

INSPECTION REPORT

THE DEANERY C OF E VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Walmley, Sutton Coldfield

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103542

Headteacher: Mrs Sally Yates

Lead inspector: Fiona M Robinson

Dates of inspection: 3rd - 5th May 2005

Inspection number: 268050

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:	441
School address:	Fox Hollies Road Walmley Sutton Coldfield West Midlands
Postcode:	B76 2RD
Telephone number:	(0121) 351 6441
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Appropriate authority:	Birmingham LEA
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor Margaret Waddington
Date of previous inspection:	14 th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Deanery Church of England Voluntary Aided School is located in Walmley, Sutton Coldfield. It is a larger than average primary school. There are 417 pupils on roll; 203 boys and 214 girls. There are 24 FTE in the Nursery, of which there are six part-time boys and 12 part-time girls. Children come from a wide range of social, economic and academic backgrounds. Most are white British and there are a small number of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds. Of these, there are no pupils at an early stage of English acquisition. There are no traveller children and none are in public care. The levels of knowledge and understanding of children when they join the school are above average generally. The proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs is below the national average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Four of these have a statement of special educational need, which is in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The school won the leading aspect award 'Faith and Values' in 2002, the Impetus Award in Citizenship and Human Rights in 2004 and the Healthy Schools Award in 2005.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22182	Fiona Robinson	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Art and design History Music
19443	Nancy Walker	Lay inspector	
11642	Carole Parkinson	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography
22157	Mike Roussel	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology
22790	Jane Pinney	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school with many strengths that provides a very good standard of education. The headteacher provides very good, dynamic leadership that motivates everyone to give of their best. She is supported very well by the leadership team and governors. This enables the school to make improvements at a good pace and helps pupils to achieve well. A shared vision and high expectations are providing a firm steer to the school's work. Good teaching ensures that all pupils succeed. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by Year 6.
- Standards are well above expectations in information and communication technology (ICT) by Year 2 and Year 6.
- The school is very well led and managed.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good.
- There are very good opportunities for enrichment in sport and music.
- Links with parents and the community are very good.
- The children have a very good start to their education.

The school has made very good improvements since the previous inspection. Key issues have been tackled very well. There has been very good recent improvement. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved significantly due to the school's effective strategies. The quality of the curriculum is good with very good opportunities for enrichment provided. The school improvement plan is a very effective tool for guiding advancement and raising standards. The school is very well placed to improve still further.

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	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	B
science	A	A	A	A

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

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

Pupils' achievement is good. This year they have entered school with above average standards. By the end of the Foundation Stage¹ standards are very good in knowledge and understanding of the world; personal, social and emotional development and physical development, and children achieve well. Standards are good and achievement is good in the other areas of learning. Pupils make good progress over time in the infant phase and the junior phase. They demonstrate very good attitudes to learning. At the time of the inspection, standards were good in Year 2 in reading, writing, science, history, geography and music. They were well above expectations in ICT and satisfactory in all other subjects. By Year 6, they were well above average in English, mathematics, science and ICT. They

¹ The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the Reception Year.

exceeded expectations in art and design, history, geography and music. Pupils are well placed to meet or exceed their current targets in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well in relation to their prior attainments and those with English as an additional language achieve well. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests, Year 6 pupils achieved well above average standards in comparison with all schools and similar schools in English, mathematics and science.

The development of pupils' personal qualities is very good overall and this leads to the very good attitudes and increasing sense of responsibility they display. Their behaviour is very good and pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance and punctuality are very good. The provision for the spiritual, moral and social development is very good. It is good in cultural development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good with some very good features. Very good teaching was seen in English, mathematics, science, ICT and art and design. Excellent teaching was observed in English. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The use of assessment is very good in English, mathematics, science and ICT. The curriculum is good and is enhanced by very good extra-curricular activities. All statutory requirements are met. Provision for special educational needs is very good and all pupils are included in all the activities provided. Partnerships with parents are very good and this enhances pupils' education. Links with the community are very good and valuable opportunities occur to promote pupils' achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. Governance is very good. Leadership by the headteacher and the leadership team is very good. They provide a very clear vision and focus to the school's work. Teamwork is very effective and support staff are used well to support the curriculum. The management is very good. The governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is very good. They are very supportive of the school's work. They have a very strategic overview and conscientiously fulfil all of their statutory duties. They monitor the work of the school very well and have a very good awareness of the impact of teaching and learning on standards. The financial management of the school is excellent.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the education provided. Pupils are very happy to attend school and they think that learning is fun. They are very happy with the teaching they receive and proud of their school. They think that their school is bright, stimulating and purposeful.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

There are no significant issues.

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- As recognised in their School Development Plan, further develop assessment procedures in the non-core² subjects in order to enable pupils to build on their knowledge, skills and understanding in a progressive way.

² The non-core subjects are those other than English, mathematics, science and ICT.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve well in relation to ability throughout the school. They achieve good or better standards at the end of Reception Year. Standards are above average by Year 2 in most areas and well above average by Year 6 in English, mathematics, science and ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children receive a very good start to their education.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by Year 6.
- They are well above expectations in ICT by Year 2 and Year 6.
- Standards are good in art and design, history, geography and music.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good as a result of good teaching.

Commentary

1. When children start school in the Nursery, assessment data shows that their attainment is generally above average. The current Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 pupils were broadly average on entry. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes respond well to good or better teaching and make good progress over time in knowledge and understanding of the world, the personal, social and emotional and physical areas of learning. Most children well exceed the Early Learning Goals³ in these areas of learning. They make good progress and most exceed these in communication, language and literacy, mathematical and creative areas of learning.
2. Overall, standards have risen throughout the school, especially in the upper junior phase. There are a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in Years 2, 4 and 6 which has impacted on standards. Pupils with special educational needs in each year group make good progress in relation to prior achievement due to good teaching.
3. The table below shows that in 2004 standards in Year 2 were well above average in reading, writing, science and mathematics compared to all schools. Current standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well, due to work being matched well to their ability. Standards are above expectations in history, geography and music. They well exceed these in ICT, due to good or better teaching, very secure subject knowledge and understanding, and very good use made of resources.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.0 (17.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.1 (15.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.1 (17.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

³ Early Learning Goals are the identified targets children are expected to have achieved by the end of their Reception Year.

4. The table below shows that in 2004 standards in Year 6 national tests were well above average in relation to all schools and similar schools in English, mathematics and science. The present Year 6 has a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in it which has had an impact on standards. Current standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science due to very good teaching. They also well exceed expectations for pupils of their age in ICT which is a good improvement on the previous inspection, when standards were good. They are good in art and design, history, geography and music. Standards are satisfactory in all other areas. Girls tend to achieve higher standards than boys; however, the school has put effective strategies in place to narrow the gap. Pupils with special educational needs, the higher attaining pupils and those with English as an additional language achieve well and make good progress. The general trend is above the national average. During the time of the inspection there were no gender differences in the standards obtained.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.6 (29.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	29.4 (28.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	31.1 (31.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 61 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. In Years 1 and 2, achievement is good because of the good provision made for the pupils' development. All pupils including the higher achieving pupils and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well because work is matched effectively to their ability and pupils are supported well in their learning. Their progress is charted carefully in English, mathematics, science and ICT, and the information is used well to inform planning.
6. Pupils are making good progress in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 with appropriate challenge provided for the higher achieving pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils are making very good progress in ICT across the school. Their ICT skills are well deployed across the curriculum. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well in all areas.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well against their targets as set out in their individual education plans, because of effective assessment of their difficulties and very good support from teachers and other staff.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The level of attendance and the punctuality of pupils are both very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Their personal development is very good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good overall. All these aspects have improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good.
- They are very keen to come to school and want to learn.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good, caring and considerate and pupils are happy to work co-operatively.
- The spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is very good.
- Cultural development is good.

- Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school.

Commentary

8. Pupils' very positive attitudes, values and other personal qualities impact very favourably on the climate for learning in the school and, as a result, achievement is good. The school expects all pupils to participate in all aspects of school life. Their contributions are valued. The caring ethos of the school permeates the life and work of all. Parents are very appreciative of the values the school promotes.
9. The pupils of The Deanery School have great pride in their school and are pleased to attend. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, want to learn and find their lessons interesting. The ICT facilities are popular and the pupils are keen to extend their skills. They engage in extra-curricular activities with enthusiasm, taking advantage of the wide range of clubs, visits and visitors the school has to offer. The enjoyment and pleasure pupils have in learning has a direct impact on how well they achieve. Children in the Foundation Stage settle quickly, understand the routines and join in happily.
10. From the youngest to the oldest, relationships between pupils are very caring. All ages play together amicably and socially at break and lunchtimes and no-one is left out. They work harmoniously together within the classroom, co-operating and collaborating very well.
11. Independence is promoted very well with many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for tasks around the school, as well as with their own work both in lessons and at home. As a result, pupils have a high degree of self-worth and feel valued for the part they play and the work they do. There are very high expectations of pupils to be self-disciplined and to do the right thing. Through the school's 'peer mediation' work, pupils play a significant role in supporting one another. The very good role models that many staff present to pupils and schools are very valuable daily reference points for pupils to draw on and to emulate. As a result, pupils behave very well and they are very polite and thoughtful. The school council meets regularly and the members take their responsibilities very seriously. They appoint their own chairperson and secretary, who write the agenda and minutes, and the council is ably supported by the headteacher, who helps them decide if suggestions are feasible and desirable. The school council provides very good opportunities for the pupils to develop further their initiative and responsibility.
12. The school's strategies to enable all pupils to achieve well are underwritten by its programme for ensuring spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Well-planned circle time, (where pupils discuss friendships, feelings and relationships) and school assemblies make an important input into their personal development. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. They have a very good understanding of right and wrong which is promoted from their entry into school. Moral and spiritual awareness are catered for very well, with the local clergy making a valued contribution. Pupils treat each other, staff and visitors, with courtesy and respect. Pupils' understanding of their own and others' cultures is good. The knowledge of their own culture is fostered well and multicultural awareness is fostered through festivals such as Chinese New Year and Eid, and art and design and music. The special involvement the school has with Nepal and other countries is a significant support to the pupils' cultural development.
13. Attendance is consistently well above the national average. The school makes firm efforts to maintain this trend and parents respond to these very well. They support their children well in their learning and this has a positive impact on raising standards. Pupils are very punctual

and arrive in good time for the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. The table below gives the details of absence for the last complete recording year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	3.6
National data	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Parent/pupil preferred not to say

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
317	0	0
7	0	0
4	0	0
3	0	0
5	0	0
7	0	0
1	0	0
6	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
6	0	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Pupils are taught well throughout the school. They are encouraged to do their best. This leads to good achievement by very interested and positive pupils in relation to their prior attainment. Teachers plan and assess work well, so that pupils make good progress across the curriculum. There are very good opportunities for enrichment in the broad curriculum. The school has very good links with parents and the community.

Teaching and learning

The school provides a good quality of education in the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and all pupils, including the higher achieving and those with special educational needs, make good progress toward their targets.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are planned well and pupils are well motivated to succeed.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of behaviour and pupils are involved well in their own learning.
- Excellent teaching was seen in English.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Assessment procedures are very good in English, mathematics, science and ICT.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 51 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	22 (43%)	21 (41%)	7 (14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators monitor the quality of teaching, planning and learning on a regular basis. The samples of pupils' work show evidence of good teaching quality and most work is presented well.
15. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. There are no significant weaknesses in teaching; instead there are many strengths. Those that stand out are good planning which results in work being matched well to pupils' ability, the insistence on very good standards of behaviour, and a strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils have quality of opportunity to succeed. Marking has improved and pupils understand what the next steps in learning are.
16. The work of teachers is greatly enhanced by that of teaching assistants. They also have responsibility for some aspects of work with pupils with special educational needs. They carry out these roles very effectively and pupils benefit greatly from this assistance, as observed in the teaching of reading and group work in English and mathematics. The intervention strategies used are very carefully managed by the SENCO. They have a significant impact on learning and help pupils to make good progress towards their targets.
17. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and work is matched well to the children's age and experience. Very good teaching was seen in English, mathematics, ICT, art and design and music. Excellent teaching was seen in English.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent English lesson for higher ability pupils in Year 6, on reading and understanding examples of official language and its characteristic features, in which pupils achieved excellently.

The quality of teaching and learning was excellent, owing to the teacher's skill of explanation and the pace and excitement of his teaching. Pupils were very keen and highly motivated to contribute to the lesson. The planning was meticulous and based precisely on previous assessment. Initially, pupils were able to identify key points through noting the purpose of paragraphs. They made very effective use of their whiteboards and there was constant use of praise by the teacher. Their learning was enriched because excellent use was made of their own examples. There was excellent evaluation of their discussion on the use of bags through questioning. The teacher used the new subject matter very well to revise the structure of a report. As a result, pupils were able to use connectives and paragraphs very well in their own work. By the end of the lesson, pupils had achieved excellently because work was matched very well to their ability, including those with special educational needs, and their progress was monitored very carefully. Pupils demonstrated excellent attitudes throughout the lesson. The lesson was inspiring because of the excellent role model set by the teacher and the outstanding challenge, pace and content of the teaching.

18. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, learn well because of the effective planning and teaching. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive very good support both from teachers and teaching assistants. Individual education plans are of a very good quality. Targets are linked very effectively to the English and

mathematics aspects of the National Curriculum and this has a positive effect on raising standards.

19. The system of assessment is very good in English, mathematics, science and ICT with some very good procedures in place and a good programme of regular assessment. Good procedures are in place across the curriculum and good use is made of assessment to plan the next steps in learning.

The curriculum

The school provides a good range of learning experiences for its pupils. Opportunities for pupils to participate in activities outside the school are very good. The quality of the accommodation and the provision of resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for special educational needs is very good.
- The provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- The provision for extra-curricular and enrichment activities is very good.
- The good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum ensures that pupils are assisted well.

Commentary

20. As at the time of the previous inspection, the school provided a broad and relevant curriculum in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 to 6. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good and reflect the school's determination to offer a wide range of opportunities to all its pupils. Planning effectively supports teaching and learning. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been well implemented and teachers are secure in their knowledge of these strategies. The curriculum is regularly reviewed to meet the changing needs of the school and, through good action planning, is modified so that pupils have better access to learning, knowledge and skills. For example, this is demonstrated by the pupils' improved investigative skills for science. Areas for development are clearly identified. For example, in history and geography, the subject leaders are aware that skills in these subjects are not always developed systematically and are revising the planning accordingly.
21. The school successfully strives to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities. Work is appropriately set and the good support from all staff ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have equal and full access to all activities. The personal, social and health education and citizenship curriculum is well established. Personal development is promoted on a day-to-day basis through the very good care and attention that staff pays to all pupils. The curriculum promotes well the school's caring ethos and pupils have very good opportunities to discuss their feelings and problems with the teachers and others. This makes a very good contribution to the very good social relationships found across the school.
22. The school organises a very good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that appeal to the interests of a significant number of pupils. They have very good opportunities to participate in sporting, artistic and musical activities. Field trips and tournaments and the contribution of many visitors to the school all enhance the very good provision in this area. Older pupils' social skills are developed very well through annual residential visits.

23. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and teachers and support staff are very aware of pupils' individual needs. They plan very carefully to make sure there are appropriate opportunities for all to achieve success. No pupils are disapplied from any aspects of the curriculum and pupils with special educational needs all have very well planned individual education plans which ensure that work is matched very well to their ability and personal needs. There has been good improvement in the quality of planning, since the previous inspection.
24. Pupils are prepared very well as they enter school, as they move through different stages in the school and when they transfer to their secondary schools. For example, Year 6 pupils are currently enjoying the support of a mentor from one of the secondary schools, who visits the school weekly to offer advice and answer any questions.
25. There is a good match of teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum and of learning support assistants to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. Pupils with statements of special educational need are supported very well and work is matched very well to their ability. The contribution of the well-qualified and experienced learning support assistants, particularly when involved with children in the Foundation Stage, with the less able and with pupils with special needs, is significant. The good progress that pupils make owes much to their support.
26. The accommodation is satisfactory. It is well maintained and provides a stimulating learning environment to enhance pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Externally, accommodation is very good, with spacious grounds and the provision for quiet meeting places. Since the previous inspection, areas of shade have been established, to improve pupils' well-being in hot weather. Internally, pupils benefit from many advantageous aspects of the accommodation, including a newly established library, a computer suite, two large halls and separate rooms for music and design and technology. The cramped condition in some classes and noise from closely adjoining classrooms does not have an impact on learning and pupils achieve well in spite of these. The school is well aware of these weaknesses in the accommodation and has established a rolling programme of improvements.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a very good standard of care for its pupils, and parents are especially pleased with this. The quality of support and guidance has improved even further from the positive picture found when the school was last inspected and it is now very good. The school listens to the views of pupils and involves them well in its work and future development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school ensures the personal and emotional needs of every child are very well provided for.
- The extent to which each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with adults in school is very good indeed.
- Risk assessments to ensure the safety of pupils on visits are very good.
- Support, advice and guidance provided by the school are very good.

Commentary

27. The school is a very welcoming place and staff are skilled at putting everyone at their ease. Routines are very well established and so there is a very calm and orderly environment. Staff know pupils very well and they take a keen interest in them. They are very watchful, including in the Nursery, and they notice whenever a child needs help, either in lessons or elsewhere, and they are skilled at providing that help. Right from the start, the school has pupils' well-being at heart and has very good arrangements to help pupils to settle into school life. Parents are very much in praise of this aspect. In addition, the school's initiative to provide a means whereby pupils can receive knowledgeable help on a one-to-one basis for any worry they might have, through the 'Jolly Jungle' as well as its 'peer mediation' work, is instrumental in removing potential barriers to pupils' learning and this is highly commendable.
28. Routines such as first aid, fire drills and health and safety audits are secure. A very high priority is placed on ensuring pupils are as safe as possible on visits out of school. The headteacher is very knowledgeable on this and is vigilant in ensuring her staff carry out a preliminary visit to every venue and complete a very thorough risk assessment with control measures to minimise potential hazards. All staff are aware of child protection procedures. The headteacher is the designated person and has received training.
29. Pupils are entrusted with many responsibilities throughout the school and they make a significant contribution to how the school operates on a daily basis. They are mature and sensible enough to cope with responsibilities of a higher order to enable them to implement corporately agreed changes. The school council represents their views very clearly.
30. Class teachers know their pupils well and offer very good advice, support and guidance in relation to their personal development. Academic and social progress is checked very carefully and pupils' achievements are celebrated in assembly. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in school. There is early identification of need and, as a result, effective strategies to improve learning are put in place as soon as possible. Effective programmes are put in place to address needs and as a result, pupils achieve well. Very good quality support from outside agencies is used effectively by the school to develop learning.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents has improved since the school was last inspected and it is now very good. The school continues to work very well with other schools and colleges. Links with the community, including the Church as well as commerce and industry, remain very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school keeps parents very well informed and involved, not least through access to its outstanding web site.
- Parents support the school very well in all that it does.
- Very good links with other schools, local businesses and services enhance learning and prepare pupils very well for their next stage of education and life.
- The school is in the process of developing a new end of year report.
- There are very good links with the university concerning the training of teachers.

Commentary

31. The school values its parents highly and is keen to involve them. Their opinions are very regularly sought on many aspects of school life. Of those who responded to the school's questionnaires, there is a 100 per cent level of satisfaction with virtually no requests for any change, except for improvement in school dinners. The school has acted upon this request with a clear plan for improvement being implemented by the start of the final half term of this

current year. Parents are kept very well informed of the life and events of the school and of what is being taught in lessons. Detailed curriculum newsletters are provided termly. Nevertheless, these are supplemented extremely well by the school's excellent and easy to use website which includes information on every subject and element of learning. It is extremely helpful to parents as well as pupils. In addition, the school's mathematics homework scheme has been developed and includes very good tips for parents on how they can help their children to improve.

32. The support that parents give to the school and their children is very significant and contributes substantially to the high standards that pupils achieve, both academically and personally. For example, they achieve very high levels of attendance and punctuality, they are very smartly presented in high quality uniform, and even the youngest pupils have good personal and social skills. Very many parents knowledgeably support their children with reading and other homework and this contributes to the high standards achieved. In addition, parents raise a good amount of additional funds for the school each year for the school to spend on resources.
33. There is very good support for parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are fully involved at all stages, including annual reviews and, as a result, are able to help their child at home to progress in his/her learning.
34. Links with secondary schools are very well established with many activities throughout the year and so pupils transfer at the age of 11 with full confidence in their next phase of learning. Very good links with the Church contribute very well to pupils' personal development, particularly their moral and social skills. The link the school has with Connexions, and in turn with many local businesses and service providers, is also very valuable in helping to develop pupils' personal qualities. For example, the opportunities that all pupils have to experience the real world of work through planned visits and an end of year 'job taster day', are instrumental in helping pupils to realise from a young age the value of education, and that they are masters of their own career destinations and the possibilities open to them.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership and management have improved the school rapidly.
- The deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher provide very effective leadership.
- Governance is very good and gives the headteacher very effective and consistent support.
- Recruitment, retention, deployment and workload of staff have been managed outstandingly well.
- Financial management to help raise standards is excellent.

Commentary

35. Governance is very good. Governors work closely with the headteacher. They are very well informed through the school development plan about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how financial management is linked to raising standards. Governors are fully involved in the school's self-evaluation. The governing body ensures the school meets its statutory duties and has undertaken regular training so it can carry out its duties effectively. There is a very effective structure with chairs of each sub-committee and communication is very good. Inclusion, race equality and child protection policies are in place. Statutory

requirements are fully met. Nearly all the school's policies have been rewritten since the previous inspection and all have been put before the governing body.

36. The headteacher has worked closely with the school to share information and there is a good understanding of the results of the school's performance in national tests and the implications for change and spending in school. Governors are very involved in the school and find out for themselves what is happening.
37. Governors support the headteacher strongly and are now well informed enough to challenge as strongly as they support. They ensure that performance management targets are set for the headteacher. The governing body has had significant changes since the previous inspection and improvement in its effectiveness is very good.
38. The leadership of the headteacher and senior staff is very good. The headteacher has led the school and reorganised staffing, the senior management team and the literacy strategy with outstanding energy and effectiveness. She has implemented and communicated her vision for the direction of the work of the school very effectively. The headteacher, in partnership with the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, provide very effective leadership that motivates everyone to give of their best and helps to raise standards. The complex nature of the school's needs and areas for development have been very well analysed by the headteacher and broken down into sequences of practical tasks and plans to be implemented by senior staff. This has impacted well on standards by Year 6.
39. The school development plan is very good; it reflects the school's priorities and is based on a thorough and accurate assessment of needs and linked in details to the budget. Staff and governors are involved in the plan, know its priorities and its effects and evaluation and play their part in the monitoring and assessment of the school's progress. The process is clear and accessible and is having a significant impact on raising standards.
40. The headteacher has made many significant changes, in a comparatively short time, since she joined the school and this has made heavy demands on all members of staff and governors. Morale is high and staff are realistic, hardworking and keen to support the rapid pace of improvement they see. Senior management set a very good example by the high quality of their teaching, hard work and professional attitude. They support the headteacher and the school's strategies and priorities are implemented consistently throughout. As a result, standards have risen; new and effective structures such as the National Literacy Strategy and making geography into a discrete subject have been put into effect. Teamwork is very effective because all members of staff are well informed and see the purpose and results of what they are doing.
41. There is very good leadership and management of special educational needs by the SENCO. This ensures that the systems in place are of a very good quality and have a positive impact on raising standards. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are fully included in all activities and in consequence make good progress.
42. Management is very good. The school evaluates all its work thoroughly and prioritises effectively. Its self-evaluation is very good. The school takes effective action in response to its evaluation and translates it into classroom practice. Its analysis of data is sophisticated and put to good use. Performance management is very good and gives staff a clear sense of direction and support. The school provides very effective training for its staff and there is a sharp awareness of areas which have yet to be addressed. There are also very good induction systems in place for new staff.

43. The management of staff has been central to the school's success and has been outstandingly well managed by the headteacher to raise standards, success and morale in the school.
44. Financial management to support the school's priorities is excellent. The school bursar has outstanding oversight of this process. Budget priorities are closely linked to the school's development plan and the principles of best value are well used to raise standards. Staff are kept well informed of how money is spent.
45. The school's financial control is very good. The auditor's report is acted upon, and the headteacher and governors have very good access to clear and up-to-date information to ensure that the school's financial state is clear. Financial administration is excellent and helps the rest of the school to run smoothly.
46. The school is very well placed to continue to improve rapidly. This is because of the very high quality of leadership and management, well established and effective financial and administrative systems and a strongly supportive and enthusiastic staff well involved in the school's strategic planning. In consequence, the school is providing very good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,431,905
Total expenditure	1,454,717
Expenditure per pupil	3,233

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	68,747
Balance carried forward to the next year	45,935

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and has been maintained since the previous inspection. Although very recently returned to the school following a maternity leave, the co-ordinator is providing good leadership and management of this area of the school. Curriculum planning is good overall. Assessments are used well to track children's academic and social competencies and to plan activities that are suitable to their individual needs, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language, and the higher attaining children. The staff form a very effective team and work with strong commitment and expertise to ensure that children have a very good start to their school life and are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. Children enter the Nursery in the year they are four, on either a full or part-time basis, mostly depending on their age and transfer to one of the two Reception classes in the year in which they are five. Children start Nursery with levels of attainment that are above average, although this varies from year to year. Overall, children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. By the time they reach Year 1, attainment is above the expected levels in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. In personal and social education, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development, attainment is well above the expected levels. During the inspection, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on children's attainment in creative development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- They have very good relationships both with adults and with other children.
- The induction process has a very good impact on the development of the children.

Commentary

47. Children settle very well into school life. Nursery children leave their parents and carers confidently and feel secure in the caring environment. This is because the induction process is carefully planned and takes place over a period of time. From the beginning, the children learn how to behave in school and be part of a social group. In the Nursery and Reception classes the children are eager to explore new learning and happy to make their own choice of activity. By the time they leave Reception, children concentrate well on work being undertaken. They have a well-developed sense of right from wrong and their behaviour is consistently very good. Their attitudes to school, to other children, to adults and to their whole environment are most positive.
48. Teaching is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Staff know the children well and respond very appropriately to their individual personal and social needs. The children are continually encouraged to be involved in a range of activities and, where necessary, are reminded about such things as sharing and taking turns. Teachers and support staff work very well together as a team, acting as good role models and establishing high standards of

behaviour and social skills. All children are helped to make good progress, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. By the time they leave the Reception classes, they are well above the expected levels in their personal and social development.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Children with special educational needs are well managed.

Commentary

49. Children are on course to be above the expected levels of attainment by the time they leave the Reception classes. This represents good achievement overall on their prior attainment. In the Nursery, they achieve well as they listen with interest to the story of Elmer the elephant, paying close attention. They show a keen enjoyment of books and are beginning to link sounds to letters. Most hold their pencils correctly as they learn to write their names. Most Reception children write and read a few familiar words independently.
50. The quality of teaching is good in the Nursery, where the children learn well through the interesting resources that stimulate them. Throughout the Foundation Stage, staff provide plenty of good opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills, such as when Reception children talk to partners about the job of flowers. Reception teachers demonstrate many strengths, including high expectations of learning and behaviour and very good relationships with the children. Children with special educational needs are well supported so they make good progress. Teaching is good in the Reception classes and children make good progress, because tasks are matched well to their ability.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a good basic knowledge of numbers.
- As in communication, language and literacy, in the Reception classes sessions are too long to effectively maintain the children's interest and motivation.

Commentary

51. Children are on course to have exceeded expectations in this area of learning by the time they leave Reception. They make good progress over time. Most Nursery children successfully count forwards and backwards from ten and many extend their counting still further. Through challenging practical activities, such as adding socks to a line, they are learning simple addition as they 'add one more'. Reception children mostly carry out simple addition and subtraction confidently. They have a good understanding of taller and shorter. More able children are

beginning to work within the National Curriculum as they establish whether objects are longer or shorter than a metre rule.

52. The teaching has many strengths and in the Nursery it is consistently good. Throughout the Foundation Stage, many opportunities are provided for children to count, often within practical activities. A good provision of resources, such as water, sand, number games and number fans, helps children develop their mathematical language and understanding. In the Nursery, activities are suitably challenging and children are well motivated by the interesting activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good quality of teaching ensures children learn very well.
- Children's skills on the computer are very good.
- Children's spiritual awareness is much enhanced through the rich and varied experiences provided for them.

Commentary

53. Children are on course to achieve well above expectations by the end of Reception and in many areas, particularly their use of the computer, children's attainment is very high. In the Nursery, most children have already reached the recommended Early Learning Goals in this aspect of their knowledge and understanding as, individually, they confidently name the parts of the computer and direct the cursor to select the correct numbers in a counting game. Reception children use ICT very effectively to support their learning as, with help, they enthusiastically convert a tally chart of minibeasts they have seen to a bar graph. As they go through the Foundation Stage, children learn to recognise and label features of the human body and of plants. They begin to recognise the difference between then and now as they compare toys of the past with those of today. Reception children are introduced to different cultures and beliefs through stories from the Hindu, Jewish and Christian faiths.
54. Teaching is very good in this area of learning. As a result children achieve very well. They are provided with a very wide range of experiences that excite and challenge them. Teachers build very well on previous learning. For example, one child recalled previous work on honey bees to give a most articulate explanation of how and why pollen is collected from the inside of flowers. All teachers use resources extremely well to motivate the children and instil a spiritual awareness of the world around them. This was clear as children expressed wonder when shown the inside of a lily. They listened and watched with total engagement as the teacher challenged them to consider the link between flowers and fruit before she cut open a variety of fruit to show them the seeds inside.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor area is used well to support children's physical skills.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Good use of resources by teachers enables children to learn effectively.

Commentary

55. Children are on course to be well above the expected levels of attainment in this area of learning by the time they leave Reception. Their dexterity in handling large and small items in the classroom is developing well in working with, for instance, construction kits, tools and materials. Malleable materials, such as clay, are used most successfully when making models. They use construction toys with confidence, producing a range of houses, animals and vehicles. Children have good opportunities to use bats and balls, climbing apparatus and wheeled vehicles in the outside area, which enhances their learning. For example, Nursery children demonstrate good balance and co-ordination as they use tricycles to make zig-zag patterns across the playground.
56. Teaching is consistently good and all staff join in with the children and demonstrate how to carry out different activities and develop various skills. This helps all the children to achieve well. Resources are used very effectively to motivate children and stimulate their imagination. For example, Reception children excitedly manipulate a parachute and demonstrate very good co-ordination and teamwork as they manipulate a ball across the surface. A wide variety of practical activities is provided and children are encouraged to keep busy throughout the day.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

57. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards, but the work on display indicates that standards are above average, as for example when Reception children have mixed paints for different shades. Children are using the role-play areas and puppet theatres well to develop their imagination.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above those expected nationally.
- Pupils' attitudes to work are very good.
- Teaching is good with many very good examples.
- The curriculum is good.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- The school has enhanced its high standards since the previous inspection.
- Assessment procedures are very good and consistent in use.
- The use of teaching assistants is very good.

Commentary

58. Results of the National Curriculum tests for the last three years have indicated that the school's standards of English are above and well above those expected nationally when pupils reach the

ages of seven and 11 when compared with all schools nationally. When pupils are seven years old, their reading standards are the same as those of pupils attending similar schools and their standards of writing are above those of pupils attending similar schools. By the time pupils are in Year 6, standards in English have been well above those expected nationally for all schools and for similar schools. The trend in attainment has been above the national trend over the last five years.

59. Pupils come into school when they are five with average standards in communication, language and literacy. There is a wide range of ability in every class with some pupils achieving standards well above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. This is because they receive good support in their learning and work is matched well to ability. Standards in reading and writing are above the level by the time pupils are seven. Basic skills of handwriting and spelling are good. Pupils write confidently and cheerfully, checking their writing and working well together to improve the accuracy of their writing. The school's predicted targets indicate that standards of writing are higher than those in reading. Writing is above average, with a good number of pupils attaining higher levels and a smaller number of pupils attaining lower levels. The school is making every effort to address and improve standards in reading with additional and precise small group teaching of reading for all pupils, whatever their capability. This is beginning to raise standards.
60. By the time pupils are in Year 6, standards are well above those seen nationally. This is because of the large percentage of pupils likely to attain higher levels in National Curriculum tests. There are significant numbers of pupils in the same year group whose basic literacy skills of spelling and handwriting have been below the level normally seen although their understanding is good. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well in relation to their ability. Standards of basic skills in Years 3 to 5 are good. The achievement of pupils in Year 6 is good because they entered school with average attainment and are likely to leave with standards well above average overall. Attainment in writing is currently well above average for seven year-olds and 11 year-olds. The subject leader has inspired staff to work very hard and successfully raise standards in learning. All pupils achieve very well by Year 6 because of very good teaching. Valuable opportunities are provided for extended writing and pupils' writing is celebrated in displays. The following is an example of very good writing from a Year 6 pupil on the theme 'Day and Night':

*'Day drifts away,
A blanket of winking jewels is spread over the world.'*

61. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good in most lessons. Pupils are engrossed in their activities and their ability to work independently and collaboratively is very good because of the many opportunities arranged for them by their teachers.
62. Teaching is good especially in Years 3 to 6. Teachers' planning is good throughout the school, particularly for less capable pupils and those with special educational needs and these groups make good progress and achieve well. All pupils are included in a wide range of activities. Teachers use computers in the ICT suite very well to extend pupils' knowledge, skills and independent learning. Although there is minimal difference in the tasks set for pupils of different abilities, teaching uses different learning styles well to allow pupils to learn in different ways. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution through their work with pupils with special educational needs and their group work, which pupils of all abilities enjoy very much and where they all make good progress especially in reading. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and the atmosphere created helps pupils to concentrate and learn.

63. The curriculum is very good. It is broad, balanced, relevant and rich. Pupils are particularly interested in poetry and the school provides very well in this area. A new library has been built and is to be opened soon with a wide range of new books. This is planned to greatly enhance pupils' reading and independent research skills across the curriculum. Computers are used well to demonstrate different aspects of English grammar such as synonyms and to make learning fun. The school has various story tellers and speakers as well as book fairs and performances to extend pupils' knowledge of language and opportunities to demonstrate what they can do.
64. Leadership and management are very good. The National Literacy Strategy was put into place in 2002 and all staff have worked very hard with the headteacher and subject leader to introduce new reading and spelling schemes, set up a new library and to use computers as an integral part of teaching literacy. This has resulted in a significant improvement in standards for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Assessment procedures are very good. The assessment of strengths and weaknesses is used very well by teachers to plan lessons and to monitor pupils' progress. Target setting is ambitious but realistic and there is a real drive throughout the school to raise standards, to improve the quality of provision, to involve pupils in setting their own targets and developing a love of the subject. Teaching and planning are monitored very well and this provides an accurate picture of the school's achievement and how and where funds are allocated. For example, speaking and listening has been identified on the school development plan as an emphasis this year and all lessons observed showed good opportunities planned for speaking and listening across the curriculum. Improvement since the last inspection is very good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

65. Literacy across the curriculum is good. Learning subject specific language and writing styles from other areas of the curriculum takes place and makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The school has a curriculum with good emphasis on the use of writing skills across the curriculum. Teachers often incorporate learning from other subjects in their literacy lessons, which adds to the keen interest and involvement pupils display in their written work. Word processing skills are often used to present writing in different formats and for illustration. Pupils are provided with valuable opportunities to develop and apply their literacy skills in other subjects, especially in mathematics, science, art and design and history. ICT is well used to help pupils make a final presentation of their work such as to present the results of fair testing in science and to create designs in the style of Mondrian and Picasso in art.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average and achievement is very good.
- Setting by ability is having a good impact on standards.
- Very good leadership and management.
- Teaching and learning is good overall.
- The work of the teaching assistants is very good.
- Good home/school links with parents for homework.
- Assessment procedures are very good and consistent in use.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are very good.

- Increase the opportunities for pupils to independently choose the most appropriate time to use ICT in their mathematical work.

Commentary

66. Standards are well above average by the ages of seven and 11 and pupils' achievement is very good overall. These standards have been consistently high over time and this is due to the very high quality of subject leadership and management providing a very good steer to the teaching and learning and a consistent focus on the tracking and assessment of standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported by teaching assistants. The standards achieved in the higher levels in the standard attainment test, especially the Level 5+, are very high and this constitutes a good improvement since the last inspection.
67. Pupils have a very good attitude to their learning. Discussions with pupils revealed that they like their mathematics lessons because they are interesting, challenging and that their teachers make the lessons fun and enjoyable. The school monitors and identifies pupils who are gifted and talented in various areas of the school curriculum. Notably in mathematics there are pupils who have been identified as being very high achievers and these pupils' needs are planned for very well by the teachers to ensure they are working to their potential.
68. Junior pupils are set by ability into higher and lower groups for mathematics and this is having a positive impact on maintaining high standards and also the drive and challenge for more pupils to aim to achieve at a higher level in their learning. Pupils are also encouraged to self-assess where they are in their learning and identify targets they can aim for to move to a higher level. It is significant that in each set, pupils are subdivided into higher, middle and lower abilities groups and this also impacts upon the individual learning achievement within each group. However, the school has identified an area for development through their tracking of pupils and in Year 6 they have a higher, middle and lower set. An observation of a lower set lesson demonstrated that the group were enjoying their learning and were proud of their personal achievements to date. They were very keen to answer questions and demonstrate their good understanding of addition and subtraction. All pupils achieved well, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
69. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. However, there were a significant number of examples of very good teaching across the school. Teachers plan well in teams and good use is made of the guidance and structure of the National Numeracy Strategy. Assessment is very good because it is consistently applied and monitored by the school assessment manager. The quality of marking is good because it is consistent with the marking plan, displayed in the classroom, so that pupils fully understand the symbols and respond appropriately to their teacher's assessment comments. Very good support is given by the teaching assistants, who work as a co-ordinated team with the class teachers.
70. A problem solving scheme was introduced in the autumn term and the scrutiny of pupils' books, lesson observations and in talking to teachers and pupils confirm that the whole school has worked hard to improve pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in solving problems and this is beginning to impact upon standards.
71. Links with parents are very good. In response to parents' wishes to understand more about what their child is learning in school and to enable them to help their child at home the school has ensured regular parent meetings and mathematical workshops. There is also a scheme of mathematical games worksheets that give clear instructions on how parents can use them to the best advantage with their child. In addition, a termly programme of work and targets are sent

home to inform parents of what they will be learning and to support the weekly homework. Pupils have their own homework diaries and these are used well to support their learning.

72. Good use is made of ICT in mathematics lessons through the use of the interactive whiteboards, and in ICT lessons with a mathematics focus in the computer suite. However, evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' books and displays around the school demonstrates that the skills learned by pupils in the use of ICT in mathematics have not yet transferred into pupils' work. For example, pupils are not yet at the stage of independently making decisions as to when it would be more productive to use ICT than pencil and paper methods, such as handling data and creating graphs and diagrams.
73. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject manager has specific mathematical expertise and has regularly analysed test results, tracked pupils' progress as they move through the school, monitored pupils' books, teachers' planning and observed lessons to identify any areas of weakness. Any area identified for development has been supported by arranging staff meetings and training days and in attending mathematical courses. Good links have been maintained with other schools, especially for secondary transfer and the local cluster groups of schools to aim to share and develop good practice. The subject makes a very effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Mathematics across the curriculum

74. Use of mathematics across the curriculum is good overall and with the increase in electronic media there is a richer source of opportunities available to support the use of mathematics in other subject areas.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average.
- Standards by Year 6 are well above average.
- Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- Pupils are given very good opportunities to investigate for themselves.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

75. Inspection findings indicate that standards in Year 2 are above average. National test results and teacher assessments of 2004 showed that, by the end of Year 2, pupils attained standards that were above the national average and average when compared with similar schools. By the end of Year 6, standards were well above the national average and well above those of similar schools. Standards in Year 6 are well above average and all pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, against their prior attainment. There has been a significant improvement in standards since the last inspection.

76. The school provides many opportunities for investigative work. This is one of the main reasons why pupils achieve well. Pupils learn from an early age how to enquire, plan, ask scientific questions, predict, make careful observations and collect and explain their evidence clearly. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection, when scientific enquiry was identified as an area of weakness, and is having a very positive effect on standards of attainment. Pupils greatly enjoy the practical work and as a result have very good attitudes to their learning. For example, Year 1 pupils work enthusiastically as they share their ideas on how to set up an experiment to see whether plants need light to be healthy. In Year 2, pupils enthusiastically use hand lenses to investigate the seed head of a dandelion. Skills of scientific enquiry are systematically developed and well targeted to individual needs as the pupils progress through the school. As a result, when Year 6 pupils are revising their knowledge of light, the more capable pupils relish the challenge of investigating the fact that the angle of incidence equals the angle of reflection.
77. Activities are interesting and suitably challenging. This enhances pupils' progress well in scientific knowledge and understanding. For example, younger pupils enjoy exploring flowers and seeds. They express amazement when studying dandelion seed heads through magnifying lenses, with one pupil exclaiming delightedly to his partner, "Wow, that's amazing!" By Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of the parts of plants and the conditions necessary for their survival. They understand that animals and plants adapt to their different environments. Pupils describe how some materials change when heated. They are developing a good understanding of electricity. For example, they know that a bulb does not light up when the circuit is broken. By Year 6, pupils use keys to identify and classify living things. They understand well the importance of the food chain. Pupils learn about the properties of solids, liquids and gases and use terms such as reversible and irreversible to describe changes in materials. Older pupils confidently present their findings to the rest of the class.
78. Teaching and learning is good overall, with some very good features. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well planned to ensure that pupils make consistent progress in their knowledge and skills by building well on their previous learning. Teachers establish very good relationships and expect high standards of behaviour. As a result, pupils co-operate and behave well. Resources are well organised to enable pupils to settle quickly to their tasks, which ensures no time is wasted, and has a positive impact on learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported so that they are fully included in lessons and achieve well. Teachers focus clearly on the use of technical vocabulary ensuring pupils use the correct scientific vocabulary in discussions. Questioning is used well to enhance understanding and encourage the development of ideas. The interactive whiteboards are used well in classrooms to support pupils' learning and good use is made of ICT to record the results of pupils' findings in their investigative work.
79. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator took on the role with commitment and enthusiasm. She has a very clear knowledge of what needs to be done to move the subject forward. For example, she has revised the subject planning very effectively to ensure that scientific enquiry is given a high priority in lessons and experiments are conducted to a common format. As a result, the skills of scientific enquiry are becoming firmly embedded as pupils move through the school. Assessment procedures are very good and good use of these is made to plan the next steps in learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very good and pupils achieve well.
- Leadership and management of ICT are very good.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning.
- Good cross-curricular use of ICT in literacy, mathematics, science and use of the Internet.
- ICT accommodation and resources are very good.
- Not all pupils are independently transferring the skills learned in ICT lessons to their own learning in school.

Commentary

80. Standards are well above the national average by the ages of seven and 11 with very good achievement. The well-planned use of ICT and focused support of the teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. From September 2004, the leadership and management of ICT was organised with the deputy headteacher as the ICT leader and another member of staff as the key ICT teacher. Within this structure, specific areas of responsibility were agreed and have resulted in an excellent example of teamwork. In addition, two technicians visit the school, one as a consultant and one to support the maintenance of equipment, as part of the secondary school link partnership. With these roles in place, the drive towards making ICT a high profile subject to support the teaching and learning in the school has taken off and the school is now working to a well-focused three-year plan. This constitutes a very good improvement on the previous inspection. The very good curriculum, very good resources and very effective use of assessment have helped to raise standards to well above expectations, throughout the school.
81. The school is very well resourced with ICT equipment, including listening centres, cassette/CD players/recorders, overhead projectors, infant and junior computer suites and interactive whiteboards in some classrooms, with more planned for. The very good use of these resources has helped to make standards well above expectations. The junior stage computers are networked and plans are in place to network the whole school in the near future. New computers have been installed in the school library. However, it has been recognised that some computer systems need updating and funds have been made available to purchase new computer systems and four new interactive whiteboards to increase the opportunity for more classes to benefit from the teaching and learning support from the electronic media. The school has ensured that other bays of computer systems are available around the school for pupils' use and all staff have laptops, which were seen in regular use in classrooms. This has had a significant impact on pupils' learning and helped to raise standards for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
82. Displays around the school demonstrate a very good range of work covered by pupils, including the use of painting programs for computer art, word-processing, weather forecast printouts, multimedia presentation, time-line graphs and wrapping paper designs. Standards are well above expectations. Very good use is made of the digital camera to enhance children's work on display. The school has focused on the development of cross-curricular skills in ICT and the subject is well monitored. Observations of lessons demonstrated some very good cross-curricular work, especially in science. For example, one class was learning to produce their own flow diagram to illustrate the life cycle of a flower. In another lesson, pupils were learning to enter and organise data into a database in connection with their science topic on Habitats and the aim was to create a branching database on mini beasts. In both lessons pupils were very confidently using the programs and have developed very good skills in the

manipulation of computer hardware and software. Examples were seen of very effective use of the interactive whiteboards, including links with websites that can be accessed for programs that the whole class, groups and individual pupils can work on. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are very good overall, and ICT is used well to support their independent learning across the curriculum.

83. Teaching overall is good. The sample of teaching observed was not across the whole school, but in those lessons observed, teachers were very competent in the subject and could very confidently demonstrate the skills for their pupils. Some year teams have used their teaching skills very effectively by sharing subjects, with the most confident teaching all the ICT, while other teachers another subject area. Assessment is good overall and a new sheet for pupils' own evaluation is at present being trialled in Year 6.
84. The subject leader is providing very good educational direction for ICT. Priority areas have been fully identified for development in a clear, costed, comprehensive action plan. One of these areas was developing a school website for links with the community where parents can access the site and see what their children are doing and also use email to communicate between home and school. The quality of the school website is excellent. Lesson planning is good overall and monitoring of plans is undertaken to identify the ICT planning and cross-curricular links in each class and any lapse in ICT planning is picked up very quickly. Accommodation and resources for ICT are good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good overall. It is used effectively to support learning in art and design, literacy, history, geography, mathematics and science. Pupils are encouraged to use the Internet to research information for topics and there has been good improvement in its use to support independent learning.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above those normally seen.
- Teaching and learning ensure all pupils achieve well.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject.
- Improvement since the last inspection is good and the school has responded well to the judgements made in the previous inspection report.

Commentary

86. Standards by the time pupils are seven and 11 are above those usually seen. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well. Younger pupils learn to contrast different areas, such as their local surroundings in Walmley, with the Isle of Struay. They learn the difference between seaside and country and recognise that maps are representations of physical areas, showing both naturally occurring and man-made features. As pupils go up the school, younger pupils in the junior school show an increasing understanding of how maps are used. They identify sources of water round the world, areas of high and low rainfall and use and effect of water on human life. By the time pupils are in Year

6, they continue to develop their knowledge and use of maps, for example, by planning routes and learning about map contours. Independent learning skills are developed well for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, as they look for information on areas such as Eastern Europe. They also complete other projects, such as studying the M6 Toll Road planning and construction which is local to the school. This has provided valuable opportunities for pupils to debate any problems that arose. Good use has been made of ICT to support learning, especially in the junior phase. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- 87. Pupils are enthusiastic about geography and find it interesting and fun especially in active lessons where they watch videos of a different country such as Mexico and sample and compare English and Mexican food. Teaching is good. It is lively but carefully planned and makes best use of resources available. Teachers think very carefully about making the subject understandable for pupils, especially those who are less capable or have special educational needs. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their independent learning skills. It provides well for those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. All pupils have very good access to the subject and are presented with a wide range of learning opportunities.
- 88. The curriculum is good and has been improved since the last inspection. Geography is now taught as a subject in its own right so that pupils receive greater subject content and knowledge is built up consistently. Resources are just adequate for teaching but the school has identified the need to enrich these. The curriculum and resources have been identified for review on the school's development plan. Subject specific skills are taught adequately through the modules taught and the school has emphasised and given in-house training on mapping skills.
- 89. Subject leadership is good and good progress has been made since the last inspection. The subject leader is well aware of areas for improvement and has ensured that provision will be reviewed soon through the school development plan.

History

- 90. In history, it was possible to see only one lesson which showed teaching and learning to be good. ICT was well used to enhance this lesson and to develop skills of finding information from various sources. Pupils use the ICT suite to interrogate websites which hold information on their chosen topics. They use the websites effectively to find additional data on the Tudors, the Victorians and the Greeks. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good and they are very keen to research information. Analysis of pupils' work and discussion with pupils indicate that standards are above expectations by seven and 11.
- 91. Displays around the school and the pupil work books showed a wide range of historical study had been undertaken across the school. There was evidence of detailed work on Greece. The pupils had enjoyed looking at elements of Tudor times and comparing them with life in modern Britain.
- 92. The history element of the curriculum is well managed and resourced. Standards are above expectations by Year 2 and Year 6, because lessons are well planned and the curriculum is rich and stimulating. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English as an additional language, make good progress. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good because of good teaching and improved planning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

93. Only one lesson was seen in art and design. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about overall provision; however, the evidence available indicates that it is good. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work, spoke to pupils about what they had learnt in art and design and physical education, and looked at pupils' work.
94. It is evident from teachers' planning, the prospectus and discussions with pupils that work planned in art and design is interesting and varied. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. This lively approach was observed in a very good Year 4 art lesson, when pupils concentrated very hard to produce a picture of a journey. They were inspired by the introduction given by their teacher and took careful note of her thoughts on the skills and techniques they needed to use. They maintained very good attention as they produced their memory of a journey and related colour and shapes to it in a meaningful way. The pupils then collaborated very well with their partners to praise and evaluate each other's work. Pupils are supported well in their learning by teachers and support assistants. Displays are bright and colourful around the school. For example, Year 3 have investigated interesting patterns in textiles and created good quality fabric patterns, by printing their own designs onto fabric. Year 5 explored Patterns in Nature and discussed the work of famous artists before creating and decorating their own pots. The subject makes a very effective contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. There is very good involvement of pupils in their learning, and individual research skills are developed well.
95. The curriculum is good overall. It is broad, balanced, rich and relevant. It is enriched by experiences such as gallery sessions. There is good use of ICT to support pupils' learning and older pupils really enjoy visiting art galleries on the website. They enjoy clay work, marbling, collage work, two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils have completed imaginative collages, observational drawings of fruit and vegetables and good quality self-portraits. Standards are in line with expectations for pupils by age seven and above expectations for pupils by age 11. Evidence from a scrutiny of work shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. The subject leader is providing good, clear educational direction for the subject. The school has developed good systems for pupils to self-evaluate their work. The co-ordinator has identified the need to further develop a record keeping system of pupils' progress throughout the school. There has been good improvement in the quality of the curriculum, planning and pupil self-evaluation of their work since the last inspection. All pupils are included well in their learning throughout the school.

Design and technology

96. During the inspection, only a small number of lessons were seen in design and technology, therefore no overall judgement is made on provision. A scrutiny of work, photographs and displays show that design and technology is in line with that expected nationally at seven and 11. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well. A new subject leader took over the responsibility in January 2005 and in that time has made great strides in auditing the subject area and identifying areas for development. At the present time, a new policy is being written and assessment procedures have been updated with a new proforma for each year. Design and technology folders have

been monitored, including coverage of the scheme of work that is based on national guidance for the teaching and learning in the subject. The subject manager is collating evidence for a portfolio, including photographic evidence and work saved on computer disks. Design and technology has been identified as a priority for development in the school development plan for 2004-05 and funds have been earmarked to support this initiative.

97. Other displays and work ongoing include an investigation of pop-up books and designing pop-up pictures through the use of levers and linkages, designing playground equipment to improve the play environment, designing and making prototype slippers, moving monsters, picture frames, musical instruments, making puppets and in designing and making biscuits in food technology. However, limited work was seen that developed pupils' skills in using tools for working with rigid materials. Resources are satisfactory and the subject manager is at present auditing equipment in advance of purchasing new tools and consumables.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in music are above average by Year 6.
- Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- The co-ordinator provides very good leadership for this subject.

Commentary

98. Standards are above expectations by the time pupils are seven and 11. The quality of the curriculum is very good and the specialist teacher makes very effective use of assessment to track pupils' progress and to plan the next steps in their learning. The subject makes a very effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection in the use of ICT for composition work. The new music scheme inspires the pupils in their learning. For example, a group of Year 4 pupils worked very hard on composing music for launching their rocket into space. Their attitudes, values and personal qualities were very good, as they practised, refined and performed for the whole class.
99. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning was very good. There was a very good pace to the teaching and high expectations of behaviour. All pupils achieved very well, including the higher achieving pupils and those with special educational needs. Very good teaching in an orchestral session resulted in all pupils having a very good understanding of performing as a class orchestra. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve good standards in their composition work and demonstrate a competent understanding of rhythm.
100. Very good cross-curricular links are evident. All pupils are fully included in all activities. Concerts and performance make a highly valuable contribution to pupils' overall musical experience. For example, the junior choir performed *'The Journey'* at the Crescent Theatre and for the last two years have participated in a mass concert of a thousand children at the National Indoor Arena. The infant choir regularly sing at summer fayres, local churches and concerts, such as the Malachi concert in Sutton Town Hall. Pupils have the opportunity to learn a wide

range of instruments including recorders, stringed instruments, woodwind instruments, drums and keyboards. Both the junior choir and the orchestra perform at a special musical evening at the end of the school year.

101. The co-ordinator provides very good educational direction for the subject. Her enthusiasm inspires pupils to perform in instrumental groups and the choir. There is very good access and opportunity for all pupils. The quality of singing is very good throughout the school. There is a music room which is used very well to nurture and develop pupils' talents. For example, this is used very well by the specialist teacher, peripatetic teachers and pupils' instrumental groups for practising and refining their skills. The recorder ensemble frequently plays at assemblies and the orchestra sometimes plays for the children at lunchtimes.

Physical education

102. During the inspection, physical education was sampled so it is not possible to give an overall judgement on provision in this subject. A study of teachers' planning shows that appropriate coverage is made for the subject during the year. Two lessons were briefly observed; athletics in Year 5 and cricket in Year 6. In these two lessons, pupils were making good progress in the development of their techniques because the lessons were well structured and the teachers had secure knowledge of the subject. Pupils attend swimming lessons in Years 2, 3 and 4 and by the end of Year 4, teachers' records indicate that most pupils can swim the nationally recommended distance of 25 metres. Pupils' physical education is well enhanced through the very good provision for extra-curricular activities and pupils successfully participate in local sporting events, including football, netball and gymnastics. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well as a result of these very good opportunities. There are no pupils with physical difficulties and all pupils are fully included in all activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are very effective.
- The school has an effective programme and ensures a consistent approach in all classes.

Commentary

103. The school has a well-organised programme that provides very good guidance to teachers and promotes pupils' achievement well. It is delivered consistently and impacts very positively on their learning. The quality of teaching and learning is good and leads to good achievement and very good standards. This represents a good level of improvement since the previous inspection.
104. Very good opportunities are provided in all classes for 'circle time'⁴ to discuss matters concerning them and these are well taught. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well. Pupils indicate their appreciation for these opportunities. The programme includes drug awareness and

⁴ During 'circle time' children sit in a circle and discuss personal feelings and thoughts.

sex education. Healthy eating and keeping safe are other aspects of pupils' personal development that are explored effectively. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibilities for their own actions and the actions of others throughout the programme. For example, the school council approach is proving to be highly successful and pupils appreciate the opportunity to consider others as well as themselves. Their awareness of citizenship is promoted very well through a practical approach, including the work of the school council. This helps to develop pupils' committee and debating skills.

105. The leadership and management of this area are very good. The needs of all the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, have been very carefully considered, resulting in a very positive environment for learning, which is exciting and stimulating. Pupils on the school council and those who act as class councillors represent the views of all pupils and are making a very valuable contribution to school life.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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