

INSPECTION REPORT

UPWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Upwood, Huntingdon

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110693

Headteacher: Mrs Sharon Whitelaw

Lead inspector: John William Paull

Dates of inspection: 28 February to 02 March 2005

Inspection number: 268166

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	161, which is smaller than most other primary schools
School address:	Ramsey Road Upwood Huntingdon Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	PE26 2QA
Telephone number:	01487 813510
Fax number:	01487 812019
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Richard Naish
Date of previous inspection:	26 April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- The school is organised in single year classes from Reception to Year 6. Children in the Reception are aged four or five years and currently number 21. All of them attend full time.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school during the year is significant in some classes.
- Overall, boys and girls are about equal in number, although large differences are apparent in particular year groups; for example, Year 6 has seven boys and fifteen girls, whereas Years 4 and 5 each have fifteen boys and nine girls.
- The school gained an *Achievement Award* in 2003, in recognition of very good National Curriculum test results.
- Other awards and quality marks gained, include:
 - the local authority's *Basic Skills Quality Mark* in 2004;
 - the *Football Association Charter Standard for Schools* in 2004.
- The school has important links with the locality, including:
 - *Upwood and Raveley Pre-school Playgroup*, which meets on the premises;
 - *Upwood's Out*, which provides after-school care for pupils.
- Just over 12 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is average.
- No pupils are believed to speak a language other than English at home.
- By far the largest ethnic group on roll is white, which includes four pupils who are not British. A small number is of mixed Afro-Caribbean/white backgrounds.
- At nearly 28 per cent, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. Most of these pupils experience difficulties related to learning, although a few have social, emotional and/ or behavioural difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement (just over 3%) is also above average (a statement explains what must be provided statutorily to meet a pupil's special needs in school).
- The proportions of pupils with special educational needs are higher than at the time of the last inspection.
- While socio-economic circumstances in the area around the school are about average, attainment on entry is below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22028	John William Paull	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Religious education Personal, social and health education, and citizenship Special educational needs
9092	Ron A. Elam	Lay inspector	
16773	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Physical education
29362	David Cousins	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Upwood is a good school at which pupils achieve well and behave very well. Teaching and learning are good. The headteacher's leadership is very strong and she is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and governing body. Their shared vision is based on seeking continuous improvement and good value for money is being achieved.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Results of National Curriculum tests in Year 6 are often better than those of similar schools and were very good in 2003, when the school gained a *National Achievement Award*.
- Standards in Year 6 are currently above average in mathematics and in information and communication technology, and much work seen in art and design and music is above what is normally expected.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and contribute much to overall achievement.
- Available teaching time and the lengths of lessons, fixed by the times of breaks and lunchtime, adversely affect provision in some subjects, so teaching and learning are not served as well as they might be.
- A few weaknesses were found in accommodation, such as lack of space outside for Reception children, and insufficient room for classes to read and research in the library.

Improvement since the inspection of April 1999 has been good. Developments in the targeting and evaluation of plans for improvements, and in safety around the building, have been successful. Several other significant features, identified in the last report, have also been improved. Furthermore, governors are now making a particularly strong contribution to the school's future direction, and teachers' planning, including that in the Reception class, is now much clearer.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	A	C	C
mathematics	C	A*	C	B
science	B	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' overall achievement is good. The table shows that, in 2003, the school's Year 6 National Curriculum test results in mathematics were in the top five per cent nationally. In recent years, the school's Year 6 results have matched or exceeded averages in English, mathematics and science. The overall trend in results is above the national trend and annual targets have also been exceeded, with many pupils attaining above the expected level. In Year 2, the school's trend is below the national trend, and results have not been as strong as in Year 6. In reading, they have been below the national average since 2002, and were well below it in 2003. Currently, children's attainment on entry is below average. Despite good achievement, work samples show that overall attainment is below what is normally expected at the end of the Reception year. In turn, this lower starting point accounts for much of the falling trend in Year 2, when it is below average in reading and writing, although average in mathematics. The main reason is that the number of pupils with special educational needs has nearly doubled since 1999. Provision for these pupils is good and they achieve well, but their attainment is understandably lower than that of other pupils, reducing overall standards. Work seen in Year 6 is above average in mathematics, information and communication

technology and religious education and is average in English and science. Work in music, and art and design often exceeds normally expected levels, and at least matches what is normally expected in other subjects. **Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good**, including very good social and moral elements and very good attitudes to school. Pupils' behaviour is good: they co-operate very effectively with their teachers and with each other, and are polite and helpful. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall, **the quality of education provided by the school is good** and it contributes strongly to pupils' learning, good achievements and to their very good attitudes and behaviour. **Teaching and learning are also good**, although some variation is apparent. For example, one lesson, albeit untypical of the teacher, was unsatisfactory while several, especially in Years 4 and 6, were very good. The quality is nearly always good in the Reception class. Throughout the school, examples of satisfactory teaching and a high proportion of good teaching were also observed. As a result of this good overall picture, pupils' progress over time is good and, in comparison with their starting points, they attain well by the end of Year 6. Teaching of mathematics, especially, is nearly always good and pacy, sometimes very good, so pupils give every impression of enjoying the subject, engage strongly with lessons and achieve well. The quality of teaching in literacy hours and in science, while satisfactory, is not as consistently strong as in mathematics. What was seen in information and communication technology was good overall and, in music, very good. Pupils with special educational needs are taught, targeted and supported well, using good resources to help them learn and progress effectively. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced to meet national requirements. However, what is taught is often hampered by the ill-timing of breaks and similar organisational features. These factors sometimes have an adverse impact on learning. Procedures for the care of pupils are good. Resources are generally good, although the library and the outside play area for the Reception children are weaknesses.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, appointed just over a year ago, has worked out a very good vision of future progress, including the rectification of weaknesses, and how to achieve it. She is very ably supported by the governing body and deputy headteacher. Other senior staff make good contributions, although the co-ordinators of subjects such as science, geography, and personal and social education have not been in post for long enough to have a significant impact on the quality of provision. Management of subjects is therefore inconsistent from one to another. For example, good procedures are in place to manage and track pupils' performance in literacy and numeracy, but not so in some other subjects. The governors fulfil their statutory requirements well and are very well led by the chair. Financial management is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Senior staff are very willing to hear parents' views and they respond appropriately. In questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting, parents' opinions were strongly supportive of the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs were particularly complimentary in specific comments that were made, stating that learning support assistants are well trained and care very well for their children. Pupils expressed very strong support for their school, believing that teachers are always willing to listen to their ideas and to help them to progress.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ensure that the organisation of time within the school day, co-ordination of what is taught and minor inconsistencies in teaching are addressed successfully, thereby improving the quality of learning and raising standards;
- review the use of accommodation to improve provision for children in the Reception year and raise the impact of the library on reading and research.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Nearly all pupils achieve well, including children in the Reception year. Currently, standards of attainment in Year 6 are above average in mathematics and average in English and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In 2004, in comparison with similar schools, Year 6 National Curriculum test results were above average in mathematics and well above average in science.
- Achievement is good in the Reception year, although overall attainment is often below what is usually found.
- In Year 2, attainment is below average in English and science.
- In Year 6, current work seen in mathematics and information and communication technology is above average, and much of what was sampled in art and design, and music is above expected levels.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well in relation to their targets.

Commentary

1. Since the last inspection, the school's overall trend in Year 6 National Curriculum test results is above the national trend. This reflects pupils' good achievement and the higher standards that are being attained now than at that time. The last report indicated that standards were erratic. In fact, this feature is not unusual in a school of the size of Upwood and it remains the case now. One of the main reasons is that, in subsequent year groups, differences in proportions of pupils with identified learning difficulties have a significant impact on percentages attaining at expected levels and above. For example, Year 6 results in 2003 were the school's best ever. As shown in brackets in the table below, these results exceeded national results considerably in all three tested subjects. They were, in fact, well above average in English and science, and in the top five per cent nationally in mathematics. However, in 2004, the class that took the tests contained a higher proportion with identified special needs and, although pupils achieved well and targets were met, their results were not as good overall. Nevertheless, standards attained were broadly in line with the relevant national averages in English and mathematics, and remained well above average in science. In comparison with similar schools, these results were good, especially in science, in which they were well above average, and mathematics in which they were above.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.0 (29.1)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.4 (30.2)	27.0 (26.8)
science	30.2 (31.0)	28.6 (28.6)

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

2. The last report pointed out that changes were occurring in important social characteristics in the area around the school, and that these were having an impact on overall attainment on entry. These factors have continued since then. In 1999, attainment on entry to the Reception class was judged as broadly average. Analysis of children's profiles on entry now indicates that overall attainment is below average, although it ranges widely. For example, a

few children are very articulate speakers and very confident, while several others are much less confident and display weaknesses in speech and vocabulary. A significant proportion is identified early as having potential special educational needs. These characteristics mean that more children are starting from a lower level of attainment than in the past. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching that they receive is usually good, so they learn and achieve well. Nevertheless, owing to the lower starting points, a significant proportion is unlikely to reach all the expected goals for their age by the time they enter Year 1.

3. Lower than average attainment when pupils begin the National Curriculum in Year 1 is the main reason that standards at the end of Year 2 are lower now than in 1999. Although teaching and learning in these classes are never less than satisfactory, and include elements of good teaching, pupils do not have enough time to make up the deficit by the end of Year 2. Results of National Curriculum tests reflect this finding, showing a trend below the national trend since the last inspection. Nevertheless, results in 2004 were an improvement on the previous year, indicating standards that were below the national average in reading, broadly average in writing and above average in mathematics (see table below). Statutory Teachers' Assessments in science indicated a standard well below average. The strong leadership of the headteacher and senior managers has responded well to the falling overall trend. It was decided that the deputy headteacher should move into Year 2, as a means to raising the profile and overall quality of provision for younger pupils. It is too soon to be certain about the impact of this move, but a good start in analysing pupils' performances has been made as a first step to targeting their needs. Standards in writing have also improved, owing to greater emphasis being placed on it recently.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.2 (13.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.0 (14.5)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.1 (15.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Currently, standards of work seen in Year 2 broadly reflect the results of the 2004 tests. Attainment is below average in English and science, and average in mathematics. The higher standard in mathematics is mainly because the subject co-ordinator teaches Year 2 and thereby has a strong influence on pupils' learning. Samples of work indicate that pupils make good progress through Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 6, standards are average overall. The present Year 6 class did very well in 2001, when they were in Year 2. However, their current average attainment still represents good overall achievement, as the class has since been joined by other pupils who have special educational needs of types that affect the quality of their learning. Furthermore, two other pupils who were likely to exceed normally expected levels have left the school. Despite this finding, standards in mathematics, information and communication technology and religious education are good, as many pupils are working successfully at a level above that normally expected for their age. Much of the sampled work in art and design, and music was also above normally expected levels. In English and science, standards are currently average and in the remaining subjects, work that was sampled was generally at around expected levels for the relevant ages that were observed. Nevertheless, pupils' positive achievements could be raised even further, by improving those albeit satisfactory elements in the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum to match the quality of the best.
5. Nearly all pupils with special educational needs make good progress through the school. They attain well in relation to the targets that are set for them. These targets are realistic and challenging, bearing in mind the nature of pupils' different difficulties. The main reason for this encouraging picture is that pupils are supported well by learning assistants who are well

trained and skilful. In mathematics, in Year 6, a few pupils with special needs are doing sufficiently well that they are close to attaining the normally expected level for their age. Pupils with particular gifts and talents have been identified and the school is beginning to introduce measures to address their needs. Their progress and achievements are currently satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good overall. Their attitudes to school and behaviour are very good. Attendance levels are average. While punctuality in the morning is satisfactory overall, a few pupils are often brought to school late.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' are very proud of their school.
- The school's measures to promote good behaviour are very effective, so pupils are very well behaved and relationships among the whole school community are very good.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not expect sufficient self-reliance from pupils.
- Pupils' personal qualities are well developed and include very good social and moral development and good cultural and spiritual development.
- A few pupils often arrive late in the morning and so do not fully benefit from the good teaching that is provided.

Commentary

6. Almost all pupils are proud of their school and enjoy attending it. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils justifiably expressed very positive views about their responsibilities, their opportunities to represent the school in sporting events, and the good access to computers. They also appreciated the friendship of other pupils and their very good relationships with staff. Pupils enjoy most of their lessons and the positive atmosphere during playtimes and lunchtime. In nearly all lessons, pupils listen very attentively and show good levels of interest, concentration and determination to complete set tasks.
7. Behaviour in classrooms, during lunchtime and playtimes is very good. Staff set very high expectations for pupils' behaviour and most pupils are very keen not to let down their teachers or themselves. The very good and reliable behaviour of nearly all pupils is a key element in the very positive atmosphere for social development that prevails. The atmosphere in the dining hall is calm and sociable. Playtime and lunchtime are well organised so that pupils of all ages get good opportunities to play together. Measures to prevent bullying are very good. Pupils report virtually no bullying and, if reported, are confident that incidents would be thoroughly and fairly investigated. Very rare racist incidents are taken very seriously and properly reported. This very good ethos is reflected in the fact that there were no exclusions in the previous school year.
8. In a few lessons, the balance between allowing pupils opportunities to explore their own ways of learning and following direct instructions was too loaded towards the latter. On these occasions, teachers' expectations of pupils' self-reliance were too low. As a result, pupils' uses of initiative and the development of their self-confidence were adversely affected.
9. Teachers and teaching assistants take many opportunities to discuss values and feelings with pupils. As a result, pupils are well aware of how others should be treated and respect beliefs that are different from their own. Pupils' multicultural awareness is effectively developed in several multi-cultural displays around the school and curricular activities linked to cultures in Africa and India. Religious education lessons make a sound contribution when pupils learn about Sikhism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. History and geography offer good opportunities for pupils to learn about British and foreign cultures. For example, pupils in Year

6 are well aware of what everyday life was like in Ancient Egypt, and Year 5 learn about modern Greece, alongside their historical work. Socially, teachers frequently encourage pupils to involve themselves fully in building the school as a community. For example, pupils in Year 6 enjoy taking on posts of responsibility around the school, helping with the library and looking after younger pupils in the playground. Extra-curricular activities enable pupils to develop further social skills. Pair and group activities in lessons allow pupils to learn how to negotiate and manage working relationships. Furthermore, good residential trips are provided and enable pupils from a range of year groups to learn about working and playing with others in close proximity. The School Council provides opportunities for pupils' ideas to be discussed in class and then carried forward democratically to its meetings. Very good moral provision means pupils learn about difficult decisions that adults and children may have to make. For example, during a literacy hour, Year 6 pupils conducted a very mature discussion about whether children should have mobile phones in school. Assemblies include collective worship and fully meet statutory requirements. During the inspection, they also provided opportunities to learn about books and their value and importance to other people for learning and enjoyment.

Attendance

- The table below shows attendance figures for the school. In recent years the level has been very good at around 95 per cent. However, it is now only satisfactory, being at a level similar to that of most primary schools around the country. Parents generally telephone the school to explain why their child is absent. However, when a message is not received, staff do not usually telephone home on the first day of any unexplained absence, often waiting a day or so before they do, which is not the current best practice nationally. Nearly all pupils arrive on time in the morning. However, despite reminders in newsletters, a few pupils are regularly brought to school late by their parents, and arrive up to ten or more minutes late each day. This lateness disrupts activities and means that the latecomers especially do not fully benefit from the good teaching that is provided.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	0.2
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

Overall, the quality of education that is provided for pupils is good. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is sufficiently broad, balanced and relevant to pupils' needs, although it lacks innovations. Pupils are cared for well, based on good arrangements for their personal welfare and involvement in school life. Links with parents and other schools are good and links with the community are very good.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Arrangements for assessment are satisfactory. While aspects of the school's procedures for checking pupils' progress are good, several elements have not been in place for long enough to provide sufficient useful information.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' knowledge and understanding of subjects and areas of learning and how to use resources to support learning are good.

- Teachers' insistence on and methods of achieving high standards of behaviour are very successful, and support pupils' learning strongly.
- Teaching and learning in the Reception year and through the main school are good.
- Teachers do not always provide sufficient time for pupils to explore their own ideas, which restricts initiative and innovative approaches to learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught and supported well, so they learn effectively in relation to the targets that are set for them.
- Although good in English and mathematics, uses of assessment are inconsistent in other subjects.

Commentary

- Teaching and learning were good at the time of the last inspection and this quality has been maintained. The main reason is that teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum and what to teach are good and they use learning resources effectively to ensure that pupils acquire the skills that they should. These features are especially evident during numeracy sessions and in information and communication technology. In several examples of good teaching that occurred in these subjects, including very good lessons in Years 4 and 6, teachers' preparation and use of resources paid off strongly. They were able to refer to such teaching aids at exactly the correct moment to maximise pupils' engagement, development of skills and understanding, thereby contributing strongly to achievement. Although the overall quality of teaching in literacy hours, which was satisfactory overall, was not as consistent as in numeracy, these features were often still apparent, especially in Years 1, 4 and 6, and served learning well in several lessons. Similar examples were also apparent during good lessons in art and design, and history. For example, in Year 5, the teacher's effective use of the work of different artists stimulated pupils' thinking about the portrayal of emotions. In the history lesson in Year 2, an interactive whiteboard was used well to display extracts from *Samuel Pepys's Diary*, helping pupils to understand several features of the era. In music, as in the last inspection, teaching and learning were very good. In this case a specialist, whose knowledge and understanding of the subject were excellent, taught all classes throughout the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	7 (19%)	16 (45%)	12 (33%)	1 (3%)	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.

- Teachers employ a range of very successful methods of promoting and achieving good behaviour in lessons. They praise and encourage consistently and appropriately; reward good work and behaviour, and offer clear support and guidance about how to behave. These strategies also influence pupils' acquisition of personal qualities, such as co-operation and sensible attitudes. As a result, from the Reception year to Year 6, nearly all lessons are characterised by behaviour of high quality. This impressive feature of provision serves learning very well. It results in pupils' respectful listening and, in turn, they follow teaching points closely, apply themselves to tasks enthusiastically and produce good amounts of often neatly presented work.
- In the Reception year, the class teacher and nursery nurse are fully aware of the principles that underpin good teaching of young children. They work together well as an effective team, planning and monitoring progress effectively. As a result, the children settle well at the start of each day and engage with interest in the tasks that are provided for them. Teaching and learning are consistently good in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development, so the important basic skills in these key areas are acquired successfully. As a result, children achieve well in relation to their attainment on entry.

14. In several lessons that were satisfactory and, to a lesser extent, in a few that were good, teachers were inclined to instruct and direct pupils too much. This weaker aspect of their teaching means that pupils are not sufficiently required to think for themselves, which adversely affects their capacity for taking initiatives about their own learning. One of the most telling examples occurred in an otherwise satisfactory science lesson in Year 5. Teaching focused on conditions for germination of seeds. This lesson was well planned and the teacher displayed considerable knowledge of the subject, which she was successful in passing on to the class. However, while her pace of questioning and instruction was very rapid, pupils had little opportunity to suggest ideas other than the teacher's own or to make decisions for themselves, thereby reducing overall effectiveness. In the only unsatisfactory lesson that was observed, in geography, teaching suffered because of poor timetabling. A music lesson interrupted the session, and pupils were unsettled on their return, so their focus on what was being taught was lost. As a result, their concentration was weak and learning and achievement were insufficient. Other observations of teaching and learning in this class indicate that this unsatisfactory teaching and learning are not typical of the teacher concerned.
15. Teaching and support of pupils with special educational needs are good, which confirms the comments of several parents prior to the inspection. This positive picture includes arrangements for pupils with social, emotional and/ or behavioural difficulties. The co-ordinator is very aware of the need to keep class teachers and teaching assistants aware of methods that will help these pupils to stay on task and to learn. Teamwork is therefore good and pupils benefit. Their targets are well known and kept up to date, so teaching addresses their needs consistently. Teachers adapt work to meet different special needs and direct questioning to pupils accordingly. In groups, this attention to detail continues with invariably good support from teaching assistants.
16. Procedures to ensure that planning reflects pupils' current levels of understanding are good in the main core subjects of English and mathematics. Uses of new technology to record assessments and to analyse pupils' progress with the help of computer programs are currently being introduced and are potentially very good. An emphasis on developing systems that are common to all subjects across the curriculum is another good feature. However, much of what is in place is not yet fully embedded in practice, so processes are currently inconsistent from subject to subject, and from class to class. As a result, in several subjects, including science, insufficient information is available for subject co-ordinators to establish firm trends that are useful to class teachers. Nevertheless, what is being developed has the capacity to rectify this deficiency successfully. In the Reception year, assessment is good and involves the use of frequent observations that record what individual children do. These notes are then formally collated to show how children progress through the *stepping stones*, towards the *early learning goals* at the end of the Reception year (*stepping stones* and *early learning goals* are nationally published descriptions of what young children are required to learn).

The curriculum

What is taught is satisfactorily broad and balanced, and sufficiently rich to meet pupils' requirements. Accommodation and learning resources are generally satisfactory, including various strengths and a few weaknesses.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Organisation of teaching time sometimes reduces the effectiveness of teaching and learning.
- The use of themes and projects enhances what is taught.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils are well prepared for transfer to subsequent stages of education.
- Pupils enjoy a good range of sporting contacts with local schools and clubs.
- Weaknesses in accommodation are evident.

Commentary

17. The curriculum meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Personal, social and health education is also provided effectively and is taught regularly in each class. It is linked appropriately to other subjects such as science. The dangers of alcohol and the misuse of drugs are taught specifically within each year group. The school has an agreed programme for sex and relationships education, which is provided for older pupils. Parents are informed in advance of these lessons, so they are aware of the content and thereby enabled to support teaching at home. Nevertheless, weaknesses in the organisation of teaching time and in the timetables of some classes mean that learning is not always served as well as it might be. The timings of breaks or lunchtimes frequently result in sessions of an awkward length, resulting in, for example, short pockets of time after literacy hours. As a result, time spent on literacy is unnecessarily extended to fill the space or, alternatively, the resulting teaching is not long enough to allow pupils to acquire skills in another subject in any depth. Therefore, what is taught on such occasions is simply satisfactory overall, rather than good. On other occasions, the timing of whole-class music lessons and school hymn practices sometimes takes pupils away from another subject in the middle of a lesson. When this occurs, pupils are not able to extend their understanding to higher levels or to work for extended periods, as their learning in the interrupted subject becomes disjointed. This factor contributed much to the one unsatisfactory lesson that occurred, which was in geography.
18. The curriculum is enhanced by the use of themes, such as in history days, and by combining the time for design and technology, so it can be spent on carefully planned 'designing and making' projects. This practice has clearly had a strong impact on improving the profile of this subject and has recently raised the standard of products that pupils make. Developmental planning to respond to national and local initiatives is in place including, for example, increasing pupils' enjoyment and focusing more strongly on speaking and listening. *The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies* have been implemented successfully and, as a result, pupils' basic skills are developed adequately, especially so in numeracy. A growing use of interactive whiteboards by teachers and pupils is underway, although it has yet to make a significant impact, partly owing to the lack of boards as yet in place, and partly to the shortness of time that has elapsed since their introduction.
19. Teachers and support staff are aware of the needs of pupils identified as requiring additional help and plan well for meeting these needs. Support staff enable pupils to be fully involved in lessons so that they achieve well for their abilities. All staff value these pupils' contributions in lessons and that helps build their confidence and self-esteem. The school works well with appropriate external agencies, including specialists, who support pupils with special educational needs.
20. In all relevant age groups, the school has good arrangements to ensure that pupils move on smoothly to the next stage of their education. Good links exist with the local secondary schools to which most pupils transfer. For example, pupils take part in 'project days' in design and technology and in information and communication technology. Such links are strongly supported during each summer term, when teachers from Years 6 and 7 meet to discuss pupils' transfer. A particularly noteworthy feature is the strong partnership that has been established with the playgroup that uses the dining area in the school. Regular visits arranged for the children and close relationships between the staff result in nearly all children starting their Reception year confidently.
21. Overall, the school provides a satisfactory range of activities outside the school day. These activities include good sporting opportunities such as athletics, football and cricket. Other activities offered by staff include a school choir, recorder groups and an art club. Pupils from a wide range of year groups take part in day and residential visits that support learning and achievement. However, opportunities are not currently available for pupils to learn to play instruments through the music service.

22. Overall, resources, including staffing, are satisfactory and are used effectively to support pupils' learning. However, the accommodation has three significant weaknesses. First, the school library is unsatisfactory. Its position in a corridor limits its stock of titles, hampering the use of books to develop pupils' reference and research skills. Secondly, while satisfactory for nearly all uses, the school's hall is too small for the successful development of adventurous games and gymnastics skills involving older pupils. The main impact is to limit the range of activities that they can take part in and thereby their progress, owing to health and safety implications. Thirdly, pupils in the Reception class do not have access to enough fenced space to allow daily access to all areas of learning in an outdoor context.

Care, guidance and support

The arrangements for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are good overall and support pupils' learning appropriately. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils in the school's work through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils trust the teachers and other staff and know there is always someone to whom they can turn.
- The school has very good arrangements to enable new pupils to settle in.
- The school provides a variety of opportunities for pupils to express opinions about life in the school.
- There are effective procedures for ensuring a healthy and safe environment.

Commentary

23. As at the time of the last inspection, adults in the school are very supportive and know the pupils well. Parents are pleased with the school, seeing it as a caring community where staff are approachable and willing to take their concerns seriously. In particular, parents agreed that their children settle in quickly when they first come into the Reception class. The children in the playgroup visit the school on various occasions and staff in the Reception class and playgroup liaise closely to ensure that entry to school does not come as a surprise to the children. Parents are welcomed to coffee mornings and reading workshops. Year 6 pupils link with individual children when they start in the Reception class. Pupils themselves report that they are supported very well by their teachers and teaching assistants and know whom they would go to if they needed help. They feel that teachers are prepared to listen to their ideas. The school provides a variety of opportunities for them to express their views both in the classroom and in the context of the school council. Initiatives have included the friendship stop in the playground and the provision of water fountains.
24. The school follows all local procedures for child protection and teaching and support staff have received local guidance on how to deal with concerns that might arise. Arrangements for first-aid are good, with several staff trained in relevant procedures. Adequate records of treatment are kept and letters are sent to parents on occasions when pupils bump their head. The school has good arrangements to ensure general safety. Specific problems identified in the previous inspection have been resolved. Risk assessments are carried out for the various activities that take place around the building and for visits off-site: these records are properly reviewed each year. Teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues that might arise, especially in subjects such as science, design and technology and physical education. The governors have recently set up a health and safety committee and have arranged appropriate training to enable its members to fulfil their statutory responsibilities with regard to safety matters.

25. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development are satisfactory overall. In the reception class the teacher makes full use of the nationally required *stepping stones* to enable her to establish rates of progress and to offer good guidance. In the rest of the school, assessment arrangements provide a lot of information but are not yet used fully in all subjects. Pupils' progress in English and mathematics is monitored well and they are provided with appropriate targets to guide them about what they need to do next to achieve well. These targets are reported to parents in annual end-of-year progress reports. However, such guidance is not yet as well developed in all other subjects. Co-ordinators are aware of the deficiency, but many of them have only been in post for a short time. Pupils' personal development is not formally monitored. However, this factor does not appear to present a significant difficulty as pupils' personal qualities are well understood by the staff, and outcomes, such as pupils' attitudes, behaviour and values, are in practice very good. A telling example is their strong self-esteem, which is raised by rewards such as praise and recognition in assemblies. A rich provision of residential trips for pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 enhances social skills and personal confidence.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are good overall. Links with the local community are very good and with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold the school in high regard and they are supportive of what it provides for their children.
- Annual reports on pupils' progress provide very good information to parents.
- The involvement of a wide range of organisations and people in the community extends experiences for pupils' personal, social and academic development.

Commentary

26. Parents' involvement with their children's education makes a good contribution to overall achievement and enhances the work of the school. In their responses to questionnaires and at a pre-inspection meeting, parents indicated strong satisfaction with what the school provides, as they did at the time of the last inspection. Parents consider that their children are making good progress and that good information about how well their children are doing is provided. This opinion reflects the large numbers of parents who attend consultation meetings with staff. They also feel welcome into the school at other times; nearly all indicated that they are comfortable speaking to the staff. The parents' association works hard, organising successful fund raising and social events. A few parents help regularly in the classroom and several more accompany off-site visits. The school sends out its own questionnaires every couple of years, enabling parents to be involved actively in helping to formulate its policies.
27. Each month, attractive newsletters about general matters and particular events are sent home. These newsletters are supplemented with other letters, as necessary, on particular issues. Pupils in Year 6 produce a school newspaper each term, which provides an interesting and welcome insight into school life from the children's perspective. A school website is also available and is currently accessed by around a third of the school's families. It is of particular interest to working parents. From time to time, the school runs workshops on curricular matters, such as reading and mathematics. These occasions help parents to understand how their children learn. The staff are also preparing to send home schemes of work that summarise what is to be taught in all subject areas. The idea is that parents will then have more precise information about what their children will be doing, making it easier to help at home. The annual reports on pupils' progress provide a very good summary of what the children know and can do in each subject and include targets for improving achievement in English and mathematics.

28. The school has developed several useful contacts with people in the community that contribute well to pupils' social learning. Their participation in sports tournaments and similar events enables them to meet pupils from other schools. Pupils collect for charities, both in the form of money and in kind, such as collecting books for a school in Gambia. The school has developed particular links with older people in a nearby residential home and, for example, pupils visit them to take Harvest festival goods or to sing carols at Christmas. A group also shared in a resident's 100th birthday. Pupils contribute to village life by performing at the local fete, and exhibiting and featuring in the local newspaper. The school building is made available to local clubs, including an after-school care facility. The school welcomes a variety of visitors, such as the police, an artist and local clergy. In addition to smoothing the transfer of pupils at the end of Year 6, links with the local secondary school help to involve the expertise of the secondary staff to extend opportunities for higher attaining pupils, including the gifted and talented.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and the school is well managed. The governing body has a very prominent role in moving the school forward.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good.
- The leadership of other key staff is good and effective teamwork is another strong feature of the school.
- The management of the school is good overall.
- Governors are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and effectively support and challenge the school.
- Staff evaluate the school's performance well and use their findings effectively for future planning.
- Not enough emphasis is currently placed on ensuring consistency in the work of different co-ordinators and their role in checking and monitoring the quality of provision.

Commentary

29. The headteacher provides high quality leadership and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and governing body. Now, in only her second year of headship, she leads a very popular and effective school that reflects her strong sense of purpose and very clear vision, seeking continuous improvement in a drive for excellence. She possesses an open, consultative style of leadership, uniting all staff into a coherent and effective team. Much improvement has already been achieved and planning for further advances is good. It is based on analysis of results and information gained from improved systems for monitoring of teaching and learning. Her energetic presence and sensitivity to the needs of staff and pupils alike generates a happy, constructive ethos and effectively binds the school community together.
30. The deputy headteacher and other key staff are involved well in the work of the school. Their contribution reflects the headteacher's determination to draw on available expertise and to ensure that all staff are fully involved in sharing ideas and contributing to decision making. The staff works well as a team and are united in their commitment to improvement and high standards of achievement. Co-ordination of English and mathematics is good, although the quality and effectiveness of management of other subjects, including science, are currently inconsistent. One of the main reasons is that several co-ordinators are new to their posts. The result is that a few of them have not had opportunities yet to monitor the work of colleagues and pupils directly, so do not have sufficient knowledge and information about the quality of teaching and what is taught in their subject. It is significant that information and communication technology, and art and design, for instance, are co-ordinated by longer

established members of staff and that these subjects are amongst those that are managed well. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (often known as SENCo) collaborates well with other staff, ensuring that pupils' needs are accurately identified and that good levels of support are provided. The systematic monitoring of English and mathematics is used well in tracking standards and identifying points for improvement. However, in subjects where co-ordination has weaknesses, the reason is often associated with insufficient emphasis or available time to monitor provision and what is taught. The headteacher and senior staff are aware of these difficulties and strategic plans are in place to rectify the situation.

31. In the period just before and after the headteacher's appointment, a greater incidence of staff turnover occurred than had been experienced for several years previously. However, good procedures for induction have minimised the effect. Good support for newly qualified teachers has clearly been a contributory factor in this finding and the school has strong potential for involvement in the training of student teachers.
32. The governing body is fully involved in shaping the vision and direction of the school. It carries out its statutory duties very efficiently and its members are very well informed. The chair leads its contribution very effectively. This strong position is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Well-established committees each take responsibility for focusing on aspects of what the school provides. As a result, governors are knowledgeable and able to accept involvement in the planning of future developments. This involvement includes ensuring that procedures for the professional development of the staff are effective, and linked with well-considered priorities. The results of this good management are seen, for example, in the school's very positive climate for learning and high proportion of good quality teaching through the school.
33. The financial plan and the school improvement plan are closely linked, so senior staff and governors are in a strong position in relation to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of spending on priorities for improvement.

Financial information

Systems for monitoring finances and procedures for financial management are robust. Funds secured for special projects and in support of different groups of pupils are spent wisely. The principles of best value are applied rigorously by all staff, including those co-ordinators who have responsibility for a budget, and governors understand these principles well.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	458,396	Balance from previous year	3,584
Total expenditure	431,049	Balance carried forward to the next	30,931
Expenditure per pupil	2,883		

34. The balance carried forward to the next year, indicated in the second column, is higher than in most schools. The main reason is that minor capital expenditure, relating to 2003-4, had not been cleared at the time that the annual budget was closed and therefore shows up in this figure.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Four year-olds are admitted to the Reception class at the start of each school year. Nearly all of the children have pre-school experience in the independent playgroup that is accommodated in the dining area of the school. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class is currently below what is usually found at this age, which has not been the case until recent years. At around the time of the last inspection, these changes were beginning to occur, with changes in administration of local air force housing into civilian housing associations. This process has continued. Nevertheless, attainment on entry is very wide ranging. A few children possess social and communication skills well in excess of what is usual for their age and many others are around average. However, the proportion that is identifiable as below what is usually found has increased significantly and several are identified with potential special educational needs. Children are well prepared for beginning school, with frequent visits beforehand. Good links are established with parents, who feel welcome in school and consider that they receive good information. The partnership between staff in the playgroup and in school is very good, so children are often very well known before they join the Reception class.

By Year 1, children make good progress and achieve well. Growth in confidence and maturity, and in communication, language and literacy, is considerable. What is taught is carefully planned and based on *The Curriculum for the Foundation Stage* (a national publication that explains what should be taught in Nursery and Reception classes). Children are provided with a wide range of challenging and interesting activities. A rigorous approach is in place to monitoring children's progress on a regular basis. The class teacher and the nursery nurse are fully aware of the principles that underpin good teaching of young children, and they provide an effective teaching team. Improvement since the last inspection is good. The area is safe and secure and the classroom is well resourced. However, exterior space remains a difficulty. While it is now fenced and secure, it does not provide sufficient space. Children do not have open, daily access to an outdoor area that enhances provision in the six areas of learning. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the ideal requirements for young children's learning. She has good ideas for further improvements and provides good leadership overall, minimising the adverse impact in the meantime.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Almost all children are on course to achieve the relevant goals by the end of the Reception year.
- Children achieve well because of good teaching.
- Warm and pleasant relationships between adults and children result in a very supportive learning environment.
- Children's attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Children are not given enough opportunities to use their initiative and develop their independence.

Commentary

35. Despite an overall lower attainment on entry than in 1999, nearly all children are on course to match the expected goals for their age group in this area. They settle down quickly and show every indication of being happy and feeling comfortable and secure. Clear boundaries and very good role models of co-operation and friendliness are provided by the adults. Parents report that nearly all their children enjoy coming to school and love to show what they learn

when they get home. Children value the rewards that they receive for good work and behaviour and the practice boosts their self-esteem and confidence. They co-operate well with each other and nearly always share sensibly.

36. Most children are attentive and eager to learn, and the teacher and nursery nurse create a supportive atmosphere in which each child is able to feel secure and special. Owing to this strong climate for learning, the children find it easy to conform to high expectations of social and emotional development. As a result, routines are accepted well and children settle to tasks naturally and behave very sensibly. Children are nearly always purposefully engaged and show developing confidence in the range of activities provided. However, when children are involved in activities, they are not always left to their own devices enough, which sometimes limits initiative and independence in learning.
37. The overall quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. A suitable range of activities are planned with clear learning outcomes. Children's play and responses are supported and extended sensitively through good questioning, so they develop understanding of the effects of their actions on others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in relation to their attainment on entry, because of the good teaching of basic skills.
- Children have well-planned opportunities to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.
- Children have very good attitudes to learning.
- A system to develop reading at home is very well established.

Commentary

38. Children make strong gains in learning, because they are taught well and have access to good resources. Children's very good attitudes and behaviour contribute well to their good achievements. Well-planned activities support their interest and stimulate learning. A very strong feature of good teaching in this area is that the staff explicitly congratulate and encourage children's efforts in relation to speaking and listening. For example, at the end of a whole-class discussion, children were given stickers for listening 'actively', which meant that they could show that they had absorbed what was taught. Children are similarly encouraged to talk about their experiences in ways that will create interest in others and to use newly acquired vocabulary in all aspects of their work. A telling outcome in this respect was the appropriate vocabulary that was evident during children's imaginative role-play in the classroom's *Upwood Bakery*. Encouragement to do well and "try your best" occurs constantly in all learning, ensuring that children do indeed make good progress. Many of the children are currently on course to achieve the early learning goals for speaking and listening by the time they enter Year 1, although a significant minority have limited knowledge and use of vocabulary.
39. Most children in the class are gaining satisfactory control in making pencil marks on paper. They draw and paint with increasing control and a few higher attainers write words and simple sentences, especially in the context of labels. Adapted literacy sessions are provided for the whole class, in which children form and write a sentence, often around a given word. While this provides a good focus for learning how to construct a sentence, it does not give children enough opportunities for their own ideas to flourish, as it limits the words that they might otherwise use. Nevertheless, these lessons are modified well to suit the very young, promoting the development of early reading, writing and spelling skills. Very good progress

often occurs when adults work in small groups or on a one-to-one basis, as children then receive individual attention on their own strengths and weaknesses.

40. The classroom's book area is well resourced and inviting. All the children handle books carefully and successfully and many of them know how the books are organised. Nearly all the children are at least beginning to associate sounds with letters successfully and many, although by no means all, recognise a few simple words in text. Good teaching encourages them to take books home with a set of key words to learn. Nearly all parents are involved in this process well.
41. The teacher makes continuous assessments of children's progress and has a good understanding of each individual's strengths and weaknesses. Regular evaluations of planned work are used to assist with future planning, building on what has already been achieved. Children with special educational needs, including those for whom concern has been raised about potential needs, make good progress. The main reason is that work and questions are tailored well to their individual requirements and they are sensitively encouraged to express themselves clearly and shown how to.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Number is emphasised in a good range of situations.
- Good teaching ensures that learning is secure in all aspects of mathematical development.

Commentary

42. Nearly all children achieve well in this area of learning. They are taught well and the majority are on course to attain the expected goals for their age at the end of the year. However, a significant proportion, whose attainment on entry was low, is unlikely to attain all the goals. For example, a few children found it difficult to express ideas such as 'more than' or 'one less'. Resources are used well and this feature of good teaching helps children to develop their mathematical understanding and vocabulary. The teacher plans carefully and uses a good range of teaching methods. The nursery nurse is also a good practitioner. Learning is made interesting by often turning it into fun, using different topics and themes. The classroom's version of *Upwood Bakery* was used this way, providing opportunities to count and think about sorting utensils. The use of number rhymes, counting games such as *Visiting Granny*, and songs are similar good examples that were observed. The children enjoyed all these activities and, at the same time, reinforced their skills in counting, recognising and understanding of numbers. Children are encouraged to apply what they know to practical, real situations and problems. For example, they counted the number of children present at registration and worked out how many were absent and how many would be eating a school lunch. Most children in the Reception class correctly identify and count objects correctly up to ten. Higher attaining children identify numbers that are more than or less than other numbers and these children have begun to record simple addition successfully, suggesting that a few are likely to exceed the expected goals.
43. Nearly all the children recognise basic shapes and gain knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. A few of the more able children describe objects by position, shape, size, colour and quantity, which is good for their age. Good teaching challenges them to explore these skills and to consolidate such knowledge. Children enjoy working with large and small construction toys, such as lego and jigsaws, providing opportunities to match and join shapes. In an observed session, the mathematical focus was reinforced well with interesting activities that linked with creativity, weaving paper patterns of different colours. Adult involvement in children's activities is effective and provides useful and

timely opportunities for assessments of individual children's progress that are recorded and used to plan the next steps.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are keen and eager to find out about the world around them.
- Resources are used well to broaden children's' knowledge and understanding.
- Role-play is encouraged and used effectively.

Commentary

44. Children achieve well because both teaching and learning are good. Although several children display very good general knowledge on entry, it is not always the case. However, the teacher has a good understanding of this age group and what it is that interests them. The range of activities provided stimulates children and helps them to make good progress. Nevertheless, by the time they enter Year 1, standards are a little below what is usually found. Children enjoy learning and remain very absorbed, especially when teaching provides practical, free activities involving role-play or making models out of construction materials. Resources of a good range and quality are used effectively to support learning. In the *Upwood Bakery*, for example, children engage in the use of a variety of resources, such as a cash register, a weighing balance and a cooker. They learn to name such items correctly and to use the words in sentences. Adults ask good, leading questions that help them to make discoveries, formulate ideas and increase their general knowledge. The current topic at the time of the inspection, learning about parts of the body, was developed well and featured strong links with other areas of learning, including action songs and physical activity. Opportunities for spiritual development are provided, when amazing features of the natural world are pointed out.
45. Effective adult intervention in activities and encouragement of children to explore ideas are further aspects of good teaching that assist children to make discoveries. For example, when they use paint and mix different colours, ideas about how materials change when combined are introduced.
46. Children make good progress in acquiring computer skills. Some of their pictures, using *Dazzle*, are indicative of their developing co-ordination in the use of the mouse and in their understanding of how to control some applications of the program by clicking on buttons. The three computers in the classroom are used well and children get a good level of individual support.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and contributes to children making progress and achieving well, overcoming limited outdoor play facilities that directly affect opportunities in, for example, running, jumping and balancing.
- A range of small tools and materials is used to develop hand and eye co-ordination effectively.

Commentary

47. Nearly all children are on course to reach the expected goals that relate to running, spatial awareness, jumping, balancing, and hand and eye co-ordination. This attainment represents good overall achievement. The main reason for good progress in running, jumping and balancing is that teaching is good and makes up for significant weaknesses in provision in other aspects of this area. As a result, children move about with confidence, showing understanding of the spatial needs of others. In the main school hall, children have regular opportunities for movement with music and to use the large climbing apparatus. Good use is also made of the playground on one afternoon each week, allowing children the opportunity to use large and small equipment outside. These arrangements, allied to good teaching, are enough to overcome lack of sufficient outdoor facilities for children in the fenced Reception area, which is too small. In a good lesson in the hall, for example, children were effectively taught the skills of moving in various ways, using different parts of the body and providing good links with other areas. Children moved imaginatively; they demonstrated good body control, and showed awareness of space and how to use it safely. Children enjoy these physical education lessons and respond very positively to the praise and encouragement that they are given. During the summer term, they also receive swimming lessons and learn about water safety in the school's own pool.
48. In the classroom, small tools and appropriate resources are used effectively to develop hand and eye co-ordination. Children use pens and scissors safely to draw, colour and cut out. They shape materials such as plasticine and clay. Children also make good progress and achieve well with respect to the goals related to these elements of physical development.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are well motivated and have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Too much instruction and direction by adults, rather than emphasis on children's own self-initiated ideas, limit their creative activity.

Commentary

49. All adults have high expectations of work and behaviour, and keep constant checks to ensure that all children are fully involved. As a result, overall achievement is good. Children are well motivated and use a range of materials to produce attractive and interesting work. By the end of the Reception year, most children achieve the expected goals. Teachers provide various opportunities for drawing, painting and making collages. Good opportunities also exist for musical activity and singing. Children enjoy artwork and music alike. Their attitudes to learning are positive and they often work with considerable concentration, as when using musical instruments to investigate different sound effects.
50. Many opportunities are provided to explore colour and texture, and children work with a range of materials. Well-planned opportunities exist for children to use their imagination in their own role-play, which is good practice. For example, they playact in the well-equipped *Upwood Bakery and Tearoom*. Furthermore, the school's specialist music teacher provides well planned opportunities for children to sing and clap favourite songs and to express enjoyment of music. During a good lesson, they learnt a new song and applied terms such as high, low, fast and slow to musical sounds. In this lesson, higher attainers were aware also of musical terms such as 'tempo' and 'rhythm'. Overall, however, teaching and learning in this area of learning are satisfactory. The main reason is that children are sometimes over-guided with, for example, the use of stencils to draw around, cut and colour. On such occasions, their work lacks individuality, because opportunities to explore their own ideas are then restricted.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall, although it includes several good features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Owing to changed circumstances, the school has done well to maintain standards since the last inspection.
- Although improving now, achievement has been adversely affected by inconsistencies in teaching, including several changes in staffing.
- Arrangements for and progress of pupils with special educational needs are good.
- In speaking and listening, pupils achieve well, because teachers' understanding of how to develop skills is good.
- Pupils are introduced to a good range of writing styles and their handwriting is developed effectively.
- The library is unsatisfactory.
- The school newspaper is a strong feature of how literacy is used across the curriculum.

Commentary

51. At the time of the last inspection, owing to changes in the characteristics of subsequent year groups, overall standards were falling slightly. These changes in characteristics have continued, while standards have largely levelled off and, in Year 6, very good results in 2003 have contributed to a trend that is now above the national trend, so the school has done well since 1999. In 2004, although results of the Year 6 National Curriculum tests were average overall, a higher proportion than in most other schools attained a level above that normally expected. In Year 2, results were average in writing, but below average in reading. The main reason for comparatively better results in writing was that the school's emphasis on the development of skills in this element of the subject paid off. In Years 1 and 2, nearly all pupils achieve satisfactorily. However, in work that was seen during the inspection, standards in Year 2 were below average overall. The main reason is owing to an above average percentage of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils entered the school with lower standards than other pupils in both reading and writing. Understandably, their attainment remains below average, which affects the overall picture. Nevertheless, pupils with previously average or higher attainment have maintained their rates of progress and are achieving appropriately.
52. Teaching and learning are currently sound through the school and display many good features. However, difficulties related to frequent staff changes, which were particularly apparent last year for pupils now in Year 2, are a factor that has had a negative impact on learning. The deputy headteacher, who is the present class teacher, has worked hard to overcome these problems. The class is now settled, working well and has clearly achieved soundly throughout this year. Pupils in Year 1 now are also working successfully, ensuring that achievement is improving and that capacity exists for it to do so further, when they enter Year 2 with this solid foundation behind them. The achievements of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are also sound overall, although progress is not consistent. This inconsistency is related to differences in the quality of teaching. While teaching is always good enough to ensure that learning and progress occur at a satisfactory rate, it is better in some classes than in others. For example, progress is often rapid in Year 4, and pupils in Year 6 are also progressing well. Nevertheless, overall attainment in Year 6 is average, which does not match the Year 2 national test results of 2001, which relate to this class. No evidence was found to suggest a slide in standards. Indeed, the main reason is that a significant percentage of new pupils with special educational needs have joined this class since 2001. These pupils' needs are of a kind that slows their learning, affecting the average level of the class as a whole. Nevertheless, pupils with special educational needs achieve well through the school, because

teachers understand their learning needs and because additional adults in classrooms offer good support.

53. In many lessons, including very good examples in Years 4 and 6, teaching focused well on practising and improving knowledge and uses of vocabulary. As a result, speaking and listening skills are often advanced for pupils' ages. By Year 6, standards of speaking and listening are above what is normally expected. In nearly all lessons, teachers spend a good amount of time on questioning that supports the learning of all. A strong feature of all the very good and most of the good lessons is that teachers allow pupils time to think about their responses and to express their views. In a lesson in Year 6, for example, the quality of discussion and debate was good, because the teacher fully valued all pupils' responses, encouraging them to speak and to use rich, precise vocabulary. In Years 1 and 2, pupils receive a good grounding in the principles, listening patiently while others are speaking. Pupils are taught to take turns to speak and they respond well. This approach makes a good contribution to pupils' social development, instilling virtues of courtesy and tolerance at an early stage. Pupils discuss work sensibly in pairs and in small groups, taking account of the contribution of others when formulating their own views.
54. Records indicate that the achievements of individuals who have been in the school throughout their education are generally satisfactory, including several who achieve well. For example, in older age groups, in both reading and writing, standards of these pupils are broadly average, but include many who attain at a higher than normally expected level. A good feature of teaching is that it provides pupils with a good range of opportunities to develop their skills in writing in different styles, including narrative, poetic and factual forms. Nearly all pupils show pride in their writing. Teachers' expectations for the quality and appearance of pupils' handwriting are usually high, which is often reflected in their exercise books and in work displayed around the school. In these ways, they motivate pupils effectively. Standards in handwriting are above average by Year 6. Standards in reading are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. They practise regularly at home and at school. Pupils who were heard reading during lessons were confident enough to attempt complex words for their age and used various strategies to work out new words. The library is unsatisfactory and its limited stock restricts access to books. As a result, pupils' research skills and ability to reference information from books is below what is usually found. Furthermore, many pupils have not read a wide enough range of literature in the past, which was apparent in conversations with pupils in Year 6. These pupils spoke of only a few different authors and genres. Nevertheless, good management of the subject has identified this shortcoming and is currently placing a high profile on it. During assemblies, for example, staff and pupils explained their own favourite books and tried to inspire each other to extend their range of reading material.
55. Since the last inspection, leadership and management have been satisfactory overall. However, indications are that considerable improvement in these aspects has occurred recently. Weaknesses have been identified and measures to improve performance have been introduced. Assessment procedures have been improved and pupils' progress is now tracked well by the senior management team. Teachers' marking and pupils' targets now help teachers to share what needs to be done next with individual pupils themselves. Capacity for rapid improvement is therefore strong. However, occasions exist when lessons drift a little towards the end. Some literacy 'hours' are fitted into timetabled slots that run for longer than the hour, which may be a contributory factor. This aspect requires review, especially as any time that is saved would then be available for other uses, thereby improving provision and raising standards.

Literacy across the curriculum

56. English contributes satisfactorily to other subjects across the curriculum. Pupils' reading, speaking and listening skills are used frequently in other subjects, where pupils read text and discuss their learning in carefully planned sessions. Information and communication

technology is linked well to literacy, with good examples of word processing. Furthermore, pupils in Year 6 produce a school newspaper using skills in desktop publishing very effectively.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards are often above average by Year 6.
- Good subject co-ordination influences the quality of teaching strongly, resulting in good teaching throughout the school, so pupils learn basic skills effectively.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and their attitudes to learning are very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and achieve well.

Commentary

57. At the time of the 1999 inspection, standards by the time pupils left in Year 6 were reported as average. Results of National Curriculum tests in 2000 and 2001, although slightly lower, remained broadly average in comparison with national figures. Results then rose to above average in 2002 and were particularly good in 2003. Although the school's performance fell back in 2004, results were still above average when compared with similar schools. Standards have therefore shown good improvement and this picture is being maintained currently. Much of the work seen in the present Year 6 is above average. Many pupils are working at the level above that normally expected, especially in number, in their understanding of how to plot position with the use of co-ordinates, and other graphical representations of data. Nearly all other pupils, including several with special educational needs, are working at the expected level for their age. Achievement is therefore good. It is based on good teaching and pupils' very good attitudes to the subject. However, this good work may not be reflected in National Curriculum tests towards the end of the year. The reason is that a significant number of pupils in the class have special educational needs, which may affect their ability to record their knowledge under timed test conditions. The 2004 national test results of pupils in Year 2 were above average, which was a considerable improvement on the previous year. Samples of current work indicate that standards are now around average overall. This difference is mainly owing to a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the present class.
58. The deputy headteacher co-ordinates the subject well and, as a result, the overall quality of teaching and learning is good, and includes several very good features. Currently, his own teaching of Year 2 is rapidly correcting the effects of an unsettled year that this class experienced in Year 1. In a good lesson, for example, his mathematical expertise helped pupils to acquire skills of telling the time. Planning was adapted well to meet the needs of pupils of different prior knowledge, including those with special educational needs. Higher attainers were particularly well catered for and, by the end of the lesson, had successfully learnt how to relate analogue clock faces to relevant digital readouts. Good quality teaching was also observed in a lesson in Year 1. This lesson helped pupils to understand the importance of estimates and how to make them in practical situations related to number. Again, good provision for the range of ability present was apparent. Several higher attaining pupils showed confidence in making estimates of over 100. Further good teaching in Years 3 to 6, linked with what was observed in samples of pupils' work in all age groups, suggests that what pupils do is built on effectively as they move through the classes. In this way, basic skills are acquired well and good achievement is maintained throughout the school. New technology, such as interactive whiteboards, where available, simple computer programs and overhead projectors were observed in use, enhancing pupils' learning.

59. Throughout the school, pupils give every impression of enjoying the subject. They engage well with tasks that are set and listen carefully to teachers' explanations and instructions. They are eager to respond to questions and work co-operatively in pairs and groups whenever asked. These very good attitudes, linked with equally high standards of behaviour, make a strong contribution to the quality of learning, as so little time is lost on dealing with disruptions.
60. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are constructed well and contain precise targets. Teachers and teaching assistants adapt planning effectively to these targets, so pupils receive good support that meets their needs. Pupils' achievements in relation to their targets are good. In Year 6, several pupils with special needs are achieving very well, coping effectively with work at the normally expected level for their age.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Mathematics is used to support other subjects effectively. For example, good links with geography include fixing positions on maps with the use of co-ordinates and points of the compass. In history, pupils use dates to work out how long ago things happened. Opportunities to use measurement are provided in design and technology and science and pupils handle data in a good range of situations using graphs, charts and tables, appropriate to different subjects and age groups through the school.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' overall achievements are usually good.
- Standards in scientific enquiry are adversely affected by inconsistency in the teaching of this part of the subject.
- Pupils have very good attitudes towards the subject, which support their learning.
- The subject is not yet monitored as rigorously as English or mathematics.

Commentary

62. For the last two years, the results of National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 have been well above the national average and similar to high standards reported in 1999. Overall, standards in the present Year 6 are around average. Although this level of attainment is not as high as in the past, pupils' achievements are still good, owing to a higher proportion with special educational needs, some of whom joined the school only in the last year or so. Although these pupils have achieved well, their attainment is understandably lower than that of most other pupils. In Year 2, standards of work seen are below average, whereas Statutory Teachers' Assessments in 2004 indicated that attainment was then well below the national average. Owing to lower starting points, this represents satisfactory achievement overall. Inspection evidence is that standards are improving owing to developments in practical and investigative methods of teaching. These methods are helping pupils to acquire knowledge more effectively. However, owing to past weaknesses, pupils' skills and competence in this aspect are below average, even though their factual knowledge is often good.
63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers give clear explanations and ensure that factual understanding is well understood. However, inconsistency in opportunities for practical science is apparent from one class to another. In those classes where this aspect is not sufficiently taught, pupils' skills in carrying out scientific enquiries, involving principles of fair testing, are adversely affected. As a result, their grasp of how to form hypotheses, gain information through observations, and of what to do when they have collected information, is not as secure as it should be. In the most effective lessons, pupils enjoy a good range of

practical experiences and are ably supported by teachers who challenge perceptions and develop understanding well. Good teaching of this kind was noted in a Year 6 lesson. Pupils investigated changes in the properties of materials and the teacher's clever questioning helped them to make careful observations of what happened. However, such good practice did not occur in all lessons that were observed through the school. Sometimes learning was restricted because teaching did not provide enough independence for pupils to carry out investigations or to pose scientific questions themselves. In the same way, photocopied worksheets seen in samples of pupils' work often restricted challenge, reducing pupils' opportunities to practise scientific writing.

64. Pupils' attitudes to science are very good; they are keen and enthusiastic, especially in practical situations. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, pupils learnt how to make circuits with batteries and bulbs. They responded with interest and enthusiasm, because of the practical nature of this session. Older pupils expressed their satisfaction with visits, including residential trips, explaining how outings to museums provide further enjoyment of the subject and help them to learn.
65. Management of science is currently satisfactory. However, it is likely to improve quickly. The co-ordinator is very new to the post, but already she is aware of improvements that are needed. The capacity for positive change is therefore very promising. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are not as advanced as in English and mathematics. However, this need for the co-ordinator to work alongside other teachers in their classrooms, establishing strengths and weaknesses, observing practice and sharing good ideas to improve performance is recognised.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is co-ordinated well, which has raised provision and standards since the last inspection.
- Pupils' achievements are good and are based on the good progress that they make.
- Teaching is good, so pupils acquire skills effectively.
- Computers are used to support work in a good range of other subjects.

Commentary

66. The deputy headteacher manages this subject effectively and good improvements in resources and in the standards that pupils achieve have been established since the last inspection. Good monitoring of provision means that information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, recently introduced formal record sheets are used to note the level of pupils' knowledge and involvement in practical applications of computing to what they learn. This system also allows teachers to record accurate comments in annual progress reports. A weaker aspect is that the information gained is not yet used consistently to plan work for more capable pupils.
67. Standards in Year 2 meet national expectations. Progress and achievement are good, and pupils of this age are confident in using computers and have well developed skills in using the mouse and keyboard. By the time pupils reach Year 6, standards have risen above those normally expected, with pupils competent in many uses of computers and sufficiently confident to experiment with new applications. This picture is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards and progress were simply satisfactory. A significant strength of Year 6 pupils' knowledge is in how they use spreadsheets in mathematics and desktop publishing packages to prepare a school newspaper. For instance, they set complex formulae in spreadsheets to calculate the perimeter and area of shapes. Progress through

the school is based effectively on the development of previous skills, and software is organised well to ensure that it is available to support other subjects at the appropriate time. For example, skills in word processing, uses of the Internet and CD-ROMs are developed steadily as the demand to use more complex applications increases as pupils move through the years.

68. Teaching is good and is having a positive impact on pupils' learning in nearly all aspects of the subject. A weaker element is that computers are not yet used routinely to control other devices such as sensors in, for example, science lessons. Nevertheless, in Year 6, the teacher's very good knowledge of the program in use ensured that pupils learnt very effectively. Similar provision was observed during a music lesson in Year 2. Pupils were taught skills related to rhythm and volume, using *2-simple*. This program usefully developed pupils' skills in controlling applications. Very good teaching invited them to experiment with buttons, ascertaining their functions in setting the different volumes and tempos to create various rhythmic effects. In this way, pupils also developed ideas related to both pulse and dynamic quality in music. Insistence on high standards of behaviour ensures that pupils work very well when using computers. This encouragement from teachers ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are confident in attempting tasks. Pupils with special educational needs are acquiring basic skills, such as the use of the mouse and keyboard, at often similar rates to those of other pupils, so their achievement is good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. The development of pupils' skills in information and communication technology is linked well to other subjects. Several examples were observed in mathematics in different classes through the school. Work in number and, in Year 4, plotting the position of *Billy Bug's* food are good examples. In Year 3, pupils learnt about how databases work, using a card game and a simple data program. Pupils use the Internet to find information to support learning in subjects such as history and geography and word processing supports skills in writing.

HUMANITIES

70. It was possible to observe only one lesson in geography and history, so overall judgements of provision have not been made. What was observed directly is reported on below.
71. Based on the work that was seen, pupils' achievement is generally sound in both of these subjects. In **geography**, the sampled work in Year 6 is indicative of standards that broadly meet normally expected levels for the age group. Pupils' work through the school indicates that much emphasis is placed on the development of factual knowledge and understanding of key geographical information. However, it is less apparent in the same sources that practical skills are focused on as effectively. For example, mapping skills, such as using *Ordnance Survey* maps, appear infrequently in the samples. The school has a scheme of work in place, based on national guidance, which is used for planning lessons. Good direct opportunities exist for pupils to develop their knowledge of contrasting areas during residential visits. Appropriate emphasis has been placed on improving pupils' understanding of environmental issues with the development of the school's own courtyard. The use of information and communication technology is developing satisfactorily and pupils use the Internet for research, such as when finding weather patterns in a range of countries across the world.
72. In **history**, samples of pupils' work met normally expected levels, which was also the case at the time of the last inspection. Planning in the subject is linked well to other curricular areas, such as uses of writing, art, the Internet and the locality around the school. For instance, Year 3 pupils learn about the history of the surrounding area, alongside geographical studies of the locality. Pupils' enjoyment of history is stimulated and extended by a good range of visits and visitors related to the topics they study. For example, opportunities are provided for them to interview local residents about the past, including the history of the school itself.

73. In the one geography lesson that was observed, teaching and learning were unsatisfactory. However, other evidence indicates that this quality is not typical of either the teacher concerned or of what is usual in the subject. It occurred largely because teaching was interrupted. Pupils were unsettled by having to leave their work to go to music. Learning was adversely affected because they did not properly regain concentration on their return, so progress was slower than it should be. In the history lesson, teaching was good, focusing on information about *The Great Fire of London*. Strengths included the use of resources to support pupils' interest and the encouragement of their imagination and involvement with what might have happened. As with geography, evidence of the development of practical skills was limited in the work sample. Examples of uncovering the past through the skilful use and interpretation of artefacts, scrutiny of ancient documents or the use of census information were apparent only infrequently.
74. Currently, co-ordination of both these subjects is satisfactory. The co-ordinators are new to the roles and have yet to establish their own developmental plans for their subject. However, day-to-day management of provision is good and sufficient resources are available to support teachers. Senior managers recognise the need to establish opportunities for direct monitoring of teaching, learning and what is taught. In both subjects, assessment is used to indicate how well pupils have got on. A new system for recording their achievements in all the non-core subjects is currently being introduced.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are often above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
- Teachers focus well on questions that have an impact on pupils' own personal development.
- Some weaknesses are apparent in uses of resources and artefacts.
- Overall, the subject is managed well.

Commentary

75. At the time of the last inspection, standards were described as matching expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. At that time, management of religious education was described as good. Since then, changes in staff have led to temporary arrangements to meet this responsibility. Nevertheless, much of pupils' work in Years 2 and 6 now indicates a higher level of attainment than that expected in the locally agreed syllabus and what was found in 1999, so these temporary measures have been successful in building on the previous position. This finding is especially so in relation to work on what can be learnt from religions. Overall achievement is therefore good. A strong contributory factor is pupils' very good attitudes to others, typified in their general politeness and kindness. In a lesson in Year 6, for example, pupils' behaviour and responses were excellent. They engaged well with everything that they were asked to do, taking part in discussion enthusiastically and recalling past learning about features of Judaism with considerable sensitivity, interest and accuracy.
76. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. A particularly strong feature is that teachers draw out the possible implications of what pupils learn, from situations in daily life. In Year 2, for example, what was taught included ideas about Jesus's stories of *The Lost Sheep* and *The Good Samaritan*. This work provided opportunities for pupils to express thoughts on how they should treat others, including implications for their own friendships. In a very good lesson that was observed in Year 4, good uses of a video, supported with photographic evidence, enabled the teacher to ask a series of challenging questions about why the featured modern Christians behaved in the ways that they did. Pupils understood that these people's commitment to helping others, today, is rooted in their responses to how Jesus had lived 2000

years ago. The teacher asked whether pupils thought that helping others is worthwhile in the modern world, and whether pupils thought that it brought rewards to the helpers, as well as the helped. When the class responded positively to such questions, she set them the challenge of thinking about what they might do, as children in Year 4, to help others in school and in the community. Her questioning style was very impressive, owing to its pacy which, at the same time, allowed pupils time to consider their answers. Good standards were also apparent in Year 6, although teaching lacked the support of resources and artefacts. As a result, its quality was simply satisfactory, as it did not permit the development of pupils' skills and knowledge through direct observation of religious artefacts. For example, although reference was made to prayer shawls and *Yarmulke* in teaching about *Bar-mitzvah* and *Bat-mitzvah*, no real examples were used and what was shown on an overhead projector was unclear. Even under these circumstances, pupils did well, offering good questions of their own, such as "How would twins celebrate *Bar-mitzvah*?" and "Why is it that *Bat-mitzvah* for girls is celebrated a year earlier?"

77. Currently, the headteacher is managing the subject and developments are planned to ensure that the school's scheme of work maintains its focus on what pupils might learn from religions. Links with the local church are good and future links with places of worship representing other religious communities are being explored. At around the time of the last inspection, the previous co-ordinator had succeeded in building up resources and artefacts successfully. However, in lessons that were observed, it emerged that teachers who had been in the school for at least a year or two were using more resources than was the case in a lesson taken by a new member of staff. It is therefore unclear whether induction arrangements in this subject are good enough. Another weakness in provision was apparent in variations of time allocated to the subject from one year group to another. This situation is in need of review, as it may well be related to overall lengths of available sessions during the day and when breaks and lunch are taken.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. It was possible to observe only three lessons altogether in art and design and music, and none in design and technology, so no overall judgements on provision have been made. Nevertheless, what was observed directly is reported on below.
79. In **art and design**, much of the work that was seen was of good quality. The subject is co-ordinated effectively and a portfolio, gathered during a whole-school project on the work of Picasso, contains many examples of pupils' paintings. Many of the collected examples are above the standard normally expected in the relevant age groups. A good lesson was observed in Year 5. The class teacher is also the co-ordinator and has very good knowledge of the subject. This factor was used well to introduce works by Jackson Pollock, Miroslav Sutej and Mark Rothko. As a result, pupils soon understood that emotions can be aroused by paintings and designs. Other examples, including the design of masks to show a distant audience in the ancient Greek theatre how characters might feel, and similar uses in modern carnivals were also discussed. Strong emphasis was placed on showing pupils how such effects are achieved, as a first step to producing similar work of their own in lessons that were planned to follow.
80. Work on display around the school provides evidence that pupils' skills are developed in good sequences, with teaching and learning in older age groups building well on what has gone before. Still-life sketches in Years 1 and 2, including *Flowers on Stems*, were carefully executed. Skills that pupils used are clearly used again and extended in Year 4. For example, sketches now used shade, half-tones and hatching effectively to achieve good three-dimensional effects in drawings of familiar objects. Links with history are strong, including portraiture in the Tudor style, and designs from ancient Greece and Egypt in appropriate years, while Aboriginal art made a useful cross-cultural link with work in geography.

81. At the time of the last inspection, work in **design and technology** was described as average. Recently, the school's own monitoring of work identified that products were often not finished effectively. A teacher with particular skills in the subject (nationally known as an *Advanced Skills Teacher*) from the local secondary school has been consulted and has worked alongside staff at the school. A good response has been to put available time for the subject together into extended periods, allowing projects of greater scope and challenge. As a result, pupils' work is of higher quality and the time to build and complete successfully what they design is now available. Several examples of completed work of good quality are now displayed in the school. During the inspection, for example, there were books with moving pictures and pop-ups. Pupils in Year 6 designed and made these items for children in the playgroup. The quality of the finish is generally good and pupils' designs resulted in opportunities for good cross-curricular links. For example, they decided to write their own stories, rather than use existing ones. Skills in word processing were also utilised in producing these books. Other notable products demonstrating a good finished quality were chairs that pupils in Year 2 produced for their teddy bears, and fireworks with moving parts to represent 'bangs' and 'fizzing' displays were made in Year 4. All these products suggest that pupils are achieving well and that strategic planning to improve standards is good.
82. Much of the work that was heard in two **music** lessons, during assemblies, as well as short observations of pupils who played recorders, was of a good standard. Singing especially was of a high quality. Very good teaching and learning were observed in each of the two lessons that were observed – one in Year 2 and the other in Year 6. Standards achieved in these lessons were above what is normally expected for the relevant ages. The teacher is a specialist musician who also acts as co-ordinator for the subject. She teaches it in all classes and her very thorough knowledge, management of pupils and teaching methods were the main contributory factors that led to pupils' interest and good acquisition of skills and understanding in the observed lessons. In the pre-inspection meeting, parents were pleased with the quality of music and this evidence suggests that they are fully justified in this view. In Year 6, the use of technical vocabulary was impressive, pupils and their teacher referred to 'four-part harmony' and 'soprano, alto, tenor and bass' during a discussion and appraisal of Farmer's *A Pretty Little Bonnie Lass*. Pupils were also very pleased with what they had learnt, rehearsing the terms enthusiastically to the headteacher, who came into the hall towards the end of the lesson. A strong feature of the lesson in Year 2 was the element of teaching in partnership with the deputy headteacher, also the class teacher and co-ordinator of information and communication technology. As a result, a music program was used on computers very effectively to enhance learning. All the singing that was heard in the inspection was accurate in both pitch and rhythm and was sung with enjoyment. As pupils kept together well, diction was also clear. Music contributes well to pupils' social and cultural development. A school choir visits an elderly people's home at Christmas and performances are arranged for parents. The good quality of singing contributes much to collective worship and reflection during assemblies.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good.
- Teaching and learning are good.

Commentary

83. Teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that all required elements of physical education are provided. The school offers a suitable range of opportunities to learn skills and techniques in all areas of the subject and makes good use of the facilities at its disposal. The school's own outdoor pool is used to provide swimming lessons to all classes during the summer. It is clearly good provision for building the confidence of beginners and

helping pupils to start to swim. However, the size of this pool is not conducive to the teaching of higher attainers and it is too shallow for effective work with the tallest and/or oldest pupils. Extra-curricular opportunities are offered in a variety of sports clubs after school, including netball and football. Nearly all pupils achieve well and, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards attained broadly match what is normally expected.

84. Teaching and learning are generally good. In a very good Year 6 dance lesson, pupils responded very quickly and sensibly to the teacher's explanations, listening carefully for suggested changes in activity and reacting sensitively to the music with variations in the pace of their movement. Pupils in this lesson selected from their own ideas and evaluated their own performances maturely. Furthermore, they achieved well, managing very clear and fluent moves in a difficult task, which required the combination of symmetrical and asymmetrical sequences. The teacher built well on previously acquired skills, setting activities of increasing complexity as the lesson progressed. Her interventions were always timely and consisted of additional explanations or words of encouragement whenever needed. Pupils' learning was enhanced by the use of their own sensitive evaluations that supported each other's improvement. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and teachers create a positive working atmosphere, in which all are eager to try new skills. In another lesson in Year 3, good planning and knowledge of the subject ensured that pupils enjoyed what they did. Nevertheless, the pace of this lesson was rather slow at times, so while pupils' learning was satisfactory, progress might otherwise have been at a faster rate.
85. Good links with personal and health education are evident. As a result, pupils are taught about the benefits of exercise to their health. Teachers' planning and questioning also make explicit scientific links. In response, pupils acquire good understanding of the physiological effects of vigorous exercise and the need to change into appropriate clothing for their lessons.
86. The subject is managed effectively by an enthusiastic new co-ordinator with a clear focus on future developments. However, current arrangements for managing the subject do not allow for her to observe colleagues' teaching and learning directly.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. It was possible to observe only one lesson in personal, social and health education, so no overall judgement has been made. However, discussions with staff and with pupils serving on the school council took place and planning was seen. Findings related to these elements are reported on.
88. Based on planning and policy, the programme for personal, social and health education is good. Specific lessons include good advice and guidance for pupils about how to keep safe and healthy, and provide opportunities to explore ideas of general wellbeing. During lessons in other subjects, good teaching made links with this learning. Provision for sex and relationships education and growing-up are provided. Parents are notified about this teaching and when it will occur, so they know that their children might ask particular questions at home.
89. In the one lesson that was observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good. This occurred in Year 5 and was related to the use of money. Pupils were asked to distinguish between essential items and 'luxuries' in the context of using available cash to spend on their classroom. Learning about the principles of decision-making was good and apt.
90. The school council is an effective means of developing pupils' ideas of society and democracy, while offering them a voice in the school's management. Pupils on the council expressed the view that their ideas are valued and that teachers are willing to listen to them. The extent to which all staff, including the co-ordinators for personal, social and health education and special educational needs, provide guidance to pupils that enhances their attitudes is clearly a strength of the school. Pupils are encouraged to choose their own charities and to be aware of others less fortunate than themselves. A recent example is their generous involvement in collecting for the Asian Tsunami Appeal.

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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
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).

