

INSPECTION REPORT

WROXTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Banbury

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123091

Headteacher: Reverend Susan Newby

Lead inspector: Linda Murgatroyd

Dates of inspection: 19 – 21 April 2005

Inspection number: 268318

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	91
School address:	Lampitt's Green Wroxton Banbury Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX15 6QJ
Telephone number:	01295 730298
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Rita Nicholson
Date of previous inspection:	1 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Wroxton Church of England Primary School is located in a village on the edge of Banbury. It has 91 pupils aged from three to eleven, smaller than average. Only about one tenth of the pupils live in the village, with other pupils coming from surrounding villages and some from Banbury. Over the school as a whole, boys outnumber girls by approximately three to two.

Although there is a range, children's attainment on entering the reception class is comparable to what might be found nationally. Some children are well prepared for school, with above average communication skills. Although pupils' socio-economic circumstances are broadly average, this is difficult to measure, as the school serves no school meals, so that the usual indicator does not apply in this school. The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds. There are few pupils with a mother tongue other than English, and none are judged by the school to be in the early stages of learning English.

The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well below average, as is the proportion of pupils with statements of special education need.

The school achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2004, and Schools Achievement Award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21541	Linda Murgatroyd	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage English Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language
32767	John Anthony	Lay inspector	
22397	Stuart Fowler	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Wroxton Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has the wellbeing of its pupils as a high priority. By the end of their time in school, pupils reach standards which are above average, but the rate of progress varies during their time in school. Behaviour is very good; pupils have very positive attitudes to their work. Relationships within the school are very caring. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with consistently good teaching in the upper part of the school, but some weaknesses in the Foundation Stage and early Key Stage 1. The school is effectively led by the headteacher, well supported by her deputy. Management is satisfactory. Governors' involvement is very good. The school provides sound value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, and behave very well.
- By the time they are 11, pupils achieve higher results than average in national tests.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 national tests are below the national average.
- There is insufficient teaching of writing skills in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Some parents would like more information about their children's education.
- Governors play a very active role in the school's development.
- School management has not taken vigorous enough action on some weaknesses.
- There is some good practice in assessment, but it is not consistent across the school, or used well enough to plan the next steps for individuals.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils, and relationships within the school are very good.

Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. All the key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed. The proportion of good teaching seen during this inspection was higher than during the previous one, although a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the current inspection. There have been other improvements, such as the provision for information and communication technology, and many of the strengths previously identified have been maintained. However, the results in Key Stage 1 national tests have fallen, and the trend over time has been slightly lower than average. Parents of some children are less pleased with the school's provision than at the last inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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.

As this is a very small school, statistical analysis may not be reliable, as the performance of individual pupils has a large impact on percentages. By the time they are 11, pupils' standards are above the national average, and the majority have made satisfactory progress over their time in school. At the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2004, results were below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The findings of the inspection are that standards for the current seven-year-olds are

still below average in reading and writing, but improving. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in mathematics are above average, but the presentation of their work does not reflect this. Progress, particularly in reading and writing, is not even across the school and is better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. Progress in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, but does not build systematically enough on what children already know, understand and can do. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls, despite the unbalanced numbers. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, as the support they receive is well focused.

Behaviour is very good. Children make very positive relationships with each other and with adults, and have very good attitudes to learning. Pupils are considerate towards one another, and there is very little bullying. Pupils' personal development is good overall.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with consistently good teaching from Year 2 upwards, mainly in Year 6. There is a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. In the early part of the school, writing skills are not taught systematically enough. Most pupils learn well because teachers promote very good attitudes. Some younger pupils would make faster progress if teachers used their assessments to plan the next steps in more detail.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, with good strategies in Key Stage 2 for teaching literacy skills in other subjects. Subjects are effectively linked to help to make learning more meaningful. A good range of additional activities includes many pupils and enriches the curriculum. The good guidance and support given to pupils mean that they are safe and well looked after. Links with schools in the local partnership are very good, encouraging pupils to succeed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, and is successful in achieving a school with a positive climate for learning. She and the deputy headteacher work well together in providing leadership. Management is satisfactory, but there needs to be a clearer focus on monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Governors take their responsibilities very seriously, and provide very effective support to the school. Financial management is good, but resources to allow managers time to monitor teaching and learning are not currently made available.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is mainly successful at working with parents, although a minority of parents of younger children are less happy and would like more information about their children's education, particularly about how to help their children at home.

Pupils appreciate the school. Over four fifths of pupils feel that teaching is interesting and challenging, and that they are helped to improve their work. They are also confident that they are listened to by staff, and could approach an adult in school if there was a problem.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Improve the teaching of writing skills and the presentation of pupils' work in Key Stage 1.
- Improve the quality of information for parents about their children's education.
- Extend the good practice in assessment to ensure that teachers use it to plan what pupils need to learn next and to provide enough challenge, particularly for the youngest children.
- Review resources to allow managers to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and to disseminate good practice more consistently.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Over their time in the school, pupils make satisfactory progress. Whilst results in national tests for seven-year-olds are below average, by the time they are 11, pupils are doing better than others of their age.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Satisfactory achievement by the time pupils are 11, with results well above the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science.
- Standards for seven year olds were below average in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2004 national tests.
- Progress in writing in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory, and this has a negative effect on other subjects of the curriculum.
- The pace of improvement increases significantly in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

Commentary

Please note that because there are very small numbers of pupils in each age group, there may be significant variations from year to year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.5 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.1 (15.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.1 (18.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (27.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	30.0 (27.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.5 (29.4)	28.6 (28.6)

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

1. Although children enter the school with a range of skills, on average they are achieving what might be expected for children of their age. Some children have good knowledge and understanding of the world around them and communicate well with adults and each other.
2. By the time pupils leave the school at 11, they have made satisfactory progress, although this has not been consistent over their time in the school. In the Key Stage 2 national tests in 2004, standards in English and mathematics were well above the national average, and above average in science. The proportions of pupils reaching the higher level were average in English and science, and above average in mathematics. Comparisons with schools with

similar results for seven-year-olds in 2000 are very high for pupils reaching the expected level or above taken together, although less favourable when just the higher level is examined. The majority of pupils have been in the school since they were aged seven, and the progress they have made overall is slightly below what might have been expected when looking at their results in as seven year olds, indicating that some very intelligent pupils might have done even better.

3. The picture for Key Stage 1 is less favourable. Progress has been unsatisfactory in reading, writing and mathematics, although this is currently improving. In the 2004 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards were below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading was close to the national average, but was well below average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science were very high for pupils reaching the expected level and above taken together, but below average for those reaching the higher level.
4. In particular, standards in writing in Key Stage 1 are below average, and progress is unsatisfactory. Although many pupils can write at length, they have not systematically been taught the technical skills of writing, such as spelling and attention to presentation. This means that written work in other subjects, such as science and the humanities, does not always show what pupils know and understand. However, the findings of the inspection were that standards are rising, with more rapid progress in mathematics and science than in reading and writing.
5. The progress that pupils make during Key Stage 2 is good. They make up for some of the low achievement of Key Stage 1, and manage to reach the expected levels by the time they are aged 11. This is because the teaching in the two older classes is consistently good, and challenges pupils to do their best.
6. Overall, the progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good, and the majority are well supported to narrow the gap with their peers. The few pupils learning English as an additional language achieve equivalently to their peers. The school has at present only identified one gifted pupil who makes good use of the additional challenge provide by the school. Although girls are outnumbered by boys in most classes, they did better than boys in the 2004 Key Stage 2 tests. However, the inspection team found no significant differences in the current standards of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils' moral and social welfare is a priority in the school, with high expectations of pupils' conduct which results in very good behaviour overall.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are very positive; they enjoy being at school and show interest in all aspects of school life.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good, which is demonstrated by the very cordial and courteous attitudes both to each other and to members of staff and visitors.
- Attendance is above the national average, and there is a high standard of punctuality, both at the start of the school day and during the day.
- The overall development of pupils throughout their primary school career is caring and supportive.
- The range of information for pupils in the form of books and displays of the cultural traditions of others is limited.

Commentary

7. Behaviour is very good. Pupils' behaviour during lessons is lively, but this is more due to spontaneous interested reaction to the lesson than any sense of disorder. Pupils are encouraged to contribute during lessons, and they do so politely, but also with keenness to answer questions and to show that they are learning. Their relationships with each other are very positive and helpful. Pupils are kind and considerate to each other. It is common practice for pupils with a greater grasp of a topic to offer help to a pupil who might be experiencing difficulty with some aspect of a lesson.
8. The good personal development of pupils and their welfare are priorities for the school, and much emphasis is given to cultivating the whole child. As a result, at the end of their career in the school pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their school life. The school has established procedures to deal with any concerns the children might have about anyone's conduct, and all the pupils interviewed stated that they were confident in approaching a member of staff or the headteacher if they had any problems with the behaviour of another pupil. Because the school is very small, with two year groups sharing each of the lower classes, pupils get to know each other very well. The teachers also know their pupils well, and are able to control behaviour without recourse to more complicated systems of management. Behaviour is thus monitored informally, but effectively. The strategy for dealing with any serious cases of misbehaviour is through direct consultation with parents. Some parents expressed concern that bullying exists at the school and that more could be done to remedy it. No evidence of bullying was seen during the inspection, and all the children interviewed were adamant that there is no bullying at the school.
9. Pupils in general enter the school with already reasonably well developed maturity for their age, and by the end of the reception year are meeting the expectations for children of their age in personal development. The behaviour of pupils is appropriate to their age at each level of the school, and pupils in Year 6 are articulate, confident and well-adjusted. Pupils with special educational needs and the few who are learning English as an additional language also have very positive attitudes to learning which ensure that they make good progress.
10. Provision for the moral and social development of pupils is a major strength of the school. Pupils grow in social confidence throughout their career at the school, displaying a self-assuredness that comes with a good grounding in social and moral norms. School rules are clearly and simply set out on laminated posters which are displayed throughout the school, and letters home remind parents of aspects of the school's approach to matters of social and moral importance which are current at the time.
11. Daily assemblies provide a focus for the spiritual development of pupils. Serious issues are addressed in a sensitive and straightforward way. During one assembly, kind and hard-hearted attitudes were effectively portrayed by reference to practical examples using lemon and water. The assemblies feature acts of worship, including prayers, and have a reflective atmosphere. Many pupils on walking into the school hall from their classrooms for assembly unselfconsciously sing or hum to the hymns being played in the background. There are strong links with the two local churches in the village, and members of the local clergy are frequent visitors to the school, in keeping with its religious character.
12. The school develops strong, socially responsible attitudes, the emphasis of which is based on Christian values. Money is raised for charitable ventures, especially in Africa, where an initiative to help fund a scheme to purchase farm animals is supported financially. The use of the house system and the election of house captains help pupils to understand some of the responsibilities of living in a community.
13. Appreciation of their own cultural traditions is good, with opportunities to take part in musical and dramatic productions. The Comenius 1 School Partnership scheme (My Culture, Your Culture, Our Culture) seeks to compare educational systems through a relationship with schools in Finland and Spain. The programme provides topics of common interest, encourages communication and shares activities. Broader reference to the cultural traditions

of non-European cultures is not so evident. Pupils' insight into other civilisations has been approached by a topic-based approach to teaching history and geography, for example through the perspective of ancient and modern Egypt. However, there is insufficient focus on raising the profile of the broad variety of other cultures around the world, through displays, books and integration in topic work to boost pupils' awareness and further enhance the otherwise good work done in the school to broaden their understanding and sense of cultural perspective.

Attendance

14. Attendance is good. The school has effective measures in place to monitor absence and punctuality. The most recent statistics show that by comparison with national averages attendance during the last academic year was above average. There was no unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive punctually and lessons begin on time. During the meeting with parents there was agreement that attendance at the school is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.5	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

15. There were no exclusions in 2003 to 2004.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. Teaching is satisfactory overall, the curriculum is good, and pupils learn well. The school takes very good care of its pupils, and has effective links with parents, other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with consistently good teaching in Years 2 to 6. Learning is good: pupils are interested in their work and try hard even when teaching is merely satisfactory. Assessment is well used from Year 2 to give feedback to pupils, but is not always well used to plan work for individual pupils, especially for the youngest children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the 66 per cent of good lessons, teachers have high expectations and use questions effectively, constantly challenging pupils to achieve high standards of work and behaviour.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in lower Key Stage 1 stimulates pupils' interest in their work, but does not always offer enough challenge.
- The teaching of writing in the lower part of the school is not sufficiently focused on helping pupils with spelling and presentation.
- Pupils learn well and try hard to concentrate and do their best.
- There is good practice in assessment in upper Key Stage 2, but this is not consistent across the school.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support to pupils, including those with special educational needs.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	0	12	5	1	0	0

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

Commentary

16. Teaching in upper Key Stage 1 and throughout Key Stage 2 is consistently good. Lessons in these classes are characterised by high expectations, good subject knowledge and good use of questioning that keep pupils interested. Staff make it clear that they expect good behaviour, and their very good knowledge of their pupils helps them to achieve this. Teachers are particularly effective at using open-ended questions with pupils, challenging them to explain their thinking and to build on each other's ideas in their answers. Teachers in Years 4, 5 and 6 skilfully use an integrated approach to the teaching of literacy within subjects such as history and geography, helping to make the learning of skills meaningful. This practice is developing in Years 2 and 3, but is not yet fully established. As a result of this good teaching, pupils are confident and the work achieved is of a good standard.
17. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and lower Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, although some unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. The approach to teaching in this class successfully builds on some aspects of children's starting points, such as their personal, emotional and social development, and children are confident to talk to the class and to adults, have good skills in personal hygiene and behave very well. Teaching is very effective in stimulating pupils' interest, and as a result they are keen to take part in the range of activities provided. The practice of splitting the class for much of the time between the two year groups ensures that activities can be provided to address the needs of the different age groups, and teaching assistants provide very effective support. However, what teachers expect pupils to learn from these activities is not always made clear, especially for individuals. The teaching of literacy to both age groups does not focus enough on a systematic approach to helping pupils to develop the skills they need to write and spell accurately, and as a result, not enough progress is made in these aspects of writing. This was a characteristic of the unsatisfactory lesson seen, where expectations were too low and there were many missed opportunities to draw children's attention to the text to help them to recognise spelling patterns and common words.
18. Lack of focus on spelling and presentation has also been an issue for the current Year 2 pupils, and this has also had an impact on other subjects where recorded work does not demonstrate the good levels of knowledge that pupils have. Improvements are being made in the teaching of these skills in that age group, and as a result, standards are rising.
19. Throughout the school, pupils have good attitudes to learning, and show interest and enthusiasm. From the youngest children, they are keen to join in activities and answer questions, and settle very quickly to their work. Pupils from Year 1 upwards read out their work with confidence, knowing that others will be appreciative and helpful. Older children apply themselves well, and develop good habits of concentration and self-reliance. As a result of these positive attitudes, learning is good overall. Even in some lessons where teaching is only satisfactory, learning is good because pupils respond well and try to do their best. Over four-fifths of pupils filling in the questionnaire thought that they worked hard, found out new things in lessons and got help when they were stuck. Most pupils are keen to learn, especially when they are challenged by work that interests them.
20. In upper Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2, teachers use a number of effective strategies to assess pupils' work as they teach and give feedback. They write comments about pupils' work, some invite responses to these comments, and they let pupils know how they can improve their work. As a result, many pupils know what they have to do to improve or reach

the higher levels in their work. For the youngest children, comments about their work are encouraging, but related only to content, and do not give ideas about improvement. In the best practice, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own and each other's work against clear criteria. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson in which pupils were asked to take notes about a video on the importance of the River Nile in ancient and modern Egypt, and use these to compile a report in appropriate style. Pupils made good use of a checklist on the features of effective report-writing to assess their own work and that of others, alongside the teacher's previous comments, and could understand exactly what they had to do to achieve well in the task. This good practice is not yet consistent throughout the school.

21. Pupils' standards are carefully tracked, with accurate predictions for the standards they will reach in national tests, and this system is well used to keep teachers' expectations high in most classes. However, the practice of using assessment information to plan work at appropriate levels is not consistent. In the upper part of the school, teachers know their pupils well enough to challenge them appropriately without detailed written planning for individuals, but this is not always the case further down the school. In the Foundation Stage and lower Key Stage 1, staff maintain profiles of children's attainment relating to the steps in learning that children are expected to take during this period. However, these are not used to plan in detail for individuals and groups of children so that they are challenged to achieve the highest standards they can. This means that some children could make more rapid progress, particularly in writing. Formal assessment procedures are not yet in place for foundation subjects, so that work is not always planned for pupils at different levels of knowledge and skills in these subjects. Pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans, with targets for improving their learning, and these provide clear guidance for teachers and other staff who support them. They are based on regular assessment, and this contributes to the good progress made by these pupils.
22. All classes except Year 6 have the support of teaching assistants for most of the week. The quality of the work of these staff is consistently good. They work very well in collaboration with teachers, and show very good knowledge of the subjects in which they provide support. They use appropriate language, and have very positive relationships with pupils. In particular, the work with pupils with special educational needs is very good, and is influential in the good progress made by these pupils. Pupils also benefit from the effective work of a number of volunteers, who also provide sensitive and well-focused support of a high standard.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall. It is broad and balanced and enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The school has addressed successfully the weaknesses in provision that were identified in the previous report. Resources are satisfactory overall but there are weaknesses in accommodation.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is enriched by a good range of clubs, educational visits and visitors.
- Cross-curricular links are a strength of the curriculum.
- The school provides very good support for pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make good progress.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Resources for information and communication technology are improving.
- The attractive external accommodation is used effectively.
- The school hall is too small to enable all aspects of the physical education curriculum to be taught effectively.

Commentary

23. A comprehensive programme of clubs, visits and visitors enriches the curriculum. Extra-curricular provision includes clubs for drama, chess, knitting and football. In addition, pupils have opportunities to play in the school recorder groups and to participate in music and dance festivals. A planned programme of visits and visitors adds to this enrichment. For example, pupils visit Harcourt Arboretum as part of their scientific studies; the local village church to develop their knowledge and understanding of religion and pupils in Key Stage 2 enjoy a residential experience to Hook Court in Dorset. Visitors to the school include Bjarni the Viking, teachers from the local secondary school and visiting performers such as theatre groups. The school provides a wide range of learning experiences through curriculum innovation and has established strong curriculum and sporting links with other local primary schools and the secondary school. Such varied experiences make the curriculum interesting and provide pupils with good opportunities for learning.
24. At the time of the previous inspection, time allocations for the foundation subjects needed to be adjusted and this has been done. Statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and religious education are now met. The school is committed to developing a curriculum where subjects are taught as part of a planned topic and this is now a strength of the provision in upper Key Stage 2. This recently adopted strategy is proving popular with pupils and staff, and staff are aware of the need to ensure that progression and continuity are achieved in all subjects and that all pupils are provided with appropriate challenge.
25. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils achieve well. Their needs are identified early in their school life and suitable individual programmes of work are set for them. As pupils progress through the school; they receive very good support from committed and well-qualified learning support assistants within lessons and when withdrawn to work as individuals and in small groups. Parents are informed of their children's progress and are invited into school when statements and targets are reviewed. As a result, parents have a good understanding of the progress that their children are achieving.
26. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and this makes a very important contribution to pupils' personal development, their positive attitudes and their very good behaviour. Personal, social and health education is taught effectively in circle time lessons, where emerging problems can be discussed and through other curricular areas, particularly science and religious education. The school does not currently teach sex and relationships education, but this policy is under review. Pupils participate in the national 'Fruit and Vegetable' scheme and regular visits from the 'Life Education Bus' help pupils to develop their individual life skills. Teaching about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse is included in the curriculum.
27. At the time of the previous inspection, resources for information and communication technology were barely satisfactory and pupils did not have regular opportunities to develop their skills in this curriculum area. This issue has been addressed well and resources have improved considerably. The school has invested in a new computer suite and this is used effectively. Pupils now have regular access to computers and these are used well to support teaching and learning in other curricular areas. Interactive whiteboards in two classrooms are beginning to be used effectively and further whiteboards are to be purchased for other classes.
28. The school grounds provide an attractive and stimulating environment that is used effectively to enhance learning in a variety of curricular areas, such as for establishing mathematics trails, conducting science experiments and experiencing a range of art and design activities. There have been recent improvements to the internal accommodation through the development of the computer suite and a new classroom for pupils in Year 6 is under construction. However, although staff and pupils are very resourceful, the internal accommodation of the school is unsatisfactory. The school hall is very small and is unsuitable for physical education lessons. As a result, teachers cannot effectively deliver aspects of the physical education curriculum, notably lessons in dance and gymnastics, and this restricts

pupils' learning. Noise from the central hall disturbs work in other classrooms and various building extensions have not been planned with sufficient thought to the needs of the school.

29. The accommodation for reception and Year 1 children is also unsatisfactory in some aspects. The narrowness of some parts of the room makes it difficult to use effectively, and prevents the provision of a wide range of activities from which children can choose. There is no easy access to outside play space, limiting the opportunities for physical development. Some of these issues are to be addressed during the current building works.
30. There is an adequate number of teaching staff, although the headteacher's heavy teaching load means that she does not always have the time she needs for management. Each class has a teaching assistant for at least part of every day, and pupils benefit from the high quality of this good level of support.

Care, guidance and support

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety features highly in the school's priorities, and effective measures are in place.
- The high quality of relationships among pupils, and between pupils and staff, contributes to the very caring, safe and secure environment.

Commentary

31. The care of pupils is a priority within the school, and provision for their welfare features throughout the school day. The caretaker visits the school three times each day to ensure that cleaning and hygiene are maintained at a high standard, and care outside the classroom is monitored by all members of staff. Transition from one function to another in the multi-purpose hall is well supervised and orderly; noise is kept to an appropriate level. Very good procedures are in place for health and safety checks involving the link governor with responsibility for health and safety. The school grounds are maintained to a high standard with safety a key feature of the play area. The outside environment is healthy and safe. Healthy eating is encouraged through a policy of children eating only fruit at the morning break. A running club was introduced in 2004. All staff are made aware of child protection procedures, and further child protection training is planned for June.
32. Provision for personal, social and health education is good, with the emphasis on values and citizenship, and ready access to staff is available for all pupils. Class teachers and support staff know pupils well. They are readily available to give guidance to pupils about any individual concerns that arise. Pupils with special educational needs and the few for whom English is not the first language are well supported. Pupils' academic progress is recorded on assessment records as they move up through the school, and all staff use their knowledge of the pupils to monitor their personal development.
33. Relationships are positive and very caring, both in the quality of relationships between pupils, and those between pupils and staff, which contributes to a very safe and secure environment. Almost all pupils completing the questionnaire were confident that there was an adult in school that they would go to if they were worried. There is a Buddy system which works well, a view supported by the accounts of pupils interviewed. Children entering the reception class are made most welcome, and the careful induction arrangements enable them to settle quickly into the life of the school. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for transfer at age 11, supported by the very good link with the Warriner School to which they transfer. Pupils are encouraged to put forward views during class discussions including on aspects such as behaviour rules and school activities.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Overall, the school's links with parents, other schools and the community are good, with very good links with other schools. However, parents' confidence in aspects of the school varies, mainly depending on the age group of their children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good links with other primary schools and the main destination secondary school.
- The relationship with many parents is very good.
- The very good relationship with many parents does not apply to all, and a sizeable minority of parents, mainly those of the younger children, feel that they need better communication of factors relating to their children's education.
- Links with the local community, especially with the local churches, are good.
- School reports could contain more detailed information on the standards achieved by individual pupils, especially in reception and Year 1.

Commentary

34. There are very good links with the partnership of the Warriner Secondary School, to which most pupils progress, and its feeder primary schools. The ongoing liaison with these schools supports Year 6 transfer very well, and provides a source of staff development and the sharing of curriculum expertise. The link also gives pupils opportunities for a range of sporting and artistic activities with pupils in other schools, a valuable experience for pupils in a very small school.
35. Many parents are very supportive of the standard of education provided by the school and consider their relationship with the school to be good. Most parents responding to the questionnaire feel that the school takes account of their concerns, and feel confident in approaching the school. The majority of parents of children with special educational needs are closely involved in discussions about their children's progress, and are appreciative of the school's support. Parents in Year 6 are very pleased with provision overall. Some parents in the middle years are less satisfied, and there is some discord further down the school. Some parents of children in the earlier years stated clearly that they are very pleased with all aspects of the school's work and communication, and that the school takes great care to look after the best interests of their children.
36. However, the response is mixed and a sizeable minority of parents feel that the school does not keep them well informed about their child's progress and are not confident that their concerns are taken account of. A significant number of parents are dissatisfied with communication, and would like more information about how to help their children at home. This is especially the case in reception and Year 1, where a change of teaching methods was not clearly explained to parents beforehand. This has caused anxiety, and a concern about whether their children are being given work which is appropriate to stretch and challenge them. The school is now aware of this problem, and has put an action plan in place to address it as a high priority.
37. Although there are no business links, strong ties exist with village life, from which many of the governors are drawn, and with the local parish. Governors are very involved in the life of the school and visit regularly. Some pupils attend the local Methodist hall for a breakfast club, and a partnership with the Farleigh Dickenson University, an American university with premises in the village, brings wider links into school through offering help to train American teachers. An international link with schools in Spain and Finland also contributes to pupils' knowledge of the wider world.
38. Overall, strategies to involve parents are effective and there is a good range of communication. Letters home to parents are clear and informative and provide dates of events planned in the school. There is a well-organised and active parent teacher association which holds bazaars and fetes, and raises funds to provide equipment for the school, notably equipping the outside area with an adventure playground, and providing books and computers. Members assist in classrooms and listen to pupils read, contributing to the progress pupils make.
39. A parents' evening is provided in December, and annual reports are completed in July. Most reports are informative, but do not provide information as to specific standards achieved by

individual pupils. Sampling indicates that reports higher up the school are more informative than those in reception and Year 1 which are brief. School reports in Year 6 tend to be more highly individualised. The school prospectus is clear and gives all necessary information, although it is rather formal in style.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and management is satisfactory. The governance of the school is very good and all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school governors understand the school very well and use their wide range of experience to support and challenge.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and is committed to raising standards of achievement.
- Finances are well managed and the school evaluates its spending carefully.
- There has not been enough monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure that good practice is evenly spread throughout the school.

Commentary

40. The governors play a strong role in the development of the school and share their expertise effectively. They have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are very involved in all aspects of school life. Many of the governors visit the school on a regular basis and support teachers within the classroom. They have ensured that all statutory requirements have been met and have recently reviewed and updated most school policies. Governors are fully involved in the development and implementation of the school development plan and have initiated their own governor development plan. The chair of governors has a good understanding of her role and has developed strong teamwork within the governing body, as well as a very positive working relationship with the headteacher. She has been anxious to ensure that the governors are very well informed to act as 'critical friends' of the headteacher by examining aspects of the school's performance and challenging and debating matters of strategy. Governors, such as those with responsibility for special educational needs and curriculum management, have established links with subject co-ordinators and specific year groups and their regular visits to the school are well focused.
41. The headteacher provides good leadership and has worked hard to establish a supportive atmosphere for staff within the school and a positive climate for learning. She is committed to raising standards of achievement and has recently developed and implemented an integrated curriculum to address areas of weakness within the school. She receives very good support from the deputy headteacher and they work very well as a team. The headteacher maintains a considerable teaching commitment and this has a significant impact upon the high standards of attainment that are achieved by pupils in Year 6. However, this does limit the amount of time that she can dedicate to leadership and management.
42. The headteacher knows her pupils well and is very committed to including and supporting pupils of all abilities and backgrounds so that they achieve well in all aspects of school life. For example, she has appointed some highly motivated and well-qualified learning support assistants who help to ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress within the school.
43. The financial management of the school is good and spending decisions are closely linked to the priorities set out in the school development plan. The headteacher works closely with the chair of finance to set the annual budget and governors are kept fully informed on all financial matters. The school is well served by the efficient school bursar who regularly produces monitoring reports on school finances. Additional funds and specific funds are used

appropriately to support educational priorities and the principles of best value are applied well, such as when providing a new classroom for pupils in Year 6. There are clear priorities for future spending, which include the provision of additional learning support, but have not addressed the need for resources to allow more direct monitoring of teaching and learning. The very enthusiastic school secretary carries out day-to-day administration in an efficient and cheerful manner.

44. Although some monitoring does take place, curriculum co-ordinators have yet to monitor teaching and learning within their curricular areas. As a result, they are not fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses within their subject areas or of the overall standards that pupils achieve. Good practice has not been sufficiently shared across the whole school. The newly implemented integrated curriculum will need careful management to ensure that knowledge, skills and understanding are developed in a progressive manner.
45. The management of the school is satisfactory overall, although there are some weaknesses to be addressed. The school has established and implemented systems to enable self-evaluation to take place. However, these have not been applied with sufficient rigour to prevent some underachievement in Key Stage 1, to improve sufficiently standards of writing throughout the school or to achieve consistently good teaching across all key stages. The headteachers, governors and senior staff are now putting systems in place to address these issues. Their commitment to the school is high, and because of this, the capacity for improvement is good.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	257,115
Total expenditure	269,909
Expenditure per pupil	2,904

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	35,750
Balance carried forward to the next	22,956

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** overall, although there are strengths and weaknesses in provision in different areas of learning. Teaching provides a satisfactory range of activities, and stimulates children's interest, but does not build well enough on their starting points. These judgements are based on two lessons observed, as well as scrutiny of children's books and other work on display, general observations of the range of activities, teachers' planning and assessments, and discussion with adults and children.

Although children enter the reception class with a range of skills and experience, on average these are close to those expected for children of their age. A significant minority of children have above average communication skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children achieve at a satisfactory pace in some areas of learning, and by the time they transfer to Year 1, standards continue to be of an average level. Some children have not made enough progress in writing skills.

Teaching in this key stage is encouraging and positive, and pupils enjoy school and gain in confidence. However, in some respects, expectations of what children might achieve are too low. There is some detailed assessment, referenced to the 'stepping stones' for learning, but these are not used well enough to plan carefully and to target activities and experiences for particular children based on what they already know, understand and can do, and as a result, some children are not given work which challenges them enough, especially in literacy. This leads to some under-achievement for these children, especially in writing.

The curriculum is satisfactorily planned over the year to provide a range of activities built around topics. Because the class includes Year 1 pupils, planning also makes reference to the appropriate National Curriculum programmes of study, but does not always make use of these where they are appropriate for more able children. The adults in the class work well together and children are often taught in their own age group by splitting the class for some activities, allowing for age-appropriate activities to take place. At present, accommodation is somewhat limited as some parts of the classroom are very narrow, and this restricts the number of activities that can be provided from which children can choose to work independently. There is no dedicated outside play space, although the current building works include access to the outside area, as well as additional space inside. Resources are satisfactory and well used.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and show interest in their activities.
- The care and encouragement of all adults boost children's confidence.

Commentary

46. This area of learning is a high priority for staff, to ensure that children develop their confidence and an interest in learning. They make good progress because there are clear routines which help them to settle into school, and the adults around them are encouraging and positive. Children are developing a sense of right and wrong, and are kind and considerate to each other. For example, one child spontaneously offered to lend a painting shirt to a classmate who had forgotten hers, and others were seen helping each other to build a bird's nest. Many instances of children working and playing together well were seen during the inspection, including across gender groups. They know when to listen and take turns. During class

discussions, children are keen to participate and share their knowledge about the world, building on each other's ideas. Children work with concentration and purpose on given tasks, although at present there are not enough opportunities for them to select from a range of activities to develop independence. They persevere, even when they find things difficult. They organise themselves for activities, getting aprons for messy tasks and washing their hands afterwards without being reminded. Children are on course to meet the early learning goals in this area by the time they enter Year 1.

47. Teaching in this area of learning is good. Adults use plenty of encouragement and praise to build caring relationships, resulting in children who are happy, secure and developing in self-confidence. Opportunities take place throughout the day for children to talk about themselves and their lives, often in the larger group where they also develop their speaking and listening skills.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **unsatisfactory**. Only one formal session of this area of learning was seen, and the judgement is also based on analysis of children's work, teachers' records and planning and discussion with staff and children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many children enter the reception class with good communication skills but these are not built on in a systematic way.
- Expectations of what children can achieve are too low.
- Children need more guidance in forming letters, learning spelling patterns and recognising and writing familiar words accurately.
- Teachers and support staff provide good opportunities to develop children's speaking and listening skills.

Commentary

48. A significant proportion of children enter the reception class well prepared for school in this area of learning, but the majority do not make satisfactory progress in reading and writing. Although early assessment of children's skills takes place, these assessments are not used to plan in detail what children need to learn next, and activities are aimed at the whole group instead of being amended for children whose knowledge and understanding are at different levels. Children's books show little evidence of the systematic building of phonic awareness, or of teaching of spelling patterns or the accurate writing of common words.
49. Expectations are low. For example, in the lesson seen, there were missed opportunities to draw children's attention to the text to point out spelling patterns and familiar words, the discussion of the poem demanded little of children, and the follow-up task did not require them to record anything in writing, although most children were capable of doing so. Although two children wrote their names unaided, there did not seem to be any support for those who were not yet able to do so without help. Some of the terms for classroom activities do not help children to develop an accurate vocabulary.
50. Letter formation is practised in handwriting books, but accuracy is not always insisted upon, and as a result, some children do not form letters correctly, or transfer what they practise to their other writing. There are few indications in children's books that the sounds that letters make are systematically taught. Some prompts for spelling common words are displayed on tables and on the wall, but there is little indication that they are used. There is some writing for different purposes; for example, when making birds' nests, children had a list of possible materials to tick off. There is a writing corner with a range of materials to stimulate interest in writing. Marking is encouraging and sometimes has comments about the content, but rarely makes suggestions about how children can improve their work. As a result, by the time they enter Year 1, although most children will willingly try to write, their skills are not well

developed, and many are not able to spell common words with accuracy although they do make sensible suggestions about words they know less well. Although these are indicators of meeting some of the goals for their age, it is not sufficient for children who have entered the reception class with some writing skills already.

51. Reception children take books home to read, and parents make comments in home-school books. The class is well supplied with stimulating story books, and children can talk with interest about the stories and non-fiction they have read. Many children are beginning to read with some fluency but they have few strategies for tackling unknown words.
52. Because of the supportive atmosphere in the class and the number of opportunities to talk to the group, children are developing good speaking and listening skills. They speak with confidence about their activities and interests, and answer questions enthusiastically. Many children have a good vocabulary, but there is little evidence that this is because of a planned focus during teaching.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**. Although no specific sessions were observed, indications from planning, from observing the range of activities and from observing teaching in other areas of learning would support this judgement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make satisfactory progress.

Commentary

53. Children's assessment profiles show that they reach the expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. Children count together and make repetitive patterns. More able reception children are beginning to count on to carry out simple addition and subtraction. Most count accurately numbers to 20, but a few are still learning to recognise numbers. The majority know the months of the year and when their birthdays are.
54. From planning documents, as well as from observing the range of activities on offer, it appears that the mathematical curriculum is satisfactorily covered. Teachers' long-term planning shows a range of activities to promote mathematical understanding, and there are displays related to counting.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Only limited judgements can be made on provision or standards in these areas of learning. All three areas of learning are covered by topic work and are planned in an integrated way. During the inspection, children were observed in a range of creative and physical activities, but not in sufficient detail to make judgements about their standards. Discussion with children and observations were sufficient to determine that they have a good general knowledge and can talk about their interests and activities. From the planning documents and the range of activities set out, it is evident that the curriculum in these areas has some strengths and some weaknesses. Overall, opportunities for children to choose their own activities are limited, in part by the accommodation and lack of easy access to outside play space.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's natural curiosity is promoted through exposure to interesting experiences.
- There are too few opportunities for children to choose from a range of activities, including access to an outdoor area.

Commentary

55. Many children enter the reception year with good **knowledge and understanding of the world** for their age. Questioning challenges children to express their ideas and discuss their experiences. Many children are able to talk about events in their lives, and describe not only features of where they live but issues about the wider world. For example, in a joint session with Year 1, some children were able to discuss different types of whales, and another child looking at the pictures in a book about animals could talk about meat eaters and non-meat eaters. There is access to a computer, but no evidence was seen of children's use of it. From observing interactions between children, it is evident that they are encouraged to respect the feelings and beliefs of others.
56. In **creative development**, children were observed recreating birds' nests with a range of materials they had brought from home and using clay to make hedgehogs, linked to the poetry they had been looking at in their literacy lessons. The teaching assistant working with them on this task skilfully combined making suggestions about technique with discussion of the features of the animal. Although offering good support to those who wanted it, she allowed children to use the clay in their own way. However, there was little opportunity for them to select the appropriate tools in either task. Staff provide a variety of other activities, including construction, dressing up, collage, printing and drawing, but there were not seen in use during the inspection, although some are reflected in displays. Children have opportunities to sing action rhymes and could remember the sequence, correcting the teacher when she omitted a stage.
57. For **physical development**, children go outside to the playground with other children at playtime, and take part in physical education sessions. When using small tools such as brushes and pencils, children work carefully and most have good control. As they do not have ready access to outside play space as part of the class routine, there are few opportunities for children to swing on a climbing frame or ride wheeled toys to develop their control and confidence in large movements or awareness of space. Current building works include a larger and more manageable space indoors and easier access to the outdoor area. If used effectively, these developments have the capacity to improve the provision.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall. It is good in Key Stage 2, but there are weaknesses in lower Key Stage 1.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Standards are below average at the end of Year 2.
- Writing skills are not taught well enough when pupils first enter the school.
- Progress improves rapidly in Key Stage 2, where writing is efficiently developed in other subjects.
- Assessment in upper Key Stage 2 ensures that pupils know what they have to do to achieve well in their writing.

Commentary

58. All pupils taking the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2004 reached at least the expected level for their age in English. This result was very high compared with the national average, and average for those reaching the higher Level 5. Comparisons with schools with similar results for Key Stage 1 in 2000 show the same pattern for the two levels taken together, but a below average proportion of pupils reaching the higher level, indicating that a few very able pupils might have done even better. The school predicts that almost half of current Year 6 pupils are

expected to reach the higher level and this is supported by the findings of the inspection, which show standards to be above average overall in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

59. In the national Key Stage 1 tests in 2004, results were below average in reading and writing. In reading, although the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was close to the national average, there was a spread of attainment, with some pupils not achieving the level expected for their age. No pupils reached the higher Level 3 in writing. The findings of the inspection showed that standards in both reading and writing are improving, and that the current Year 2 pupils were likely to exceed these results, although they are still slightly below the national average particularly in writing.
60. In the lower part of Key Stage 1, pupils are encouraged to write poems and stories, and most can write at some length. However, teaching places a high emphasis on fluency of writing without enough of an appropriate focus on helping pupils to recognise and use spelling patterns and letter sounds or to build up a bank of common words that they can spell accurately. Too little attention is paid to the presentation of their work. Written and oral comments about pupils' work focus mainly on content, rather than on systematic teaching of the skills pupils need to write with accuracy and build up a wide vocabulary. In pupils' writing practice books, correct letter formation is not always insisted on, and the practice is not consistently applied when writing for other purposes. As a result of this approach, pupils write at length with some confidence, but writing is untidy, with many common words not spelled correctly or attempted logically and there is little use of punctuation. When they get to Year 2, teaching of skills improves and is good overall, although work is still not well enough presented. Marking from Year 2 upwards gives pupils indications of what they need to do to improve. The rate of progress increases with this more systematic teaching, but pupils have a lot of ground to make up from Year 1. Standards in reading and writing for the current Year 2 pupils are closer to what might be expected for pupils of their age, but still below average overall.
61. Once pupils reach Years 4, 5 and 6, the quality of teaching is consistently good, and achievement noticeably increases. Teaching in this part of the school is characterised by high expectations and good subject knowledge. Vocabulary is developed through discussions and the use of interesting texts to engage pupils' interest. The adoption of an integrated approach, where literacy is taught in subjects across the curriculum, is working effectively in these classes, and skills are being taught in a meaningful context. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on Ancient Egypt, pupils refined their note-taking and report-writing skills, and in a Years 4 and 5 poetry lesson, the content was also based on the Ancient Egypt topic, but teaching the use of simile and metaphor. Planning for these lessons was clear about what pupils were expected to learn, both about the historical content of the lesson and in the required literacy skills. Pupils in Key Stage 2 draft and redraft their work, and learn to take pride in how they present it, often with the use of information and communication technology.
62. Assessment in Years 4, 5 and 6 is good. Expectations are made very clear to pupils, and they are encouraged to criticise the quality of their own work and that of their classmates, making suggestions for improvement. In Year 6, they are given very clear criteria against which to make judgements. For example, in the Year 6 lesson mentioned above, pupils used a list of the elements of successful report writing to check their work, and to assess that of others. As a result, pupils understood what was expected of them, and were encouraged to strive to do their best. Pupils in both classes were attentive and worked very well in pairs and groups, building on the guidance they had been given. This practice is not yet well established in the rest of the school, but provides a model of what could be done. The co-ordinator has had very little release time to observe the quality of teaching and learning, although staff compare samples of pupils' work to assess standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. At the lower end of the school, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to use their literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum. In Year 1, there is very little recording in subjects such as humanities, which are mainly addressed through topic work. Although this increases in Year 2, the standard of pupils' recording of their work is not an accurate reflection of what they know and understand, partly because of lack of attention to presentation. Teachers in Years 2 and 3 have begun to adopt the integrated approach in place in the upper Key Stage 2 classes, but practice is not yet fully established. As stated above, the use of literacy across the curriculum in Years 4, 5 and 6 is a strong feature. Speaking skills are practised in assemblies and other presentations.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the current Year 6 are well above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is good and pupils achieve well.
- Assessment and analysis of performance data is used effectively to monitor progress.
- There is effective year group teaching for pupils in some classes.
- Numeracy skills are developed well in other subjects.
- The leadership of the co-ordinator is good.
- Pupils do not present their work with sufficient care.

Commentary

64. Standards are above average in Year 2 and are well above average in Year 6. Current standards reflect the results in the 2004 National Curriculum test and are similar to those seen at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and achieve well in Key Stage 2 and this represents good achievement over time as most pupils arrive in school with standards of attainment close to the average level. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and learning support assistants and consequently achieve well across both key stages.
65. Overall the quality of teaching in mathematics is good and pupils achieve well. However, it is stronger in Key Stage 2, where teaching is consistently good and pupils achieve well because their teachers have very good subject knowledge, high expectations and set particularly challenging activities. Most lessons are planned carefully to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities and this has a positive impact on standards. All lessons have clear learning objectives and teachers use their questioning skills effectively to develop pupils' thinking skills and to ensure that all pupils are fully engaged in the lesson. A particularly strong feature of good teaching is the teachers' insistence on high standards of behaviour. As a result, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good or very good in all lessons. Pupils work well as individuals; in pairs and in group situations and progress is rarely restricted by inappropriate behaviour. Praise is well used and learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to learning. For example, in one lesson, the learning support assistant worked with pupils in Year 3, whilst the class teacher was able to concentrate on those pupils who were in Year 2. Lessons usually have good pace and teachers are very good at providing opportunities for pupils to explain how they have completed their tasks and to think about and discuss the strategies that they have employed. The weakest element of teaching is in day-to-day assessment because, whilst teachers do mark pupils' work regularly, they rarely offer suggestions for future improvement.

66. There is good use of assessment and data analysis to ensure that pupils' progress is monitored closely and that support is targeted appropriately. As a result, tasks are well matched to pupils' needs. For example, pupils with special educational needs receive high quality support from learning support assistants. The school also provides a mathematics club for pupils who may need additional intensive learning support. Although most classes are mixed-aged, some year group teaching takes place and this enables teachers to work effectively with relatively small numbers of pupils. In a good lesson in Year 2, all pupils quickly grasped the concept of rounding numbers to 100 because of the individual support that they received.
67. Although pupils achieve well over time, the presentation of their work is barely satisfactory. They are not encouraged to set out their work in a standardised fashion and dates, titles and learning objectives are rarely evident. There is no consistent format for the presentation of work and errors often occur because numbers have not been written correctly.
68. The co-ordinator makes good use of assessment information to monitor the progress of pupils and to ensure that teachers are aware of areas of mathematics that need increased focus if targets are to be met. Although she has carried out some lesson observations, she is aware of the need to implement regular monitoring of teaching and learning in mathematics in order to ensure consistency and to spread teaching expertise throughout the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

69. There is good use of mathematics across the curriculum and particularly strong links to geography, science and information and communication technology. For example, pupils in Year 5 have researched the internet to compare climate around the world as part of their geographical studies and then used their results to predict future world temperatures. In Year 1, pupils had made teddy bears using different shaped card as part of design and technology work and pupils in Year 6 have measured the area of the playground that would be lost as a result of their new classroom. Displays in other areas of the curriculum illustrate the use of mathematical skills throughout the school.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 2 and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to learn through investigation.
- Good use is made of the local environment.
- In Key Stage 1, pupils' written work does not reflect the level of their knowledge and understanding.
- The curriculum is enriched with a good range of visits and visitors.

Commentary

70. Standards in the current Year 6 class are above average and are similar to those seen at the time of the previous inspection. This reflects satisfactory achievement over time, as most pupils enter school with above average knowledge and understanding of the world. In the current Year 2 class, pupils' knowledge and understanding in science is above average as it was at the time of the previous inspection. However, this is not reflected in their written work where standards are clearly below average. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and learning support assistants and consequently achieve well across the school.

71. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 2. The best features of teaching are that teachers generally plan in detail, manage behaviour effectively, use questioning very well to probe and enhance pupils' understanding and set activities that provide appropriate challenge. Lessons contribute significantly to personal and social education by encouraging pupils to accept responsibility and to be aware of the need to listen to the views of others. Teachers expect pupils to behave well and as a result, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good or very good in almost all lessons. Pupils work well as individuals, in pairs and in group situations and progress is rarely restricted by inappropriate behaviour. Teachers encourage the use of correct scientific terminology, such as when pupils in Years 4 and 5 questioned individual pupils about their chosen plants and creatures. By the time that they reach Year 6, many pupils possess a good range of scientific vocabulary. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to learning by supporting pupils with special educational needs and this helps them to achieve well.
72. The school places an emphasis on practical and investigative activities. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 reacted enthusiastically when given the opportunity to handle, observe and re-pot plants and they did so with great interest and care. They were particularly excited to be given responsibility for the care of their individual plant over time and discussed the strategies that they would employ. When talking to pupils, it was clear that they enjoyed their science lessons and appreciated these regular opportunities to engage in practical activities. The school is fortunate to have access to an attractive school field, which is used effectively to support learning. This is a particularly good resource for scientific enquiry into life processes and living things and during the week of the inspection, pupils in Year 4 and Year 5 had developed their knowledge of habitats through access to this area.
73. The co-ordinator is committed to seeking improvements within this curriculum area. She has recently purchased a whole-school scheme of work to encourage further scientific investigation, improved resources and is attempting currently to ensure that the new integrated curriculum is implemented successfully. She still has to ensure that knowledge and skills are taught systematically as pupils move up the school, especially as planning for the mixed-age classes means that topics may not be revisited for some time. However, she has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school.
74. In lessons, pupils in Key Stage 1 show good levels of scientific knowledge and understanding. For example, during an introduction to one science lesson, pupils in Year 2 knew the names and were aware of the function of the various parts of a plant. They knew that plants needed water and light to be able to grow and individual pupils used words such as 'nectar', 'sap' and 'pollen' with confidence. However, pupils' written work does not reflect that knowledge and understanding. It is poorly presented, titles and learning objectives are rarely evident and too much emphasis is placed on the completion of worksheets. Although marking is supportive, it does not focus sufficiently on how pupils can improve their work.
75. A planned programme of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum. For example, pupils visit Harcourt Arboretum and Wiggington Wildlife Sanctuary and visitors include teachers from the science department of the local high school. These varied experiences enrich the curriculum and provide pupils with good opportunities for learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving throughout the school.
- There has been a recent improvement in resources and staff expertise.

- Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning in other subjects.
- The co-ordinator provides good leadership.

Commentary

76. Although standards were satisfactory at the end of both key stages at the time of the previous inspection, there were very limited resources in school. Standards remain at a satisfactory level but are improving because resources have improved considerably and pupils currently have far greater access to computer technology.
77. The training of most teachers has been carried out and this has increased their subject expertise and confidence and contributed to improving standards of teaching and learning within the school. The school has developed a new computer suite with ten computers, all with internet access, and there are additional computers in some classrooms. As a result, the ratio of computers to pupils is currently much better than at the time of the previous inspection. Although only one lesson was seen during the inspection, teaching was good, with clear explanations, good pace and good support where necessary. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons in the computer suite and pupils in Year 2 spoke with enthusiasm about their use of programs such as 'Colour Magic' that had enabled them to illustrate their work. Most pupils in Year 2 are able to log on to the computer, access information, amend their work and confidently use the mouse. All classes are timetabled to use the computer suite on a weekly basis and on occasions when problems with equipment occur, the school has a contract for technical support. The recent purchase of two interactive whiteboards and a digital projector has improved the ability of teachers to demonstrate procedures and this has a positive impact on learning.
78. Almost all pupils are highly motivated by the developments in this subject and discuss their work confidently and enthusiastically. Indeed, one group of pupils from Years 4 and 5 has just published the second edition of their class newspaper. Although parts of this have been completed in lessons, the bulk of the publishing exercise has necessitated them giving up their break times to work in the computer suite. The attitude and behaviour of pupils in lessons are good. They listen to instructions; share equipment where necessary and work well as individuals or in pairs.
79. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership. She has developed a scheme of work based on good whole-school curriculum guidelines and teaching now places an emphasis on the systematic development of computer skills. All aspects of the curriculum for information and communication technology are now addressed, although the co-ordinator recognises the need to improve opportunities for pupils to participate in activities linked to control technology. The school now has a policy for health and safety and security when using the Internet. She has an understanding of how to improve standards and is committed to monitoring teaching and learning throughout the school, encouraging greater use of the interactive whiteboards and establishing a consistent whole-school approach to assessment.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. Information and communication technology consistently supports learning in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 4, for example, have developed their historical awareness by accessing websites based on 'The Egyptians'; pupils in Year 5 have improved their data handling skills by accessing information about climates and world temperatures and, as part of a their literacy work, pupils in Years 2 and 3 have used the 'Colour Magic' program to illustrate their poetry. Teachers make use of the digital camera to record learning activities and photographs are used as part of a number of displays throughout the school.

HUMANITIES

81. As no specific lessons of **history** or **geography** were seen it is not possible to make sound overall judgements about provision in either subject. However, a number of literacy lessons and one of design and technology made links with history topics and some inferences can be made about teaching from these lessons. Talking with pupils and teachers and scrutiny of pupils' work and the curriculum outline provide an additional basis for the judgements made. Religious education was not inspected.
82. Scrutiny of pupils' work in history and geography and discussions with pupils reveal that overall their knowledge is as might be expected for their age at the end of each key stage, although there are some minor weaknesses. Planning for history and geography ensures that over pupils' time in school they cover all the required areas of study, despite the mixed-age classes. Topics are also planned to combine geography and history whenever possible, for example in local studies and a focus on London in present times and in 1666. Topic planning also outlines opportunities for other cross-curricular links, so that art, music and information and communication technology are included. The integrated approach provides effective links between subjects, and good use is made of these subjects to teach literacy skills in Key Stage 2. Study visits by pupils to local places of interest and visitors to school, such as 'the History People' to introduce the topic on the Tudors, help to expand pupils' interest and understanding.
83. The lessons seen which made links with history in both key stages were well taught. In all three lessons, teachers used historical content well to explore skills in other subjects, making the lessons they were teaching meaningful. The upper Key Stage 2 topic on Egypt, ancient and modern, effectively combines history and geography, as well as teaching literacy skills and the use of the internet for research. For example, in Years 4 and 5, the importance of cats in ancient Egyptian culture was the starting point for poetry writing. In Year 6, pupils made notes on a video of the importance of the Nile and practised the skills of report writing. In Years 2 and 3, a design and technology lesson drew on the topic of the Victorians to explore the materials and techniques used for making puppets and peg dolls. In all of these lessons, the use of the historical context helped pupils to make connections in their learning, and pupils worked well with high levels of concentration and interest.
84. In discussion with Year 2, pupils they show good knowledge about the history topics they have covered, but are less clear about those focusing on geography. However, the written work they undertake within these subjects is not well presented and lacks challenge. Much of the work is on worksheets, with missed opportunities for creative or more extended writing. In this year group the practice of teaching literacy skills through other subjects is not yet established. The quality of their written work is not an accurate measure of pupils' knowledge and understanding.
85. Pupils in upper Key Stage 2 have produced well-presented topic books on their study of the Tudors. This work shows an understanding of the issues of the period which is at least in line with expectations for pupils of their age. There is good use of information and communication technology for both research and for presentation. Discussions with Year 6 pupils confirm that they enjoy history and geography and that they have good knowledge about the topics they have covered. However, they are less clear about the skills of historical enquiry, and needed prompting to discuss sources of historical knowledge and their relative reliability. They were able to recognise that fieldwork provides information about geography, as well as sources such as books and the internet.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

86. Art and design, physical education, design and technology and music were sampled.

87. **Art and design** is taught as part of an integrated curriculum through a topic-based approach. It is clear from planning that all aspects of the curriculum are visited and that the subject receives an appropriate time allocation. The teaching in the one lesson observed was satisfactory, with good levels of adult support. Pupils progressed at their own pace and attitudes and behaviour were good. The quality of most artwork displayed around the school is satisfactory, although there is some good display, such as the attractive 'Magical Forest' in Years 4 and 5 that was strongly linked to work in mathematics. Extra-curricular activities include an opportunity for pupils to participate in an art club.
88. It was not possible to observe any **music** lessons during the period of the inspection or to arrange an interview with the music co-ordinator. However, pupils' enthusiasm for music was obvious during assemblies, where they sang tunefully and with expression, showing enjoyment particularly when given the opportunity to accompany their singing with appropriate actions. It is clear from teachers' planning that regular music lessons take place and that all elements of the music curriculum are addressed appropriately. In addition to music lessons, pupils are encouraged to play a musical instrument. Over a third of the school participates in recorder lessons and welcomes the opportunity to perform for adults and their peers. During the inspection, two recorder groups played in an assembly, using tenor, treble and descant recorders. They clearly enjoyed this opportunity to perform and did so to a good standard. The school stages regular music and dance concerts, where pupils again enjoy opportunities for performance. During a recent concert in a local hall, for example, groups of pupils and individuals performed well to an audience of adults. All of these experiences help to instil the obvious love of music seen during the previous inspection.
89. A good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities enriches the curriculum for **physical education**. Pupils clearly enjoy the opportunities provided for participation in additional team sports and sporting activities, such as football and athletics. The school has established close links with the local secondary school and many physical activities and competitions are provided as a result. Standards in swimming are good. All pupils have access to the local swimming baths during the year and by the time that they leave the school, most pupils achieve the national standard of swimming 25 metres unaided.
90. Some aspects of the physical education curriculum cannot be delivered effectively because the school hall is too small. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe one dance lesson. The teacher set the right tone for the lesson by changing into appropriate clothing and through her willingness to participate in physical activities. She gave appropriate attention to health and safety aspects, such as warming up at the start of a lesson and cooling down at the end. Most pupils demonstrated positive attitudes and their standard of behaviour mirrored the standard and quality of teaching. Pupils had a clear understanding of what was expected and responded appropriately. However, although there were only 13 pupils within the lesson, the school hall was still too small to accommodate them safely. As a result, the dance and gymnastics elements of the physical education curriculum cannot be delivered effectively and this restricts the progress that pupils make. The hall directly adjoins other classrooms and the noise created also proves a distraction in some lessons.
91. Although the co-ordinator has only been at the school for a short time, she has already drafted a new policy for physical education, maintained close links with the local secondary school and joined the 'School Sports Co-ordinator' scheme. She is aware of the need to monitor standards of teaching and learning throughout the school and to develop pupil assessment procedures for physical education.
92. **Design and technology** is taught as part of an integrated curriculum through a topic-based approach. It is clear from planning that all aspects of the curriculum are visited and that the subject receives an appropriate time allocation. Only one lesson in Years 2 and 3 was observed and teaching and learning were good. Pupils were able to suggest different types of puppet, make sensible suggestions about the stages of design and making and resources were used well. They settled quickly to their task and were able to select the appropriate materials and tools from which to create a peg doll. The teacher ensured that health and

safety issues were addressed, such as using scissors correctly and safely. Pupils clearly enjoy these lessons and pupils in Year 2 talked enthusiastically about the pancakes that they had made and eaten and their matchstick houses that represented Tudor and Stuart homes. Other examples of work in design and technology were obvious throughout the school. These included teddy bears constructed from card in Year 1, hessian bags in Year 6 and cushions in Years 4 and 5. Although good use is made of planning and evaluation sheets within the curriculum for design and technology, an effective whole-school system of assessment has yet to be implemented.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal development is an important issue for the school, and as a result, pupils are confident, interested in their work and the wider world and behave very well.

Commentary

93. No specific lessons in this area were observed, so a sound judgement about the quality of teaching cannot be made. However, the indications are that the school makes good provision for the teaching of personal, social and health education. There are timetabled lessons for the subject and themes are integrated into other subject areas, such as science and religious education. The benefits and outcomes of this can be seen in the good behaviour, attitudes and values shown by the pupils. The school teaches appropriate messages about drug and alcohol abuse, healthy eating and hygiene and supports the development of personal and social skills during 'circle time'. Pupils participate in the national 'Fruit and Vegetable' scheme and regular visits from the 'Life Education Bus' support the teaching of life skills. The previous governing body took the decision not to teach sex and relationships education, but this is now under review. Equal opportunity and the promotion of Christian values are high on the school's priorities. In the Foundation Stage and Year 1, pupils are effectively helped to settle into school, learn the school's expectations and to feel confident.
94. The house system provides an effective focus for developing loyalty and promoting an awareness of living in a community. There are usually opportunities for pupils to vote for house captains, although this did not happen this year. The small size of the school, the friendliness of adults and the care they take of pupils help to promote work in this area, and almost all pupils feel that they are listened to and treated fairly in school, and are confident that they would ask an adult for help if necessary.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
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	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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

