

INSPECTION REPORT

UNSTONE ST MARY'S INFANT SCHOOL

Unstone

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112643

Headteacher: Mrs S Creer

Lead inspector: Mrs R Rodger

Dates of inspection: 14-15 June 2005

Inspection number: 268160

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infants
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 -7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	67
School address:	Crow Lane Unstone Dronfield Derbyshire
Postcode:	S18 4AL
Telephone number:	01246 412096
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Adlington
Date of previous inspection:	April 4 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Unstone St Mary's Infant school is situated in the small village of Unstone between Sheffield and Chesterfield. There are 67 pupils on roll, including 25 children who attend the Nursery part-time.

The area around the school is rural and mixed socially and economically. An average proportion of pupils are eligible for a free school meal. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including two pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need, is broadly average; their needs include profound and multiple learning, physical and moderate learning difficulties. The pupils are all white British, apart from a very few mixed race pupils. When children start in the Nursery, their attainment is typical. The school has several distinctive features: it has achieved the Healthy Schools, Artsmark, anti bullying and Basic Skills awards and it is nationally recognised for its good work in developing environmental awareness.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10347	Mrs R Rodger	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage English Geography History Music Special educational needs.
12536	Mrs S Bullerwell	Lay inspector	
2759	Mr D Sleightholme	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Unstone St Mary's is a popular, **good** school with some very good features. Pupils achieve very well and attainment is well above average in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The leadership of the headteacher is very good; she is well supported by the staff and the governing body. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils' personal development is very good. The value for money provided by the school is good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average by Year 2;
- provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good;
- the pupils' attitudes to learning are very good;
- the care, welfare and support for pupils are very good;
- links with parents, the community and other schools are very good;
- there are areas for improvement in the foundation stage.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards and achievement have improved. The quality of teaching and enrichment of the curriculum are better than they were. School improvement planning is much more rigorous than it was and all procedures relating to the governance of the school with regard to financial management are in place and operating effectively.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	B	C	A	A
writing	C	B	A	A
mathematics	C	E	B	B

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Achievement is very good. Standards have risen significantly in reading, writing and mathematics since the appointment of the current headteacher. This is shown in the table above. The 2005 national tests show that well above average standards in reading and writing have been maintained and standards in mathematics have improved and are now well above average. More able pupils are attaining the higher levels of which they are capable. Teacher assessments in science show that standards are above average. Standards are generally in line with nationally expected levels in information and communication technology, history, geography, religious education and art and design. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards and achievement in design and technology, physical education and music. By the time children leave the Foundation Stage, they are likely to exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. No judgement has been made on standards in the other areas of learning. **Pupils' personal qualities are very good.** Attitudes to learning are very good and behaviour is good. Pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** Attendance has improved since the last inspection and it is now broadly satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education** is **good**: **Teaching and learning** are **good**. In the good lessons, planning is very detailed and meets the needs of individual pupils well. Expectations are high and there is very good support for pupils with special educational needs. Equality of opportunity for all pupils is very good. Pupils' application and productivity in lessons are generally very good. The quality of the curriculum is good and it is effectively enriched by a range of out of school activities, visits and visitors to school, especially during the curriculum enrichment weeks held for numeracy, science, literacy, art and design and multicultural education. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, although there is a lack of continuity between the Nursery and Reception class. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, although there are weaknesses in the outdoor provision for children in the Reception class. Partnership with parents, the community and other schools is very good and has a good impact on pupils' learning. The care, welfare and safety of the pupils are given a high priority and are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The **leadership** and **management** of the school are **good**. The headteacher's leadership is very good and having a very good impact on raising standards and achievement and promoting the school in the local community. The headteacher is well supported by the governors, who are now much more involved in the school than they were in the past. The subject leaders take their responsibilities seriously and they are beginning to have an impact on raising standards. However, the lack of a leader for the Foundation Stage is a weakness that has arisen due to staffing changes in recent months. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils are very happy in the school and enjoy all the activities that are available to them, including the visits and visitors. Parents are entirely happy with all aspects of the school: they value the accessibility of the staff and the very good quality information and involvement in their children's learning that have taken place recently.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the continuity between the Nursery and Reception class;
- appoint a leader for the Foundation Stage;
- explore ways of allowing the older children in the Reception class access to the outdoor environment.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement throughout the school is very good. When pupils start in Year 1 many exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. They continue to make very good progress in Years 1 and 2 and, as a result, standards are well above average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is generally typical to that usually found.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving in Year 2 and are now well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.5 (16.2)	15.8(15.7)
writing	16.0 (15.7)	15.8 (15.7)
mathematics	16.8 (15.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. There were only 12 pupils in the Year 2 class in 2004 therefore caution is needed in drawing firm conclusions from the results. There was a marked improvement in standards in 2004 compared to the previous year and current standards are above those of 2004 in the recently completed 2005 national tests. The overall trend in the national test results in the past four years has shown a marked improvement in the past two years. All of which supports the overall judgement that standards are improving and achievement for all pupils, irrespective of their age, ability, ethnicity or gender is very good. Standards overall are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. More able pupils achieved especially well in the most recent tests in reading and mathematics with almost half of the class attaining the higher Level 3. There is good improvement in science and standards are above average. Standards have improved because of the impact of the training for staff, new resources, involvement of parents and the rigorous expectations of the recently appointed headteacher.
2. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well and many reach nationally expected levels of attainment in mathematics by Year 2 and close to that in reading and writing. This reflects the very good support they receive and the additional work they have in small groups. Parents are very complimentary about this aspect of the school's work.
3. When children start school in the Nursery, their attainment is generally average. They achieve well in all areas of learning, so that by the time they enter Year 1 standards are above average with many children exceeding the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical

development. Judgements on the standards in other subjects were based on discussions with pupils, checking their work, records of their progress and displays. Overall, standards are in line with national expectations in art and design, geography, history, information and communication technology and religious education. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in design and technology, physical education and music.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and relationships are very good. Their behaviour is good. Improvements in attendance this year have been good. Pupils' personal development is very good overall, as their spiritual and cultural development is good and their moral and social development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good and as a result pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and behave well.
- The national environmental awareness award is well deserved and the work done supports pupils' personal development.
- Attendance has improved significantly this year.

Commentary

4. Pupils work and play happily as they enjoy being with their friends and teachers. Mutual respect is modelled very well by all adults in school and promoted by teachers' expectations of attitude and effort. Pupils are encouraged, from when they first join the school, to work sensibly together, have respect for themselves and others and to behave well. The 'credit card points' that lead to a reward from the 'golden treasure box' are effective in motivating pupils to try to do their best at all times.
5. Pupils' personal development is very well exemplified by their involvement in a project to make the playground more environmentally friendly. Linked to several curriculum areas and planned with the support of staff, parents, governors and community members, pupils designed and made a sensory garden. They took part in flower growing competitions, sowing seeds and planting trees. Pupils recycled paper and clothes which raised funds for school and collected used stamps for a hospice and sent seeds to Africa following their harvest festival. Over the course of a year the pupils have learned about the importance of caring for the environment, about how to work as part of a team, and how to help others less fortunate than themselves. The school works hard to ensure that the pupils learn about cultural diversity, for example, during the multicultural week pupils worked with an Indian dancer, an African screen printer and a Japanese potter. Subjects such as geography and religious education develop pupils' awareness of the lives and traditions of the cultures of other countries. Involvement and partnership in local traditions such as the yearly well-dressing effectively celebrate community involvement.
6. For the last three years attendance has been well below the national average. This year, due to the good procedures and the support of parents, there has been good improvement and attendance is now 94.3 per cent. No pupil has been excluded from school in the last year. Punctuality is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is good with all statutory requirements met. Accommodation overall is satisfactory: although the outdoor provision for the older Foundation Stage children is unsatisfactory. The care and welfare of pupils is very good. Links with parents and the community are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is good overall. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of English and mathematics is good and it has resulted in good learning.
- The promotion of equality of opportunity is very good.
- The organisation and management of classes to meet the needs of single age groups is good.
- Improvements to assessment are good.
- Marking does not provide pupils with sufficient guidance on how to improve their work.

Commentary

7. All the teachers, apart from one, had only been teaching their classes for the two weeks prior to the inspection. The quality of pupils' work and recent improvements in standards has been taken into account in reaching the judgment that teaching is good. The senior leadership of the school has given a high priority to improving the teaching of English and mathematics in the past two years. The impact of the actions taken has been good. Particular features of the good teaching and the good learning in English and mathematics include:
 - good, consistent planning formats that identify what specific groups of pupils have to do;
 - clearly displayed learning objectives that are referred to at the start of the lessons and evaluated at the end;
 - high expectations and an appropriate level of challenge for pupils, especially in mathematics;
 - very good support for pupils with special educational needs, and overall effective deployment of teaching assistants;
 - a high priority is given to homework;
 - good levels of interest and concentration by pupils who enjoy learning;
 - pupils are given time to discuss their views with a partner before answering questions.
8. In the small amount of unsatisfactory teaching and some aspects of the satisfactory teaching, there was a lack of understanding of the most effective strategies to use to help pupils learn new skills and understanding. This can be partly attributed to the lack of experience of some staff of the year groups they were teaching and was not generally reflected in the good quality work produced by pupils in their books. There are sometimes too few opportunities for independent learning in the class of older Foundation Stage children because of the small size of the classroom. There is also a

lack of continuity in planning within the Foundation Stage and too little account taken of the ways in which staff can support learning outdoors.

9. Small numbers in each year group mean that pupils have to work in mixed age groups for some of the time. Due to the good financial management of the governors and the vision of the headteacher pupils are always taught in their year group for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. This is having a good impact on improving achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
10. Assessment is good and overall there has been a good improvement since the last inspection in this aspect of the school's work. An effective system to track the progress of individual pupils as they go through school ensures that those requiring additional support are identified. The quality of marking is more variable; it is good in mathematics, but there is too little account taken of the pupils' individual targets in written work to help them know what to do to improve or whether they have met their target.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	12	6	1	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good for pupils of all levels of ability. It is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. There is a good enrichment programme. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, although the provision for outdoor learning for children in the older Foundation Stage class is unsatisfactory and some classes are very small.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Special curriculum weeks help to raise the profile of subjects and pupils' acquisition of skills.
- Provision for personal, social, health and education is very good.
- The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good.
- The good enrichment programme includes very good opportunities for pupils to take part in arts experiences.

Commentary

11. The planning of the curriculum is carefully matched to the organisational arrangements for single age group teaching of literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology and mixed age classes for other subjects. The school's success in achieving high standards in core subjects demonstrates that there is very good equality of opportunity for pupils of all levels of attainment.
12. Teachers have successfully adapted national guidance to meet the local circumstances of the school. In doing so, they ensure that the statutory requirements

for each National Curriculum subject and the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are met. Each year special weeks that focus on specific subjects are organised, for example, a mathematics week was planned as part of a school development priority to improve pupils' attainment in this subject. The success of this was evident in the range of activities provided for pupils, the good response of parents and the use of funds raised to improve resources for learning. Arts, multicultural and science weeks have also been organised. The governors have agreed that sex education and drugs education will not be formally taught. However, science teaching is used to develop pupils' knowledge of growing up and of dangerous substances such as medicines.

13. The school makes good use of the accommodation but this poses challenges especially in the Foundation Stage where provision for learning outdoors is unsatisfactory for the older children in the Reception class. There are imminent proposals to build a quiet area for the younger Foundation Stage children in the Nursery but this will have a limited impact on the provision for the older children. Currently, there is some discontinuity between the provision in the Nursery and Reception class. The Reception class is geared towards Year 1 because it has some of those children for most afternoons. This is reflected in the planning which is focused on the National Curriculum and not the Foundation Stage curriculum. While this is appropriate for the children at the end of the Foundation Stage it is less relevant when they first transfer from the Nursery and need to have time for learning through play and independent learning as well as teacher-led sessions.
14. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good. Since her appointment, the headteacher, as co-ordinator for special educational needs, has completely reviewed the provision and put in place early identification procedures for the Foundation Stage and well produced individual education plans. Pupils' progress is regularly checked and as a result the pupils make very good progress.
15. The provision for out of school activities is good and includes football coaching, recorders, Spanish and ballet dancing. An arts week provided a very good opportunity for pupils to work with visiting artists representing a wide cultural diversity and a theatre company performed in school. The school was very recently awarded the Artsmark in recognition of their good work in the arts.
16. Staffing levels are satisfactory including the number of teaching assistants employed to support pupils with special educational needs. The members of staff are appropriately trained. Resources for learning are good overall and are used well.

Care, guidance and support

The systems in place to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are very good. Pupils' access to well-informed support and guidance is very good and encourages them to achieve well. The school values the views of pupils and it has made very good progress in seeking and acting upon these views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school council is very effective by giving pupils involvement in the work of the school.
- Pupils' personal well-being is a priority of the school.
- Members of staff take very good care of pupils.

Commentary

17. Members of staff have worked hard to introduce a school council suitable for pupils up to the age of seven. The system in place is very effective in involving all pupils in a meaningful way. Since its introduction, last year, pupils have voted democratically, completed a survey of what they like in school and what they would improve, discussed school matters, such as improving the playground, and they have evaluated the programme of activities held during science week. Pupils have learnt that adults value their opinion and the suggestions they make, this boosts their self-esteem and confidence. The opportunity to be 'playground friends' or class monitors is also developing their moral and social understanding and helping them to be responsible members of the school community.
18. In this village school, members of staff know pupils and their families very well due to the effective partnership with parents. This enables staff to give very good support and guidance to meet the individual needs of pupils. The school received the Health Promoting school award. Healthy lifestyles are promoted through the availability of fruit, water, and through planned playground activities that promote fitness. Pupils can explain the benefits of taking part in 'walk to school week' and were very pleased to receive a plaque for their efforts from the Lady Mayor during a special school assembly.
19. Procedures for health and safety, risk assessment and child protection matters are well known by staff and very effectively adhered to. The health and safety school governor completes an annual audit and action plan with staff. Members of staff attend training to meet the specific medical needs of pupils. Visitors such as the police and school nurse give informative talks to pupils about personal safety. All of which ensures that pupils are safe and very well cared for when in school.
20. Induction arrangements for the pupils into the Foundation Stage are good. Parents are encouraged to attend 'taster' sessions prior to starting and there is a short, staggered entry into the Nursery as soon as the children are three.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents, the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents think highly of the school and its work.
- The school is at the heart of the community.
- The school has productive links with other schools and colleges.

Commentary

21. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good and improved since the last inspection. Parents are very happy with the aims and values the school promotes and the way in which the school meets the needs of their children. Communication with parents is very good. The daily contact with a teaching assistant, who has been specifically trained in parent partnership and family support matters, is much appreciated by parents. The school holds regular curriculum meetings, attended by over a third of parents, to keep parents informed and to enable them to help with homework. Annual questionnaires help the school provide

appropriate information to support the very good partnership with parents. Parents appreciate the opportunity to read with their children in class before school starts each day, which means pupils settle well.

22. Teachers make very effective use of the school's links with the local and wider community to promote pupils' learning through giving them first-hand experiences. 'Well dressing' is a cultural experience that enables pupils to learn about local traditions. Strong links exist with the local church through membership of the governing body, leading assemblies and involving pupils in church activities. Church members run the weekly after school fun club for pupils. Visitors and visits make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, for example, a Christian magician and coaches from two local football clubs.
23. Educational links are very effective. Close links with the local junior school and other schools in the local school improvement group allow staff to share expertise and organise joint bids for funding and training for staff. The transfer arrangements to the partner junior school are very effective. Pupils begin work in Year 2 and complete it when they move to the junior school. The school regularly hosts initial teacher training students and nursery nurses, which means more adults in school to support pupils' learning. A specialist college provides technical support for information and communication technology.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She is well supported by the governors who provide good practical and strategic support. The leadership and management of other staff are developing satisfactorily but there is no overall leader of the Foundation Stage and this is a weakness.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The vision and focus of the headteacher on raising standards is having a very good impact.
- Governors are well involved in school.
- Leadership of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The lack of leadership of the Foundation Stage is a weakness.

Commentary

24. The headteacher leads well by example. She is a very good communicator, has clear views for the strategic direction of the school and has raising standards and improving the quality of the curriculum very much at the heart of school improvement. In the two years since she took up her post she has introduced a range of effective systems to raise standards in English and mathematics and brought about a strong sense of teamwork. These are well reflected in the school improvement plan which is regularly evaluated. This has been good improvement since the last inspection. The end of year review gave a high priority to improving pupils' learning that is well reflected in the improvements in standards this year. The quality of teaching and learning is systematically checked through lesson observations, checks of pupils' recorded work and the scrutiny of planning. The climate for learning throughout the school is good; this is an improvement since the last inspection.
25. Governors have a greater involvement in the school than they did at the time of the last inspection. They are confident, knowledgeable and encouraged to contribute in meetings. They hold the headteacher to account for the achievements of pupils as well as providing practical support. A regular programme of lesson observations by some of the governors serves to keep them well informed about new developments. The structure of the governing body has been reviewed and there are now committees for finance, curriculum, admissions and personnel. Governors are particularly instrumental in developing the very good links with the community. They value the openness and encouragement they are given to be involved in the school.
26. As the special educational needs and literacy leader, the headteacher has played a pivotal role in raising standards in English. She also acts as the mathematics, religious education and information and communication technology leader in a temporary capacity as well as teaching every morning. All systems to track the progress of pupils with special educational needs and to involve parents in termly reviews are now in place and running very smoothly. Parents are very pleased with the support for their children. Other subjects, with the exception of personal, social and health education, are satisfactorily led because of the shared responsibilities for checking planning and teaching. The leadership of personal, social and health education is a recent development that is having a good impact on raising pupils' awareness of ways to improve the school environment and to learn very good social skills, for example through the responsibilities provided by the school council. The lack of a leader for the Foundation Stage is a result of the recent staffing changes. The headteacher has plans to rectify this situation.
27. A prudent review of the staffing situation to ensure the best value in terms of outcomes for the pupils has taken place. This came about following a review of the budget to remedy a deficit resulting from a funding error. There is minimum disruption to teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 and the decision to have single age classes for the teaching of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is having a good impact on raising standards. The finance committee of the governing body works hard to ensure best value principles are applied to all aspects of the school's work.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	196,563
Total expenditure	193,554
Expenditure per pupil	2,888

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	1,902
Balance carried forward to the next	4,911

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

28. Children start in the Nursery when they are three years old and attend part-time until they transfer to the Reception class when they are four. Their induction is staggered over a short period and the children are invited to spend time in the Nursery before their official starting date. The involvement of parents at this stage is satisfactory; there are no home visits, nor do parents contribute to their children's assessment when they start in the Nursery. Children who have attended other forms of day care or pre-school may have records from the providers to bring to the Nursery. There were good opportunities for parents to stay and support their children at the start of sessions during the inspection. The current staffing structure is very new, with the Nursery teacher only one week in the Nursery after several years teaching Year 2 and the Reception class teacher was previously in the Nursery.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the time children leave the Foundation Stage, they are very confident learners.
- Children listen and pay attention well.
- Behaviour is very good.

Commentary

29. Personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority for the three and four year olds. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Children are safe, secure, and well supported by teachers, staff and students both indoors and outdoors in the Nursery. They work well in small groups on clearly prepared tasks, for example, at the start of the Nursery session, children choose from activities to work with their parents. Relationships with each other and their peers are very good. There are sometimes too few opportunities for the older children in the Reception class to take responsibility and be independent because of the space limitations in the classroom.
30. Children learn to sit and listen in small groups. This is more effective when the children are encouraged to take part, as they did in a music making session, than in a larger group listening to a story. Behaviour is very good. Children quickly learn to understand the rewards system where they have to gain 20 credits and then choose a toy to play with from the golden box. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and the children are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. Achievement is good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well, so by the time they leave the Foundation Stage many have exceeded the early learning goals.
- Planning is good.

Commentary

31. Some of the very recent developments in the Nursery put in place by the teacher who has only been there for a week are good and give a high priority to developing basic literacy skills. For example, all children are encouraged to make a mark or write their name next to the name card to register when they start their sessions. Generally, the children are articulate and converse easily with one another, even those children who have only been in the Nursery for a few days. Good account was taken of the range of abilities in the Reception class as they worked in three groups to write the first part of the story of the *Bear Hunt* in their own words. More able children used capital letters and full stops with accuracy as they wrote several sentences. Other children wrote single words with support to describe the bears. Overall almost half of the children were exceeding the early learning goals for writing and almost all for communication skills. Achievement is good.
32. A newly introduced planning system is in place for the Nursery. This has many good features, especially the account taken of the differing needs of the younger children and the older children. This system has the potential to cover all of the Foundation Stage to aid continuity and progression in children's learning. Planning for the Reception class is very closely linked to the subjects of the National Curriculum because many children are exceeding the early learning goals. This is generally appropriate for some aspects, but does not take enough account of the opportunities for independent learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Bright and bold number resources contribute to good learning in the Nursery.
- The use of workbooks to record calculations in the Reception class is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

33. Large, colourful numbers are used to help younger children learn to count to six. A group doing this confidently counted to 10 in the Nursery and some were able to add the next number in the sequence because of well timed interventions by the teacher. At other times, children learn the sequence of numbers by counting as they sing. Using two wooden sticks they learned some basic positional language as they kept up a beat in time to the songs they sang.
34. Learning in the Reception class builds fairly effectively on what has happened before. Once children move away from the carpet sessions, where they are appropriately supported, many find great difficulty in understanding what to do to next as they face, for example, a page of partially completed calculations in their work books. Lack of practical apparatus and encouragement to try to record the calculation themselves limits learning and leads to several misconceptions that are not recognised by the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs working with the teddy counters and a teaching assistant made very good progress as they counted on using the counters to help. Overall, the teaching in the Reception class is satisfactory, but it is good in the Nursery. Assessment records indicate that several children are likely to exceed the

early learning goals in this area of learning, although this was not always evident in the work seen. Overall achievement is satisfactory.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

35. Too little evidence was seen to make an overall judgement on provision and standards in this area of learning. General observations of displays and a geography and science lesson in the Reception class suggested that coverage of this area is satisfactory. Older children are taught alongside Year 1 children and they follow National Curriculum plans for geography and science. There are effective strategies to promote awareness of the diversity of cultures. Good use of whiteboard technology meant that children could see accurate photographs of life in Africa and begin to be aware that other cultures have different traditions. Younger children in the Nursery follow a topic-based approach that links several areas of learning, for example, they were learning about the seaside. They used their own photographs to discuss where they go for their holidays and began to understand that places are different. Children also learn about other people's work by having a role play area to reflect the work of the travel agent. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory, for example, as children drew sunny day pictures.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

36. No overall judgement was made on provision in this area of learning. Nursery children have frequent access to an outdoor area, but the older Reception aged children generally only have access to the outdoor area at playtimes and lunchtimes. This is insufficient. In the Nursery there are clear outdoor play plans that indicate what equipment is to be provided day by day. This could be usefully extended by indicating those that are self sustaining and those that require adult support to extend learning. The young children who have only been in the Nursery for a few days enjoyed the freedom of climbing and sliding. The outdoor area for the Nursery is appropriately laid out with the climbing area separated from the wheeled toy and running area. The younger children are provided with good opportunities to develop physically outside.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

37. This area of learning was sampled. In both the Nursery and the Reception class there are well planned role play areas that reflect what the children are learning about. For example, in the Reception class, despite the limitations of the accommodation, there is a well resourced role play area set up as a game reserve and well resourced with binoculars, sun hats, camouflage and photographs of African animals. Children in the Nursery have access to painting and model making and have a travel agents set up to develop imaginative play as they decide where to go for their holidays.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good improvements in standards and achievement in reading and writing.

- Assessment systems are rigorous.
- Involvement of parents in helping their children learn to read is very good.
- Very good leadership.

Commentary

38. Improvements in standards since the last inspection are good. Based on attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage and the recently completed national tests in reading and writing, more than two thirds of pupils made better than expected progress. More than half of the pupils attained the higher Level 3 in reading. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. They are well supported because of the rigorous assessment systems introduced since the appointment of the headteacher, who is also the literacy leader. Standards in speaking and listening are very good. Pupils are articulate, listen carefully and talk confidently about their interests. Standards in reading and writing are very good and have improved in the past year.
39. Pupils are assessed at key points throughout school: following the compulsory end of Foundation Stage assessment, pupils are assessed at the end of Year 1 and then have a termly writing assessment. Detailed records of progress are kept to check progress in reading. Pupils are set well focused targets to help them know how to improve their work. The quality of teaching is good overall. Features that are consistent in all classes, include:
 - clear displays and explanation of 'what we are learning today' which means that pupils know what to do;
 - expectations are high, questions such as '*can you include speech marks too?*' encourage good learning;
 - new vocabulary is explained and pupils are encouraged to use terms such as *consonant*;
 - planning takes account of the range of needs in classes and pupils with additional needs are very well supported by teaching assistants.
40. Leadership of the subject is very good. In response to concerns of parents and colleagues about reading, a number of well tested systems were quickly put into place. A meeting for parents was held to explain the expectations of the reading scheme and their role in supporting their children's progress, pupils were given home/school reading diaries and reading games were provided for the youngest children. All parents are invited to spend short periods reading with their child in school every day. A shared checking of teaching and learning is now in place and has been effective in sharing good practice. A mobile library visits the school fortnightly for Years 1 and 2 pupils to borrow a book. This supplements the good resources already held in the school library and in classes.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

41. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to write outside literacy lessons. Pupils wrote recounts and narrative as an extension to personal, social and health education. For example, pupils wrote, '*Have you got a friend like mine? If you do please tell me!*', which shows how well they are learning to write in a questioning style. They also carefully listed information about insects in the contents page at the start of their topic books. Pupils wrote imaginatively about events in school and teaching effectively re-enforced understanding of time connectives and good sentence structure in Year 2. A

writers' week held last year further reinforced the importance of literacy through the stimuli of storytelling, poetry reading and discussions with a children's author.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in Year 2.
- Pupils' achieve very well.
- Teaching is good.
- Parents provide good support to pupils' learning.
- Subject leadership is good.

Commentary

42. Standards in all aspects of mathematics are well above average in Year 2. The attainment of these pupils was broadly average when they entered school; they have therefore made good progress in Years 1 and 2. With almost half of the pupils currently in Year 2 attaining well above average standards and no pupil below average this is a considerable improvement on the 2004 results for 7 year olds. It means that standards in mathematics now compare favourably with those attained in reading and writing. The school assessment data shows girls' and boys' attainment is similar, and that pupils, including those who have special educational needs, achieve very well.

43. The inspection has established that the reasons for this are:

- teachers have high expectations of the standards that pupils should reach;
- teachers make good use of a core scheme including the complementary information and communication technology software;
- lessons cover a wide broad range of mathematical experiences including investigations;
- pupils enjoy the lessons, most want to learn and this leads to very good achievement;
- The headteacher and subject leader identified a dip in pupils' performance in mathematics, took action to raise standards and this is now benefiting pupils as they progress through the school.

Taken together these actions have led to good improvement since the findings of the previous inspection.

44. A discussion with pupils provided evidence that most could recognise numbers beyond 100 and could say for example '378'. More able pupils recognised numbers beyond 1000. They identify missing numbers in a sequence and calculate mentally the difference between two numbers. Pupils name two-dimensional shapes such as a triangle and square; some identify a cube. They recognise the time on a clock face; more able pupils use four digit numbers such as 14.20 hours.

45. Teaching is consistently good with priority given to the acquisition of basic skills. Teachers' good subject knowledge and clear explanations help pupils to order numbers correctly and calculate confidently. They use these skills to carry out surveys and solve simple problems. For example, pupils carried out an investigation to determine preferences in crisp flavours and used the data to produce a block graph. In a good lesson for pupils in Year 1 the teacher skilfully provided tasks that were well matched to pupils' prior attainment. The pupils were well

supported by a teaching assistant and student who had been well briefed on the expected outcome. Teachers have set pupils individual targets very clearly. These are written into their books and reviewed regularly.

46. The school has successfully encouraged parents to be involved in helping their children to make progress. During a successful mathematics focus week parents supported mathematics activities including sponsored sums, counting and sorting activities and measuring skills to bake cakes for sale in school. The provision of mathematics homework is a planned extension of lesson activities and makes an effective contribution to raising standards.
47. The subject leader provides good leadership. She has worked with the headteacher to analyse pupils' results, observed lessons and given advice, checked planning and scrutinised pupils' completed work. These actions have made a positive contribution to the improving picture in mathematics.

Numeracy across the curriculum

48. There are regular opportunities for pupils to practise their number skills through work in other subjects. Pupils in Year 1 used information and communication technology software to practise counting in tens and a floor turtle to measure a route across the floor to a chosen destination. Pupils regularly use counting and measuring skills to obtain results in science experiments.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good.
- Teaching is good.
- Pupils enjoy science activities including those linked to visits and visitors.
- Subject leadership is good.

Commentary

49. One lesson was observed. This, together with evidence of pupils' past work and their evaluations of a science week recorded in their school council books confirmed most pupils achieve well, make good progress by Year 2 and reach standards above the expectations for their age. Regular assessments comprehensively cover all elements of the science programme. Pupil progress records show that 9 out of 19 pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining above average standards and confirm the teaching of a good range of science experiences including regular experiments.
50. By Year 2 most pupils can classify food into categories of meat, fruit and vegetables. They know how useful electricity is and that it must be used safely. More able pupils can draw a simple electric circuit including a battery and bulb correctly. Pupils have compared natural and synthetic fibres and they have investigated materials that will stretch, bend and twist. They learned about friction by adjusting the slope on a ramp to see how far a toy car would travel. Pupils respond well to the opportunity to experiment and investigate. Year 1 pupils enjoyed visiting a park to feed and stroke the animals and using magnifying glasses to look closely at snails, moths, worms and woodlice. Pupils in Year 2 enjoyed learning about the life cycle of a frog, making books about insects and taking part in the mini-beast hunt. A visitor brought an owl to school to talk about its features and lifestyle; this proved to have wide appeal to pupils of all ages.
51. These engaging topics and interesting activities are typical of good teaching over time that covers a good range of scientific themes. Teachers use resources, such as the sensory garden, well and they organise investigations regularly. A lesson for Year 2 pupils began well because the teacher used photographs of pupils as a starting point for their learning about classifying using characteristics such as gender, height and colour of hair. A lesson promoting the value of regular exercise and the dangers of medicine linked well to pupils' personal and social development.
52. Leadership and management are effective. The subject leader has observed the teaching of a number of science themes and regularly monitors planning. Pupils' completed work is analysed and assessments are completed regularly. The tracking of individual pupils' progress is a good feature of assessment. The leader has identified developing the use of information and communication technology through the new facilities as a step in subject development that is likely to impact positively on pupils' progress. The governors have supported the teaching by prioritising funding so that the single age staffing arrangements for literacy and numeracy sessions are extended to one afternoon each week for science and information and communication technology. The good progress made by most pupils and the standards achieved are evidence of the positive impact of this decision.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is overall satisfactory but includes good features.
- Literacy and numeracy lessons are enhanced by information and communication technology experiences.

Commentary

53. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. The evidence gained, together with that from observation of pupils using information and communication technology in small groups and a portfolio of past work, showed standards are broadly in line with those expected for 7 year olds. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. In Year 2 most pupils control a mouse to make things happen and type on a keyboard to write simple sentences and labels. Given the broadly average attainment of pupils entering Year 1 most achieve satisfactorily by Year 2. Pupils' past work shows teaching has ensured most have made satisfactory progress in learning how to write a letter using a simple layout, construct a list and add images to text. Pupils enthusiastically programmed an electronic floor turtle to move from one point to another. They remembered the sequence of commands and could predict well the number of moves needed to steer the turtle accurately to the chosen destination.
54. Teaching is good. It is founded on good subject knowledge, clear delivery and good preparation of resources. The pupils enjoy lessons because of the teachers' straightforward, effective approach. Pupils responded well to prompts in a computer puzzle game. They then applied this new learning when writing questions about another pupil in the class to be answered only in the same format of replies.
55. The main impact of the satisfactory leadership is the improvement in information and communication technology resources for teachers and pupils. As a result, a teacher provided a slideshow of the African landscape to enrich a geography lesson. The provision of laptops has improved pupils' access to computers. A copy of the school policy on access to the Internet has been issued to parents and signed by them and their children.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

56. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils wrote up science experiments and recorded the progress of seeds germinating and growing into small plants. They use software menu tools to produce artistic images and designs. New software has been purchased that is compatible with the core scheme for mathematics and this helps pupils to consolidate their learning. Pupils'

HUMANITIES

57. History and geography were sampled. One **geography** lesson was seen in Year 1. Pupils' work was checked and discussions were held with the subject leaders. The scheme of work for geography and **history** is based on the nationally approved scheme over two years so there is no repetition of topics. Good use is made of the local environment and visits to other localities such as Chatsworth and Graves Park to provide pupils with first hand experience of historical and geographical features. Geographical skills are taught and pupils are introduced to simply drawn maps. There was some weaknesses in subject knowledge, shown by the lack of challenge in the

one lesson observed. Pupils audibly groaned when asked to draw a map from home to school and mark features they photographed because they had done this before. Recent developments in assessment mean that individual progress can be checked regularly. The tracking information shows a much smaller number of pupils exceeding expectations than in other subjects which may indicate an overall lack of challenge.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assemblies are used well to extend pupils' understanding of religious themes.

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Commentary

58. Only one lesson of religious education was observed so secure judgments about the quality of teaching are not made. However, scrutiny of work produced by Year 2 pupils and a school assembly provided useful evidence about overall provision. It confirms pupils have made satisfactory progress in extending their understanding of religious ideas and practices and standards are generally in line with the expectations for Year 2 pupils in the agreed syllabus. Checking the content of pupils' books against the specification of the locally agreed syllabus shows pupils receive a programme that meets statutory requirements.
59. By Year 2, pupils have visited the village church to learn about Christian symbols such as a cross and candle and features such as the altar and font. They have followed the story of the Creation, learned the Lord's Prayer and the significance of religious days such as Shrove Tuesday. The requirement to provide pupils with an understanding of one other world religion has been satisfactorily met through teaching about Hindu traditions including rangoli designs and mendhi patterns.
60. Pupils are regularly taught Bible stories, the parable of the Good Samaritan featuring in a lesson for a class covering pupils in Year 1. Through this story pupils were encouraged to think about the importance of caring for each other. They made puppets to represent characters from the story and this helped them to remember the key events when the story was retold at the end of the lesson.
61. A visiting parish children's worker led a school assembly on the story of Zaccheus. The pupils, who were very well behaved, listened intently as the assembly promoted the importance of making a good choice, the value of friendship, and they learned how to be fair and honest. The leadership of the subject is very recent. She has only assumed responsibility for religious education this year and has therefore had limited time to make a positive impact on provision. However, she has attended training and has used this knowledge to give direction on how the syllabus can be implemented in a small school setting. Lesson plans and guidance to match the two-year topic cycle have been developed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. No art and design, design and technology, physical education or music lessons were observed during this inspection. Consequently judgments are not made for teaching and pupils' achievement. In **art and design**, pupils mix colours such as combinations of red, black and white to produce a range of pinks and greys and they use these to practise painting techniques. They used pencils and photographs to draw their own versions of well-known buildings such as Tower Bridge, Windsor Castle and the Taj Mahal. Pupils use coloured pencils to produce satisfactory standards of shading to illustrate their healthy eating project. School displays, photographs of an arts focus week and a discussion with pupils indicated that standards are broadly in line with

what is expected for the pupils' age and that pupils have acquired an appropriate range of skills.

63. In Year 2 in **design and technology** pupils made a bear with moving arms and legs by fixing its limbs with paper fasteners. They also learned how to make a simple winding mechanism. They used this design principle to make a handle and axle as moving parts for a model wishing well. In food technology pupils have learned how to combine healthy foods into a salad. Pupils combined their understanding of history with their artistic skills when they assembled a collage depicting a seaside scene from the past. They also used information and communication technology software to recreate their impressions of a busy day. In work linked to religious education pupils successfully used tissue paper to make effective stained glass windows. Photographs of a focus week depict pupils enjoying working alongside specialist artists including a Japanese potter, an African block printer and an Indian dancer. As a contrast to this multi-cultural dimension pupils also extended their knowledge of art when they traced their local cultural heritage by learning how to dress a well.
64. No lessons were observed in **physical education**. However a discussion with Year 2 pupils confirmed they access a satisfactory range of activities including gymnastics, games and dance. Pupils in Year 2 described how, at the start of lessons, they take part in brisk warm up activities including running, jumping and stretching their arms. Similarly at the end of lessons pupils know what is meant by activities that help them cool down. Pupils know that these lessons help them to be fit and healthy. They described how they have learned how to throw, catch and bounce a ball and how they have improved and can now do this with one hand. They described learning to balance; one more able pupil referring to linking movements into a sequence. Pupils also reported enjoying taking part in country dancing and in playing *stick in the mud*, a tag game on the school yard.
65. No **music** was observed during the inspection. The leader has regularly checked planning. The school follows the LEA scheme and supplements this with the nationally approved scheme of work. Pupils listen to music in assembly and sing reasonably tunefully.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High priority is given to promoting a healthy lifestyle.
- Very good citizenship is promoted through the school council.
- Leadership is good and is having a good impact on provision.

Commentary

66. Personal, social, health education themes are promoted very well. By accessing external advice the school has successfully introduced practices of the Health Promoting Schools initiative such as the fruit scheme and playground games to encourage physical fitness. The school has been formally recognised with an Eco Award for its work in promoting environmental themes including recycling. Personal, social and health education themes are taught through a topic cycle that the co-ordinator monitors. A good lesson for a class covering Years 1 and 2 provided

opportunities for pupils to suggest ways to improve the school environment. The pupils were keen to be involved and good relationships were promoted.

67. The school council is a good feature of the school and helps promote the concept of being a good citizen. All pupil councillors have a minutes' book to feed back information to their classes and record pupils' points of view. The council held a good review of the school litter problem and adopted pupils' suggestions for additional bins and litter monitors. Pupils have responded well to surveys by the council members, voted democratically, discussed pupils' issues and evaluated the activities of the science week. Overall the council provides very good opportunities for pupils to be involved in decision making, to raise their own concerns and to become responsible members of the school community.
68. The leader for this aspect of the school's work has introduced several good initiatives. The subject is given a high priority throughout the school and is having a very good impact on the pupils' attitudes to learning and their enjoyment of school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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

