

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETER'S CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sible Hedingham, Halstead

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115070

Headteacher: John Smith

Lead inspector: Alison M Cartlidge

Dates of inspection: 16th - 18th May 2005

Inspection number: 267930

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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	210
School address:	School Road Sible Hedingham Halstead Essex
Postcode:	CO9 3NR
Telephone number:	(01787) 460 362
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rosie Jenkin
Date of previous inspection:	February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is of similar size to other primary schools. Pupils come from broadly average home backgrounds and attainment on entry to the school is also average. Most pupils are of white British origin, with a few being of Asian or African heritage. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is a little higher than usually found in schools, although no pupils require additional language support. Pupil mobility is high in Years 3 to 6 and the uptake of free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, varies from year to year, although it is broadly average. Most pupils with special educational needs have specific learning difficulties. The school received a school achievement award in 2002. There has been a high turnover of teachers in Year 1 during the last few years. At the time of the inspection this class was being taught by a temporary teacher, who was covering a long-term absence. The Reception class shares accommodation, resources and some members of staff with a private Nursery.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23609	Alison Cartlidge	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education English as an additional language
1112	Peter Oldfield	Lay inspector	
23239	Mike Capper	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Peter's CE VC Primary School provides a sound quality of education and gives satisfactory value for money. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The current Year 6 pupils achieve satisfactorily, but the standards of work seen are below average. Leadership and management are satisfactory, although action taken to raise attainment has been too slow, and there is some underachievement. Pupils develop good attitudes and behaviour.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good provision for children in the Reception Year helps them to achieve well overall in all areas of learning.
- Pupils make good progress in information and communication technology (ICT) and in developing speaking and listening skills.
- Attainment is too low in English, mathematics and science, and pupils have insufficient opportunity to write in support of other subjects.
- Teachers do not always provide work that meets pupils' differing needs closely enough and, as a result, there is some underachievement, especially by the end of Year 2 and for the more able.
- Teaching assistants are used well to provide specialist support in physical education and ICT, and to lighten the workload of teachers.
- Pupils enjoy school, work hard and behave well because members of staff provide a good level of care, and support moral and social development effectively.
- The headteacher, other members of staff and governors are strongly committed to school development and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, although some recent improvements have not had enough time to raise standards significantly.
- There are good opportunities to enrich the curriculum, especially in physical education.

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Attainment is rising steadily and standards in ICT have improved. The work of subject co-ordinators is now satisfactory, although standards in writing are still too low. The quality of leadership, management and teaching remains satisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although there is some variation across the school. Children achieve well in the Reception class and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, their attainment exceeds the expected levels in all areas of learning. Most children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in this year group, although the more able make less progress in writing and mathematical development.

The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 6, although there is some underachievement, especially by the end of Year 2. Test results at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were average in comparison with those in all and similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science in the current Year 2, because there are fewer pupils working at the higher than expected level (Level 3). The needs of the more able and gifted and talented pupils are not consistently met because teachers do not always challenge them enough, especially in writing. The teachers' expectations for speaking and listening and ICT are higher. As a result, pupils' achievement is good in these aspects of the curriculum and their attainment is in line with nationally expected levels.

Test results at the end of Year 6 vary from year to year due to the high mobility of pupils in Years 3 to 6 and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. Pupils in the current Year 6 are working below levels expected in English, mathematics and science, with more pupils with special educational needs and fewer more-able pupils. This year group made satisfactory progress from the end of Year 2. When taken as a whole, test results have kept pace with the national trend over the last few years, although there is some underachievement at the school.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils are happy at school, keen to learn and well behaved. They develop good relationships with members of staff and each other, and their social and moral development is good. Rates of attendance are broadly in line with the national average and punctuality is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in the Reception Year. In Years 1 to 6, teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and manage behaviour well. However, they do not all use assessment information well enough to plan tasks that meet pupils' differing needs, especially those of the more-able pupils.

The curriculum, accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, and the school provides good opportunities for pupils to take part in additional activities. The curriculum for children in the Reception class is good and there are excellent links with the private Nursery that shares the school's facilities. However, throughout the school, teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to use their writing and ICT skills to support learning in other subjects. A shortage of time in science and religious education limits achievement in these subjects. The school has good concern for pupils' health, safety, welfare and personal support, and arrangements made to provide academic support and guidance are satisfactory. There are good links with other schools and satisfactory links with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher know what needs to be improved, although action taken to raise attainment has been limited, and a high turnover of teachers in Year 1 has hampered progress. Management is satisfactory. There are thorough systems for tracking pupils' progress, although the monitoring of teaching lacks rigour. The school is socially inclusive, although planning does not ensure that all pupils are given equal opportunities to achieve. Subject co-ordinators are expanding their roles and are keen and hardworking. Governance is good. Several enthusiastic governors have galvanised the governing body into action and support and challenge the school vigorously. Statutory requirements are not met in full in the information provided to parents.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are very pleased with the work of the school. Pupils are particularly positive about their friends and practical activities, including clubs.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in English, mathematics and science, and provide greater opportunities to extend pupils' writing skills in other subjects; and
- improve the pace and challenge of teaching and improve achievement by ensuring that assessment information is used to plan work that reflects pupils' differing needs, especially the more able;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that the governors' annual report to parents and the school brochure include national test result comparisons and targets.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is below the nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in the Reception Year.
- Pupils develop speaking and listening skills well but do not achieve well enough in writing, or use this skill enough to support learning across the curriculum.
- Achievement is inconsistent across the school, especially for more-able pupils, and standards are not high enough by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress in ICT.

Commentary

Reception Year

1. Children's attainment on starting school is higher than it was at the time of the last inspection, and is now broadly average. Their achievement, including those with special educational needs, is good. Most children are on target to exceed the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Attainment is higher than that found at the time of the last inspection, with attainment and progress in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development having improved. Exceptionally close links with the private Nursery that shares the accommodation and excellent induction procedures enable children to learn quickly.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.2 (15.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.1 (14.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.7 (15.2)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Test results vary from year to year, depending on the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group, and pupil mobility.
3. When compared with those in all and similar schools, national test results at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected level (Level 3) was above average in mathematics, average in reading but below average in writing. Standards of work seen during the inspection in the current Year 2 were below the expected levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science, with fewer pupils in this year group working consistently at the higher than expected levels. Overall, attainment has been rising above the national trend, with improvements in provision in the Reception Year having a positive influence on attainment. However, an examination of the school's assessment information shows that there is underachievement from the end of the

Reception Year to the end of Year 2, and standards are not high enough. A high turnover of teachers in Year 1 has had a negative impact on the consistency of provision in the last few years and has depressed standards. This has been a barrier to learning that has been beyond the school's control. During the inspection, a temporary teacher in this year group was ensuring that pupils were making at least satisfactory progress this year.

Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6)

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (26.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.3 (26.3)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.9 (26.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. National test results at the end of Year 6 in 2004 were average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected level (Level 5) was well below average in English and average in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment in the current Year 6 is below nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science, with more pupils than usual having special educational needs, and fewer pupils working at the higher than expected levels. Pupils' attainment is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection, with attainment in writing remaining too low. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they have insufficient opportunity to develop writing when learning in other subjects and teachers do not ensure that pupils present their work neatly.
5. Targets set for the end of Year 6 in 2004 were not met because there is high mobility in Years 3 to 6 and half the pupils taking the tests in 2004 did not start at the school. Pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well because the school enables them to develop self-esteem, which makes them confident speakers who are keen to ask questions and share their ideas. Intervention strategies in English and mathematics are used well to boost progress in Years 3 to 6, making achievement at the school satisfactory overall.
6. Variable teaching leads to underachievement in some lessons when work is not matched closely enough to pupils' differing needs. This mostly affects more-able pupils in English and science, although in mathematics, it sometimes causes less-able pupils to make too many mistakes. Whilst leaders at the school identify and support pupils who are underachieving, they do not do enough to strengthen teaching. There is no significant difference between the achievement of girls and boys or between pupils from differing backgrounds.
7. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, and attainment in ICT) is in line with national expectations. Significant improvements since the last inspection in the provision for ICT are helping pupils to achieve well in this subject. However, ICT and literacy are not used well enough to support learning in other subjects.
8. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Clear individual education plans and some good support from teaching assistants enable them to learn at an appropriate rate. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and are given broadly satisfactory support. Most parents are satisfied with the way their children achieve.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils show good attitudes towards learning, although some do not present their work well.
- The school has high expectations of behaviour, although some pupils are concerned about bullying.
- Pupils enjoy good relationships with other pupils and members of staff, develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem, and take responsibility well.
- Pupils' moral and social development is good.

Commentary

9. As at the time of the last inspection the school is successful in encouraging good attitudes towards learning. Children in the Reception Year are happy to come to school and eager to learn. They show good levels of independence and participate fully in the wide range of activities provided. Older pupils particularly enjoy taking part in practical activities, although some do not take enough care when working in their books, and this can adversely affect their learning.
10. Behaviour throughout the school since the time of the last inspection continues to be good. Pupils rise to the challenge of the high expectations set by the school. There have been no incidents of exclusion from the school in recent years. Pupils agree their own class rules, follow the good example set by members of staff, and observe the prominently displayed reminders about how to be helpful and responsible. A few pupils expressed some concern about being bullied, but were happy with the system of 'worry boxes' for concerns and suggestions and with the way members of staff and school council members deal with these.
11. Relationships between the pupils and with members of staff continue to be good throughout the school. Pupils are happy to help each other, and careful supervision and support at playtime and lunchtime enable pupils of differing race and background to play together harmoniously and respect each other's feelings. In class, pupils work collaboratively and share resources sensibly. They are pleased to take responsibility, and parents are pleased with the way this is encouraged. For example, older pupils support younger ones with their reading and act as buddies when children first start school. The school council is involved in the school improvement plan, and pupils' success is rewarded and celebrated in assemblies. All these activities enable pupils to gain confidence, develop self-esteem and become ready to learn.
12. The school provides good opportunities for promoting pupils' moral and social development, and they develop a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Reception children achieve well in personal, social and emotional development and learn class routines quickly. A school charter is shared successfully with older pupils, and members of staff consistently promote social and moral development through their example and direction. Weaknesses in cultural development found at the time of the last inspection have been addressed appropriately.

Attendance

13. Attendance is at about the national average, although the level of unauthorised absence is high because the school has thorough systems for monitoring absence and records term-time holidays as being unauthorised.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	1.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching, learning and assessment procedures are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory, with good opportunities for enrichment. There are good levels of health care and safety provision, and support for pupils' academic progress is satisfactory. There are good links with other schools and satisfactory links with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment is satisfactory overall, with good procedures for the Reception Year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good or better in the Reception class.
- Practical activities are used well to support learning in subjects such as science.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and make good use of resources, including ICT, to make learning interesting.
- Teachers' expectations, especially in writing and the presentation of work, are not always high enough.
- Good use is made of assessment data in Years 3 to 6 to identify and support groups of pupils who need additional help in literacy and numeracy.
- Teachers do not always make enough use of assessment information to ensure that work is matched to pupils' individual needs and to provide equal opportunities.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	3 (10%)	11 (36%)	15 (48%)	2 (6%)	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. The quality of teaching and learning is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. It is good in the Reception Year and satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Some difficulties due to a high turnover of teachers in Year 1 and high mobility of pupils in Years 3 to 6 have had an impact on provision.
15. In the Reception Year, good teaching and learning lead to children achieving well. There is a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated learning. Members of staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children and use a good range of teaching methods. The quality of support when children are working outside is especially good. At these times a wide range of activities engage children very well, with high quality adult support extending learning effectively. The very high adult-to-child ratio means that support is always available. Lessons are well resourced and learning is made fun, with differing needs being met well on most occasions and children developing a very good capacity to work independently or with each other. However, there are occasions, especially in writing, when more-able children are given

insufficient challenge.

16. Throughout the school, teachers are hardworking and strive to make learning interesting. They have high expectations of behaviour and clear routines in place to help pupils understand what is expected of them. As a result, there is a purposeful working atmosphere in most lessons, with pupils fully engaged in their learning and applying themselves well. Teachers make good use of resources, with new interactive whiteboards being used effectively to introduce new concepts in subjects such as science and mathematics.
17. In Years 1 to 6, teaching is most successful when teachers plan suitable practical activities. At these times pupils respond well, quickly becoming engrossed in their work and co-operating well. In science, they enjoy carrying out simple experiments, which have improved their investigative skills. In a very good geography lesson in Year 4, the very good use of maps helped pupils to achieve well as they learnt about some of the key features of a village in India. However, in Years 1 to 6, teachers' expectations are not always high enough, especially of the quality of writing and the way that pupils present their work. Teachers too readily accept untidy work and do not do enough to ensure that writing skills develop at a suitable rate. Whilst pupils' work is marked regularly, teachers do not help them understand how they can improve their writing. They do not set clear expectations for the accuracy of spelling, syntax and punctuation in pupils' writing, and instruction on specific kinds of writing is not detailed enough.
18. Assessment is satisfactory overall. In the Reception class, there are thorough assessment procedures, with members of staff making regular observations of how well children are achieving and using this information effectively to meet differing needs.
19. In Years 1 to 6, the school has established clear procedures for tracking pupils' progress over time. This information is used well in Years 3 to 6 to identify groups of pupils who would benefit from additional help through 'booster' classes or national strategies intended to improve skills in literacy and numeracy. Once identified, these pupils are given good support, and an analysis of test data shows that they make rapid progress and achieve well whilst participating in these support programmes. However, at other times teachers do not make enough use of available assessment information. Whilst they often plan different work for the ability groups in each class, it is not always matched closely enough to need, resulting in some underachievement. This was the case in the two unsatisfactory lessons observed during the inspection. There is a wide variation in provision, with some teachers not always challenging pupils sufficiently. Pupils are sometimes given the same piece of work whatever their age or ability. This affects more-able pupils in particular, especially in the way that they are expected to record their findings in subjects such as science.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory, and is extended through a good range of out-of-class activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good curriculum for children in the Reception Year.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 have too few opportunities to use their reading and writing skills across the curriculum.
- Planning for all subjects emphasises enjoyable practical experiences, but the curriculum is not always adapted well enough to individual needs.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal development and for extra-curricular activities.
- Additional programmes are used effectively to boost the skills of lower attaining pupils.
- There has been a high turnover of teachers in Year 1 and there are some weaknesses in accommodation.

Commentary

20. A good curriculum is provided for children in the Reception Year. Members of staff plan a very wide range of exciting outdoor activities, and there is a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated tasks. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 meets requirements, and provision for mathematics, science, ICT and art and design has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. New ICT equipment has played a significant part in the improvement of pupils' skills, although there are missed opportunities to extend these skills to support learning in other subjects. There has been an improvement in the quality and range of books, although not enough is done to develop skills in reading and writing in subjects other than English. The curriculum for science and religious education is covered adequately, but lessons are short and pupils often have insufficient time to record their learning in depth or to achieve higher than the expected levels. Pupils in Year 6 start to learn to speak French and this is a good feature in their preparation for transfer to the high school.
21. The curriculum includes good opportunities for pupils to carry out practical tasks which are planned well and engage their interest. However, progress through the school is uneven and the opportunity for all to benefit equally from the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The most significant weakness is that tasks are not consistently adjusted to meet the needs of pupils of differing ability. This slows the development of literacy and mathematics skills in the early stages, with the result that pupils are not well enough prepared to begin the curriculum for Years 3 to 6. More widely, it limits the progress of some pupils in all subjects across the school, most notably those who are more able, who are not given work that is hard enough. Additionally, individuals and groups are withdrawn from lessons or assemblies for instruction in a different subject, so missing parts of the curriculum. This is unsatisfactory and was also a weakness in the previous inspection.
22. Effective use is made of short-term intensive programmes to boost the skills of pupils who need help, notably in literacy and numeracy. Gifted and talented pupils have been identified and the school is at an early stage of developing provision for them. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual education plans set out clear targets focused on pupils' identified needs. As a result, teachers have clear guidance in planning appropriate work for them. Targets are adjusted appropriately as pupils' needs change so that they make sound progress.
23. There is a good curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education, including citizenship. The scheme of work provides wide coverage of key topics. Visitors extend pupils' experience of citizenship, and the school council involves pupils in decision-making. All classes have time in which to discuss issues of concern. It is a good feature that pupils have an exercise book in which to record their learning so that they can see their own progress.
24. Members of staff take learning beyond the classroom in a stimulating way. They organise a wide range of special events, such as the recent Chinese Week. The programme of visits includes a residential experience for older pupils. At lunch times and after school, pupils are offered a good range of clubs and activities. Provision for sport is very good, and a teaching assistant with special expertise plays a leading role. Teachers use resources well to hold pupils' interest. Staff changes in recent years have disrupted learning in Year 1, although this class is making at least satisfactory progress under the present temporary arrangement. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils, especially in ICT, physical education and literacy. Limitations in the accommodation, particularly a lack of space, continue to present difficulties for teaching and learning. The Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms are accessed through Year 4 and this can disrupt lessons. The ICT suite is not adequately ventilated. The non-fiction library continues to be under-used. Access is difficult for older pupils, and there is no policy to promote visits by individuals or groups for borrowing and research to extend their reading skills.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a good standard of care and welfare in a safe and secure environment. Pupils' personal development is supported well, although academic guidance is not always sufficient. Processes for seeking pupils' views are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent induction procedures enable Reception children to settle into school very quickly.
- Members of staff provide good care for the pupils and ensure that the school is safe.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to share their views.
- Academic support is not fully developed to meet pupils' differing needs.

Commentary

25. Excellent links have been established with the private Nursery that shares the accommodation with the Reception class. Members of staff from the Nursery and Reception class work together very closely, sharing resources and planning. Together they ensure a seamless transition from the Nursery into the school.
26. As at the time of the last inspection, the school provides good care and ensures that the pupils work in a safe environment. Levels of care and support are especially high in the Reception class, enabling children to achieve well.
27. Teachers and other members of staff know and understand the pupils' personal needs well and provide sensitive support as required. Pupils trust members of staff and know whom to approach if they have a problem at school. The school keeps a thorough record of the large number of minor accidents that occur during boisterous games at playtime. Because of high pupil mobility the school has a well-established support programme for new pupils, including a 'buddy system' that helps them to settle into routines well and be ready to learn. A support club meets at lunchtime to support pupils with behavioural difficulties and to provide a quiet place to complete homework.
28. Academic support and guidance are satisfactory overall, although with some weaknesses. Information collected on pupils' ongoing academic progress is not used rigorously enough to provide them with consistently suitable work or advice on how they can improve, and this leads to some underachievement, especially for the more able.
29. The school is successful in valuing and encouraging pupils' views. The elected school council shares pupils' ideas and concerns and makes a positive contribution towards school developments. Pupils are pleased with the way members of staff listen to them and take a genuine interest in their views and suggestions and this improves their self-esteem.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with parents and the community and good links with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's effective links with other schools support transition arrangements well.
- There are excellent induction procedures for children joining the Reception class.
- Not all parents support their children at home.

Commentary

30. There are well-established, close links with the local secondary school and other primary schools. 'Challenge' days for pupils in mathematics, ICT and design and technology held at the secondary school give pupils the opportunity to use more technical equipment, and make the transition to secondary education smooth. A two-day induction project enhances pupils' learning further and helps them to become familiar with the way they will be expected to work when they have transferred. School council members represented the school in a cluster group forum to discuss mutual concerns and ideas.
31. There are excellent links between the Reception class and the Nursery that shares the same accommodation. The members of staff plan together and work together so that children are familiar with school routines when they transfer into the Reception class.
32. As at the time of the last inspection, most parents find the school very approachable and are pleased with the way concerns are dealt with. The governing body has worked with members of staff to carry out research into the way homework raises attainment and have seen a direct link between the level of home support and the success of the pupils at the school. There are good plans to support parents further in workshops. Whilst information for parents is satisfactory overall, there are some weaknesses in the quality of reports on pupils' progress, because they do not all provide clear guidance on how well pupils are achieving, and some parents may not be aware that their children are not achieving well enough.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory and governance is good. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body is enthusiastic, analytical and committed to raising attainment.
- The headteacher has a good understanding of what needs to be developed, although some weaknesses remain from the time of the last inspection.
- Pupils' progress is monitored closely, although the monitoring of teaching lacks rigour.
- Good training opportunities, especially for teaching assistants, have helped to reduce the workload of teachers.
- Provision in the Reception Year is led very well and management is good.
- Leaders provide strong role models to support the personal development of pupils.
- Finances have been used well to develop some aspects of the school's work.
- Statutory requirements are not met fully.

Commentary

33. Governance is good. In the last few years, changes in personnel and leadership and intensive training have prepared governors well for their responsibilities. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses because they carry out focused monitoring of its work. This equips them well to provide a good level of challenge and support. For example, their intensive review of provision for pupils with special educational needs is thorough and constructive. Their report makes sharply focused recommendations to guide the school in improving provision, in making spending more effective and improving the pupils' progress. Governors are highly motivated and active in tackling difficulties. For example, they reacted to low attendance by parents at the annual general meeting by meeting them at the well-attended consultation evenings. Performance targets for the headteacher set by governors have resulted in measurable improvements in provision and pupils' achievement. Governance has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection.

34. As at the time of the last inspection, the headteacher provides satisfactory leadership for the work of the school. He has high aspirations, and recent training has provided renewed impetus for school improvement. Following this training the delegation of leadership and management responsibilities has led to greater involvement of other members of staff and governors in identifying areas for development in provision. Subject co-ordinators carry out careful monitoring of test results and have regular opportunities to observe their colleagues at work. However, the monitoring of teaching is not yet sufficiently developed to enable them to share good practice with each other, to eradicate weaknesses swiftly and to increase the challenge for more-able pupils. Performance management is used appropriately to prioritise training opportunities for individuals, including members of support staff, who are a valued part of the team. Good leadership in ICT has ensured that standards in this subject have risen well since the time of the last inspection. Overall, the work of subject co-ordinators has improved and is now satisfactory. However, weaknesses in pupils' writing remain. School development has been hampered to some extent by the high turnover of teachers in Year 1 and by high pupil mobility in Years 3 to 6 and these factors have had an impact on pupils' progress.
35. Funding to provide training for teaching assistants has been used effectively. A teaching assistant now provides effective, specialist support for ICT, and another teaching assistant has been successful in taking on responsibility for planning and delivering much of the physical education curriculum. Governors have noted an improvement in staff attendance since the school has provided teachers with more time to plan and prepare lessons while their classes are being taught by specially trained teaching assistants.
36. Very good leadership and effective management have led to improved provision for children in the Reception Year, and children achieve well as a result. An improved curriculum and exceptionally close links with the private Nursery that shares the accommodation have given children in the Reception Year a good start to their education.
37. The atmosphere in the school is caring and friendly, and mutual support is a strong feature of the good relationships between members of staff and pupils. Members of staff provide good role models for pupils' personal development. The school is keen to welcome and value pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and differing circumstances. However, there are some weaknesses in providing equal opportunities, because pupils are withdrawn from lessons to attend individual music tuition and support groups for literacy, limiting achievement in the subjects they have missed.
38. Financial management is carried out effectively by the headteacher, members of the administrative staff and governors. Spending on specific projects such as the provision for ICT has been effective in raising standards. The school has satisfactory arrangements for ensuring best value, and provides sound value for money by maintaining steady progress since the time of the last inspection.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	538,065	Balance from previous year	30,880
Total expenditure	541,413	Balance carried forward to next year	27,532
Expenditure per pupil	2,707		

39. Whilst most statutory requirements are being met, information supplied in the annual report to parents and the school brochure does not include national test result comparisons or targets.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. There have been good improvements since the last inspection. Excellent links have been established with the private Nursery that shares the accommodation with the Reception class. Members of staff from the Nursery and Reception class work together very closely as a team, sharing resources and ideas. This has had a good impact on overall provision, with children's attainment on joining the Reception class now being broadly average overall.
41. Provision is very well led by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. Her very high aspirations are shared with other members of staff from the private Nursery and the Reception class. They plan activities together, so that all can contribute equally well to the support given to children from both establishments when they work alongside each other.
42. Teaching is good overall, with the needs of children being met effectively. The key features of teaching are:
 - The classroom and outdoor area are organised well and there is a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated learning.
 - Members of staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children, and use a good range of teaching methods.
 - Lessons are well resourced and learning is made fun.
 - Members of staff have high expectations for behaviour and encourage and engage children with differing needs.
 - There are occasions, especially in writing, when more-able children are given insufficient challenge.
 - Children with special educational needs are well integrated into activities and achieve well.
43. There is a good curriculum, with the quality of outdoor provision being very good. Members of staff plan a wide range of very exciting activities for when children are working outside and this supports learning very well, with high quality adult intervention extending skills and knowledge very effectively. There are few weaknesses in the curriculum. However, there are missed opportunities to promote writing throughout the curriculum. There is insufficient adaptation of the curriculum to prepare children for when they move to the more formal teaching methods of Year 1, for example by adopting aspects of the national literacy or numeracy strategies, or by moving towards greater integration of Reception Year children at play and assembly times.
44. Assessment procedures are very good. Detailed assessments are made when children first start school, and this information is used very effectively to identify what children need to learn next. Regular observations of children are made whilst they are working and these show clearly how well children are achieving.
45. There are good links with parents and excellent induction procedures. Virtually every child comes from the private Nursery so the move into the Reception class is seamless, with all children settling very quickly and members of staff already having a very good understanding of the needs of different children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's attainment is very good.
- Members of staff take very good account of children's individual needs.

Commentary

46. Children achieve well in this area of learning and most are on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Reception Year. Children are very kind and sociable. When working outside, children show high levels of concentration and perseverance and co-operate well when working in pairs or small groups.
47. Teaching is very good because of the very high expectations of all members of staff. They have a very good knowledge of both the social and educational needs of individual children and place a very strong emphasis on ensuring that children develop very good independence and self-esteem.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in reading and speaking and listening.
- There are missed opportunities to develop writing skills.

Commentary

48. Children's achievement is good, with most being on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Reception Year. Achievement is best in reading, with early skills being taught very effectively. A good range of strategies is used to teach children letter sounds and there is a strong emphasis on learning being fun. Adults read stories well and children are happy to join in with learning letter sounds.
49. Children's speaking and listening skills are good when they join the Reception class and they continue to improve at a good rate because teachers give children many opportunities to take part in discussions and talk about what they are doing with each other and with members of staff. As a result, they become very confident about speaking to groups, as well as to individuals and visitors.
50. In writing, teaching is satisfactory. Insufficient account is taken of the potential of more-able children. Whilst most children make sound progress and begin to make marks on paper, the most-able children are given insufficient opportunity to extend their skills further. Throughout the school day, there are missed opportunities to promote writing as a means of communication, and writing elements of the Reception Year literacy strategy are not being used enough to extend the skills of the most able.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in developing early numeracy skills.
- Teachers are successful at making learning purposeful and fun.
- There are some missed opportunities to extend further the skills of more-able children.

Commentary

51. Children's attainment is good, with most children being on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Reception Year. Children achieve well, especially in developing counting skills. They make good progress because of the way that children are given opportunities to develop and practise counting skills across the curriculum.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Members of staff are very careful about using numbers in practical situations. This encourages the children to become curious about numbers and helps them to understand why it is important to learn how to count. Planning for activities is very thorough and is based on a good understanding of what children have already achieved. Members of staff support children well in their learning when they are working independently, especially when working outside. Learning is always made fun and children develop a very positive attitude to working mathematically. They show great enjoyment when taking part in mathematical activities such as following a treasure trail and finding and counting hidden beans.
53. Some opportunities to extend learning are missed during children's whole-class sessions. At these times, limited use is made of questioning to extend learning and to begin to introduce more-able children to different ways of recording their work.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and a practical outdoor curriculum meet the needs of all children well.

Commentary

54. Children's achievement is good and most children are on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Reception Year. Learning is well supported by good quality teaching and an exciting and stimulating curriculum that includes a very good range of practical activities. Learning is best when children are working outside. At these times, a wide range of activities engage children very well, with high quality adult support extending learning effectively. Role-play areas are imaginative and are well linked to the theme of the week. There is a very good pace to learning, and children are very successfully encouraged to think for themselves. The very high adult to child ratio means that all children have ready access to support when they need it.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good outdoor accommodation has a good impact on learning.
- Teachers meet differing needs well.

Commentary

55. Children's attainment is good, with most children being on target to exceed the expectations of the 'early learning goals' by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children achieve well, because of the very good quality of outdoor accommodation and resources.
56. The quality of teaching and learning is good. During 'free-choice' time, activities are well planned and learning is made purposeful. There is a very good range of resources, especially outdoors, and children are given many opportunities to explore and experiment with different pieces of equipment. This helps them to improve skills. Children are confident and adventurous and share equipment and resources well. Children concentrate and persevere on activities such as climbing, digging and riding bikes. Adults give good quality support to children when they are working independently. Members of staff know the children well and talk to them about what they are doing, extending learning by the careful use of questioning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

57. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision. Good quality displays show that there is a good curriculum, with children using a wide range of techniques to produce interesting and attractive artwork. Children have good attitudes towards learning and talk confidently about things that they have made.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are not high enough by the end of Year 2.
- More-able pupils do not achieve well enough.
- Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening.
- Lessons are interesting and well resourced.
- Provision for lower attaining pupils is effective.

Commentary

58. Standards in the present Year 6 are below average in reading and writing. The number reaching the expected levels is similar to that found nationally, but the number reaching the higher levels is well below average and more-able pupils do not always make enough progress. This reflects the findings of the national tests in 2004. Nevertheless, present Year 6 pupils have made satisfactory progress since Year 2 when their test results were below average. Through the school, standards in speaking and listening are average and pupils achieve well. Pupils with lower attainment or special educational needs in language make satisfactory progress because recommended programmes of intensive instruction are used effectively to improve their skills. Teaching assistants play a good role in such instruction and in supporting groups in class.

59. Results in the Year 2 national tests in 2004 were similar to the national average, having been below average for the three years previously. However, in the broader range of work outside the tests, standards in the present Year 2 are below average in reading but well below average in writing.
60. Writing is a significant weakness through the school and this was noted in the previous inspection. Not enough progress has been made towards improving pupils' writing. Standards of spelling are particularly weak and daily work is often poorly presented. Factors that limit pupils' performance include:
- Too frequent changes of lesson topic, giving pupils too little time to master any one kind of writing.
 - Instruction in how to write specific kinds of writing is not detailed enough.
 - Teachers' expectations for presentation and accuracy are too low.
 - Marking is not used consistently to plan follow-up work by individuals.
 - Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length in other subjects.
61. Action taken to improve handwriting is beginning to show results. Some Year 2 pupils write in a joined style and few fail to do so by Year 6. A few pupils in Year 2 successfully write long stories but much work is very brief. Many Year 6 pupils construct clear accounts using paragraphs but generally pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length. Displays in all classes show the better work that results when pupils are given time to plan and improve their work. However, much daily work in all subjects is untidily presented with too many errors.
62. Action taken to raise standards in speaking and listening is proving successful because members of staff across the school follow agreed procedures. The difficulty and range of purposes for talk are extended effectively through drama techniques, end-of-lesson reviews and regular opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas with a partner. As a result, pupils through the school perform well. They listen carefully because teachers are successful in catching their interest and controlling their behaviour.
63. By Year 2, skills in sounding out unfamiliar words are secure. Pupils can explain the meaning of what they read and this skill is developed through the school in regular small group discussions led by a teacher or assistant. Reading books are graded to ensure consistent progress, although many books in Year 2 are worn and not all pupils are keen on reading. It is a good feature that one Year 2 pupil with very high ability chooses books from older classes. Time set aside each day for quiet reading is used well. However, the reading choices of pupils in Year 6 are not monitored closely enough to ensure that pupils do their best in their pace, range and level of difficulty. Reading logs are not used well enough to indicate the quality of support for homework or identify individual strengths and weaknesses, reducing the effectiveness of support from home.
64. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and were good or better in half the lessons observed. There was one unsatisfactory lesson. Lessons are planned around stimulating topics and texts, so pupils are keen to take part. Questions are sensitively adjusted to include pupils of all abilities. Teaching and learning in writing are less secure. Pupils are given good guidance in planning ideas for writing, but instruction on how to develop them in a particular kind of writing is not always adequate. This was a significant weakness in the unsatisfactory lesson, so that pupils working independently lacked confidence and their resulting work was weak. By contrast, in a very good lesson in Year 1, the teacher checked very carefully that pupils understood what they had to do before they began. She ensured that they were on the right lines as they worked and stressed key features of their success in reviewing their results.
65. The subject co-ordinators are taking positive steps to improve standards. Assessment information is now used to set targets for all pupils, and these are soundly based on national expectations. Pupils falling behind are identified and given appropriate support. Reading

books likely to interest boys have been purchased, and most pupils enjoy reading; this is starting to have a good impact on raising achievement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. Opportunities to develop reading and writing skills do not feature strongly enough in planning for other subjects. In particular, more-able pupils do not have enough opportunity to construct their own accounts using reference books. Marking does not consistently identify the misspelling of technical terms or common words so pupils continue to make mistakes.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils improve their ability to make mental calculations effectively.
- The school has thorough assessment procedures, but information is not always used well to plan work that consistently meets pupils' differing needs.
- Support groups are used well to boost the knowledge of groups of pupils from Years 3 to 6.
- Teachers plan interesting practical activities and use ICT well to promote learning.
- Limited use is made of teachers' marking to show pupils what to learn next.

Commentary

67. The national tests in 2004 at the end of Year 2 were in line with national averages, with the proportion achieving the higher level (Level 3) being good in this cohort. In Year 6, results were average at the expected level (Level 4) and the higher level (Level 5). Since the time of the last inspection, test results have been variable due to the high mobility of pupils in Years 3 to 6, but have followed a steady upward trend in the last few years.
68. Standards seen in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are below the levels expected nationally, because both year groups this year have more pupils with special educational needs and few pupils working at the higher than expected levels. Across the school, teachers start lessons well, with interesting mental mathematics tasks. For example, in Year 1, pupils enjoyed looking for doubles and near doubles when given a short time to observe two sets of spots, and in Year 6 pupils enjoyed the challenge of using four numbers to provide calculations that would eliminate totals drawn on a grid.
69. The school's thorough information from monitoring progress shows that pupils achieve best from Years 3 to 6. Overall, achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. However, there is variation across the school, and despite the work of each pupil being monitored closely and individual targets being set, not all work is matched closely enough to pupils' needs. Samples of work show that in some lessons there is insufficient difference in the challenge being set for average and more-able pupils and at other times, pupils of lower ability struggle to complete their tasks. This leads to some underachievement. Whilst the school has identified weaknesses in achievement from the end of the Reception Year to the end of Year 2, intervention to support teaching and learning has not been quick enough. In addition, the school has been hampered by an exceptionally high turnover of teachers in Year 1 over the last few years.
70. The school uses assessment information well to identify groups of pupils from Years 3 to 6 who would benefit from specific additional support and these groups of pupils progress well.
71. As at the time of the last inspection, teaching, learning and the use of assessment are satisfactory overall, although teaching varies from good to unsatisfactory. In the good lessons, teachers are enthusiastic, engage the pupils' interest well, share their good subject

knowledge, and plan well for all abilities. In these lessons, the pupils work at a good pace and are challenged to move on to the next level of learning. In the unsatisfactory lesson, work was not appropriate for all pupils and a substantial group made insufficient progress.

72. Throughout the school, teachers manage behaviour well, pupils behave well and show good attitudes towards learning. Resources, especially ICT, are used well to maintain pupils' attention and interest. All classrooms have interactive whiteboards and many teachers use these well to support their whole-class teaching. For example, in a good lesson in Year 4, the subject co-ordinator explained capacity and calibrated scales well, by using a program that showed liquid being poured into a container. At the end of another good lesson, the Year 6 teacher helped pupils to reinforce their understanding of symmetry by encouraging them to show the rotation of various shapes on a grid. The use of ICT has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to carry out practical tasks, such as drawing shapes and journeys from a set of directions in Year 2 and comparing capacity by pouring sand from one container to another in Year 1.
73. Pupils have individual targets and teachers mark pupils' work vigilantly, although they seldom show pupils what to do in order to improve their work and as a result, some pupils do not ensure that their work is presented clearly or correct errors in tasks they have been set.
74. Leadership and management of the subject continue to be satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator uses assessment information well to track pupils' progress, plan support groups and modify the curriculum. However, the monitoring of teaching lacks rigour, good practice is not shared sufficiently and unsatisfactory aspects of teaching are not improved quickly. Some pupils miss parts of mathematics lessons to attend music tuition and this can have a detrimental effect on their learning. Provision in the subject has improved steadily, making progress since the time of the last inspection satisfactory overall.

Mathematics across the curriculum

75. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics to support learning in design and technology and science. Pupils carry out measurements carefully and use graphs well to show their findings.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although achievement is satisfactory overall, there is a lack of challenge for more-able pupils.
- The curriculum includes good opportunities for pupils to develop skills through practical activities.
- Teachers make good use of ICT to make learning interesting.
- The subject co-ordinator has a strong commitment to raising standards, but the monitoring of teaching and learning lacks rigour.

Commentary

76. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. In 2004, teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 showed that attainment was above average. National test results at the end of Year 6 were also above the national average. However, both the current Year 2 and Year 6 have a greater number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and attainment in both of these years groups is lower than in 2004, and below nationally expected levels, with very few pupils working above national expectations.
77. Although, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 varies significantly from year to year, achievement is satisfactory overall, with most pupils, including those with special

educational needs, making sound progress. However, teaching does not always take enough account of the differing abilities in each class, with pupils often completing the same piece of recorded work whatever their prior attainment. This means that more-able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. Achievement is also adversely affected by the time allowed for teaching the subject, which is not consistent across the school.

78. Pupils' scientific skills are stronger than their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. There has been a focus in the school on developing scientific skills and this has been effective in raising attainment in this aspect of the curriculum since the last inspection. Teachers now plan an interesting range of well-resourced practical activities that engage pupils' interest well. This has helped to improve pupils' investigative skills, although more-able pupils are not yet confident about using their scientific knowledge to explain what they have observed in experiments.
79. As at the time of the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Key features of teaching and learning throughout the school are:
- Teaching methods are good: in most lessons, there is a good balance between teacher-led activities and allowing pupils to find out for themselves. However, on occasions, there is too much teacher direction, restricting the learning of more-able pupils.
 - Teachers manage behaviour effectively, leading to a purposeful working atmosphere in lessons.
 - Lessons are resourced well and teachers make good use of ICT to support learning, with interactive whiteboards being used effectively to introduce new concepts.
 - Teachers mark work regularly, although marking varies in quality because it does not always help pupils understand how they can improve their work.
80. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader is committed to raising standards and a leadership programme is helping to improve her effectiveness. Since the last inspection, the co-ordinator has worked hard to develop a comprehensive scheme of work, improving continuity and progress across the school. However, although there has been some monitoring of teaching and learning, this has lacked rigour to improve standards, and not enough emphasis has been given to ensuring that pupils' differing needs are being met fully.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership has ensured good improvement since the last inspection.
- Pupils achieve well.
- A well-trained teaching assistant supports learning well.
- There are missed opportunities for pupils to apply skills outside ICT lessons.

Commentary

81. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, when ICT was a key issue. Under the good leadership and management of the subject co-ordinator, there have been many improvements. Teachers are now confident about teaching the subject and resources have improved significantly. There is a well-resourced, though cramped, ICT suite and pupils' needs are being met effectively.
82. As a result of these improvements, pupils' attainment is now in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 2, pupils have secure basic skills and they apply these confidently to a range of activities. They show good drawing skills in lessons, making

good use of a range of techniques to produce attractive pictures in the style of Mondrian. In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the many applications of ICT, with teachers throughout the school acting as good role models by making good use of ICT as a teaching aid. Pupils show good skills when preparing multi-media presentations about themselves, although some are still quite slow at finding their way around the keyboard.

83. Good quality teaching and an interesting and relevant curriculum enable all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve well throughout the school. In lessons in the ICT suite, teachers show good subject knowledge and introduce new skills effectively. In these lessons, learning is made purposeful, successfully engaging pupils in their learning. Good links are made between ICT and other subjects and teachers successfully break skills down into small parts to help pupils understand what they need to do.
84. A teaching assistant takes responsibility for the day-to-day management of resources. She is well trained and knowledgeable and offers valuable guidance to teachers when they are preparing lessons. When working alongside teachers in the ICT suite, the teaching assistant supports pupils well, with her good subject knowledge helping to extend their skills and raise achievement even more.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. Good links are made between different subjects when pupils are working in the ICT suite. However, although every classroom has one or two computers, these were rarely used during the inspection. As a result, there are missed opportunities to consolidate ICT skills by using them across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

History and geography were not a focus for the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the quality of provision in these subjects.

Pupils with poor language skills are included successfully in both subjects because they record their learning through drawings, diagrams, charts and maps. However, it is common practice in all classes for the same task to be set for all pupils. Consequently, many tasks are too simple to challenge most pupils and especially in the case of those who are more able. Their written responses are generally very brief, for instance in the form of labelled diagrams or a series of short statements in answer to questions. Pupils that are more able do not learn systematically or deepen their understanding by using reference books and drafting their own reports.

History

86. No lessons were observed in history. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 have recorded less work than is generally found in other schools and the quality of work seen is below the expected standard. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 have produced good work on some topics, for instance on the Tudors and Victorians. Occasional pieces of imaginative writing successfully allow pupils to develop their understanding. Work seen in Year 6 meets expectations, but there is no evidence of work at the higher level.

Geography

87. In **geography**, teaching was good in the two lessons observed, with a range of interesting resources being used effectively to focus learning. Year 1 pupils were very keen to develop a map of the school showing safety features such as fenced areas. Pupils in Year 4 show good skills in interpreting evidence from diagrams and plans of a village in India. Work seen in Year 2 and Year 6 meets expectations, but there is no evidence of work at the higher level.

88. The curriculum meets requirements in both subjects. Members of staff are imaginative in making learning interesting, through themes such as improving the environment and initiatives such as the recent whole-school Chinese week. Good use is made of the local area for geography practical work. The school has a good collection of objects from the past to stimulate interest in history.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A shortage of time for the subject limits pupils' written responses.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and resources are used effectively.

Commentary

89. Attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 has been maintained since the time of the last inspection and continues to meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Work seen in Year 2 indicates a sound understanding of major Christian festivals and Bible stories. Pupils also know some of the customs and beliefs of Sikhism. Higher-attaining pupils retell religious stories with good attention to detail. Pupils in Year 6 show sound understanding of key principles of Judaism, resulting from a well-planned lesson series. However, a shortage of time in lessons for older pupils limits their spoken and written contributions, and this prevents them from reaching higher standards. Pupils record facts accurately but much of their written work is brief. Some tasks, such as copying captions and colouring line drawings, are too simple for older pupils and especially for those who are more able.
90. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Teaching is satisfactory with an example of good teaching being observed. Teachers' good subject knowledge is used well to plan lessons that relate to the pupils' own experiences. For example, pupils write prayers that show their own values and concerns. Pupils respond well to challenging issues, such as 'What Christians think happens to us when we die'. There are some links to topics in personal, social and health education and assemblies, although this approach is not well developed.
91. Pupils are encouraged to consider how the principles and practices of other religions affect the way people live. In the good lesson in Year 6, pupils were skilfully drawn into an understanding of a Bar Mitzvah through video clips, photographs and objects. They showed a strong personal response in their imaginative writing when describing the challenge a young boy would face when speaking to an adult audience in Hebrew. The scheme of work is successfully extended through regular visits to the parish church for worship. The subject is soundly led and managed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

This area of the curriculum was not a focus for the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to form judgements on provision, or teaching and learning.

Art and design

92. Teaching in the two lessons observed in art and design was satisfactory. Throughout the school, pupils' artwork is shown appreciation by being attractively displayed. Year 6 pupils used pastels well to show light and shade in their portraits. Pupils in Year 2 have made some interesting, colourful three-dimensional pictures using collage and paper technology. A popular art club makes a good contribution towards learning.

Design and technology

93. No design and technology lessons were observed. Samples of work show that pupils have appropriate opportunities to design and make objects from a range of materials. For example, a range of interestingly constructed musical instruments was on display in Year 5, and pupils are beginning to write evaluative comments about their work.

Music

94. In a satisfactory music lesson in Year 3, the teacher's enthusiasm encouraged pupils to participate fully in singing and playing percussion for a selection of African songs. Several pupils have the opportunity to take individual music lessons and improve their ability to read musical notation. However, some of these lessons involve pupils missing important lessons in other subjects, and the impact of this is not being carefully monitored by the school to ensure that these pupils are being given equal opportunities.

Physical education

95. A specially trained teaching assistant co-ordinates physical education effectively. Her enthusiasm and dedication ensure that pupils have the opportunity to take part in a very wide range of extra-curricular clubs and competitions. In the good games lesson observed, her careful organisation, good subject knowledge and firm management of behaviour enabled all pupils to take an active part in the carefully planned activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was not a focus for the inspection and it was not possible to form judgements on provision or teaching and learning.

96. There is a good curriculum that covers a wide range of topics including the importance of a healthy life-style, sex and relationships education and learning about the dangers of drugs. The school has a caring ethos, and throughout the day, all members of staff help pupils to develop good personal and social skills. Pupils are involved in raising money for charity, take part in a school council and support each other in lessons and around the school. For example, there is an agreed place in the playground where lonely pupils can go for company and friendship.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

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

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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