

INSPECTION REPORT

LUMLEY MEDWAY INFANT SCHOOL

Great Lumley, Chester le Street

LEA area: Durham

Unique reference number: 114003

Headteacher: Mrs L M Lawlan

Lead inspector: Mr D Hardman

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd November 2004

Inspection number: 269088

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 – 7
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 146

School address: Great Lumley
Chester le Street
County Durham

Postcode: DH3 4JL

Telephone number: 0191 3885292
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Councillor J B Walker

Date of previous inspection: February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lumley Medway Infant School is smaller than the average school, with 112 pupils on roll including 36 children in the reception class. In addition, there are 34 children attending the nursery on a part time basis. There is a broad social mix in the school and the full range of ability is represented. On entry, children's attainment varies considerably but many are below average. There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. There are 17.3 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals, which is in line with the national average. Fifteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, this is in line with the national average and three have statements of special educational need, which is above the national average. Most pupils with special educational needs have specific learning difficulties or speech and communication difficulties. Very few pupils join or leave the school other than at the normal entry times.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1779 4	Mr D Hardman	Lead inspector	Mathematics
			Science
			Information and communication technology
			History
			Geography
			Physical education
			Foundation Stage
			English as an additional language
1408 3	Mr A Anderson	Lay inspector	
1802 7	Mrs S Mawer	Team inspector	English
			Religious education
			Art and design
			Design and technology
			Music
			Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school with many excellent qualities. By Year 2, pupils' attainment is well above the level expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. Their attainment is above the level expected in religious education and information and communication technology (ICT). The headteacher provides excellent leadership and clear direction for the work of the school. The potential barrier to improvement of the recent building work has been overcome very well. Staff value all pupils equally as individuals, whatever their needs, and work very hard to make sure they get the best from their time in school. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching and learning are very good. As a result, pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher are excellent.
- Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- There is an excellent ethos in the school, which leads to a caring family atmosphere and pupils' excellent attitudes and very good behaviour.
- Inclusion is excellent because of the way the staff seek pupils' views and involve them in all aspects of school life.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent, mainly because of the excellent support provided by the teaching assistants.
- There is a very good curriculum, the school has recognised the need to develop the grounds further to fully exploit curriculum opportunities.

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Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Leadership and management have ensured that high standards have been maintained. Governors have improved their expertise and are now more actively involved in the curriculum and development planning. The provision for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage has improved significantly since the opening of the nursery. The "open door" policy of the school means that parents frequently talk to staff and, at the meeting with parents before the inspection, they spoke very highly of the school's links with both parents and the community.

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STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A* - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Pupils' achievements by Year 2 are well above average, especially in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Compared to all schools in the National Curriculum tests in 2004, the table shows that the results were well above average in reading and mathematics and in the top five per cent in the country for writing. They were equally as

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high when compared to similar schools in reading and mathematics and in the top five per cent in the country for writing. Trends in results over time are above the national trend. Currently, in Year 2, pupils' achievements are good in religious education and ICT. Overall, children's achievements in the Foundation Stage are very good in all areas of learning.

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Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Pupils' attitudes and their relationships with others are excellent. Their behaviour is very good. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. Teaching is very good, as a result pupils' learning is very good and their skills, knowledge and understanding improve as they move through the school. The teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is very good, in the nursery it is often excellent, which is a major factor in their achievements. All staff support pupils with special educational needs excellently and very good teaching provides challenging activities. As a result, these pupils achieve very well throughout the school. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics, science and ICT is very good and the results of these assessments are used very well to tailor work for pupils of different ability. Very good use is made of opportunities to enrich the broad curriculum with visitors, educational visits and by using the links with other schools to enhance learning. However, the outdoor environment is underdeveloped and the school has very good plans to improve this in the near future and so further enhance curriculum opportunities, for example, in a wild life area. The provision for care, welfare and health and safety is very good. The provision for guidance, advice and support is excellent. The partnership with parents and the community is very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership provided by the headteacher is excellent and a major factor in the quality of teamwork in the school. The headteacher has embedded in school practice a highly effective model of self-evaluation, which is open, frank and accurate. A very able, effective deputy headteacher and senior management team, as well as subject co-ordinators, contribute much to the leadership and management of the school. Governance of the school is a strong feature and governors fulfil their statutory duties very well with the chair of governors playing a particularly important and effective role in the leadership of the school. The school uses funds designated for particular purposes well and the governors and the headteacher keep a close eye on spending to ensure the school gets the best value possible for all initiatives.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the work of the school and the opportunities they have to talk to staff. Pupils speak very highly of their school and they are keen to attend. Pupils explain how they enjoy their work and comment very favourably on the activities they undertake. All Year 2 pupils are monitors and buddies and, coupled with those on the newly formed School Council, they spoke very enthusiastically about their different roles.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that the very good plans to develop the outside environment are fully implemented.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievements in Year 2 are very good and they achieve standards that are well above the levels expected for their age in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In religious education and ICT, standards are above the levels expected for their age. Standards have improved since the last inspection report. Children's achievements in the nursery and reception classes are very good in all areas of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery and reception classes are given a very good start to their education.
- Pupils achieve very well because teachers use assessments very well to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged to enable them, whatever their ability, to make very good progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well and build very effectively on their previous experiences.

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Commentary

1 When children start school, many have below average skills for their age. Children's achievements in the present reception classes are very good and many reach standards that are above the level expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. In the nursery and reception classes, the teachers organise teaching assistants very well and they work very well together to ensure that all children have very good opportunities to develop their skills. All children benefit from very good teaching because of the very good relationships. For example, they co-operate well in the activities they undertake in all areas of learning and this improves their confidence and skills, especially in language and communication.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.9 (17.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	17.7 (17.3)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.9 (17.5)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 47 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2 Compared to all schools in the National Curriculum tests in 2004, the table shows that the results were well above average in reading and mathematics and in the top five per cent in the country for writing. They were equally as high when compared to similar schools in reading and mathematics and in the top five per cent in the country for writing. Trends in results over time are above the national trend. Currently, in Year 2, pupils' achievements are very good in reading, writing, mathematics and science and they are good in religious education and ICT. Children's achievements in the Foundation Stage are

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very good in all areas of learning. Pupils' attainment is maintained at this high level because teaching is very good and assessments are used very well to set challenging targets for all pupils, whatever their ability. Although year groups vary quite considerably because of the number of pupils with special educational needs, the school makes very good use of the analysis of pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests and optional tests and this has resulted in the setting of realistic targets to focus on improving the weaker areas of pupils' knowledge and skills.

3 Currently, by Year 2, pupils' achievements are very good in English, mathematics and science. In these subjects, teaching is consistently very good because staff are very good at identifying what is and is not working, building on the strengths and remedying the weaknesses. The school's efforts since the last inspection, to raise pupils' achievements in reading and writing, have been very successful and pupils are achieving very well. Pupils' achievements are good in ICT, this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are keen to use the computers and their skills improve, especially in word processing and in supporting work in English, mathematics and science. In religious education, pupils' achievement is good, however, the quality of pupils' written work did not reflect the very good range and standards of writing seen in other subjects. Pupils' work was sampled in other subjects of the National Curriculum but there was insufficient information to make firm judgements about standards or achievement.

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4 Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve highly in their learning because of the early identification of their needs and the very effective teaching and support they receive. The quality of individual education plans is excellent. They enable pupils to progress in small, well defined stages. Teachers plan very well for pupils with special educational needs and, as a result, they attain standards that represent very good achievement in relation to their abilities. The school makes very good use of assessment information to identify pupils' needs at an early stage in their learning and for target setting in their individual education plans. It is a similar picture for pupils who are gifted and talented, as their skills are assessed and suitable work is provided to challenge and extend them. Parents' comments show that they feel their children achieve very well and make very good progress. The inspection team supports this, for example, pupils use their language, literacy and numeracy skills very well in other subjects.

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Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are excellent and their behaviour is very good. Their social and moral development is excellent while spiritual and cultural development is very good. Attendance is good and punctuality very good. These aspects have improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' relationships with others are excellent.
- Pupils very confidently take on responsibility because they are encouraged to do so from nursery.
- The moral and social awareness of pupils is exceptionally well developed.

Commentary

5 Pupils are very keen to come to school and eager to learn. Punctuality is very good. Pupils are highly motivated in lessons, listen attentively and enthusiastically carry out their tasks with a strong sense of determination to succeed. This is the result of very good teaching where all pupils are given stimulating tasks that are planned to take good

account of the differing ability levels. This raises their self-esteem and enables them to achieve highly. Most are very reluctant to leave their work at the end of a session. In other activities during the day, pupils demonstrate the same level of interest in learning. In assembly, for example, they show considerable pleasure in singing together and adding actions to the hymns. Parents and pupils in regular questionnaires confirm the pupils' high level of enjoyment in school life.

6 The provision for pupils' social and moral development is excellent. Pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes towards school and learning reflect the extremely high expectations of teachers. Pupils arrive promptly each day eager to join in all the activities offered to them by the school. Children in the Foundation Stage have only been in the school for a short time, but they already leave their parents or carers readily and settle quickly to activities each day. Teachers are excellent examples for the standards of behaviour they expect from pupils and this results in the exemplary behaviour seen during the inspection. Pupils understand the importance of certain rules and they work together to make sure everyone is safe and happy. For example, pupils draw up, agree and observe the class rules and respond very well to their teachers' high expectations. The very good behaviour of nearly all pupils is an important element in the excellent ethos that surrounds the work of the school. A quiet and orderly atmosphere prevails in the dining room and around the school. Many examples were seen of pupils spontaneously opening the door for others and saying thank you and of older pupils helping the younger ones, especially in the playground. No signs of anti-social behaviour were seen. Parents and pupils confirm that bullying never occurs.

7 Relationships are outstanding in this very inclusive school. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem is very high and they willingly take on responsibility for their own learning. They all help to set and review their own personal and academic targets and sometimes pupils with special educational needs help to design their own individual education plans. Pupils exercise responsibility for themselves and others in a very sensible and mature way. For example, the informal "buddy system" worked very well when a boy was accidentally knocked over by another boy. The "buddy" saw the incident and immediately came over to help. He helped the injured boy up and invited the other boy to apologise. He then explained to the injured boy that it was an accident. A School Council has recently been formed and this is beginning to give pupils more responsibility in the work of the school. Pupils who are members of the School Council take their responsibilities very seriously. They each have a notebook and are currently making notes of suggestions from pupils of how to improve the school grounds. Every pupil in Year 2 is a monitor and has a clearly defined duty to carry out around the school.

8 Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very good overall. Opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness are seen through many aspects of their work in school. Pupils are taught the importance of human rights including their rights as children. As a result, they have a sympathetic understanding of the plight of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils have a very good awareness of other cultures through studying different faiths and celebrating major festivals. Assemblies and many lessons, particularly in music, art and design and literacy, are used to foster a greater spiritual awareness. Pupils and parents are very supportive of the school and comment very favourably on the wide range of activities provided for them.

Attendance

Pupils' attendance is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (95.5%)

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

There were no exclusions last year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll
White – British	79
Information not obtained	30
Any other ethnic group	3

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. There is very good provision for pupils in English, mathematics and science. Provision for religious education and ICT is good. There is also very good provision for pupils' personal development. Links with parents and the community are very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is very good. This has a very positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning which is also very good. Teachers know their pupils very well and provide a wide range of activities to meet their needs. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is very good. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment information is used very well to tailor the work for different attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented.
- The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is very good, it is excellent in the nursery.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils.
- Staff expertise is used very effectively to provide some specialist teaching.
- Lessons are interesting for pupils. As a result, they enjoy coming to school and try very hard in their work.

Commentary

9 Teachers regularly use a range of assessments, including statutory and optional National Curriculum tests. The information available from these tests is used very well to identify pupils' weaknesses and to guide teachers' planning, for example, by setting targets in lessons to improve pupils' achievements. As a result, pupils gain very good information on how well they are achieving and what they must do next to improve. Assessment arrangements also promote the learning of pupils with special educational needs and the gifted and talented because their needs are recognised and work is set at a suitably challenging level to ensure that their skills are developed and extended.

10 The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is very good, in the nursery it is often excellent. For example, in a lesson in the nursery, the teacher provided a wide range of pipes so that children could experiment outside with how water flows. The children showed great excitement as they poured water in the pipe and watched it run down the pathways they created. The teachers in the Foundation Stage are very confident and the planning takes very good account of children's individual needs and includes valuable daily opportunities for imaginative play. The children's learning is supported by thoroughly prepared, practical activities and experiences that are wide ranging and interesting. This motivates children to learn very well. Staff use resources very well and bring excellent enthusiasm, skill and understanding to children's learning. Every opportunity is taken to develop spoken language, literacy and numeracy skills by careful questioning and vocabulary development. There is a very good balance between direct teaching and opportunities for structured play activities. All adults are very good examples for children to follow because they treat everyone with care, courtesy and respect. The use of teaching assistants is excellent and makes a very significant contribution to children's learning because of the many opportunities provided for children to discuss their ideas.

11 Throughout the school, teaching is very good. The headteacher and key staff have undertaken a programme of observing colleagues' teaching and the discussions on successful practice help to ensure that all pupils learn very effectively. The National

Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used very well. As a result, pupils read accurately, find information quickly and use ways of calculating totals quickly in their heads. Teachers have excellent expectations of pupils and expect them to work hard and achieve their best. For example, in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 2, the teacher set challenging tasks and pupils worked very diligently to complete them in a given time. Pupils respond very well to the challenges and, in discussions, comment very favourably on their enjoyment of lessons and on how well they think they are improving.

12 A decision was made some time ago for teachers with particular strengths in English, mathematics and science to use their skills to teach a wider group of pupils other than their own class. Specialist teaching therefore takes place in some of the Year 1 and 2 classes. This staffing arrangement is having a very positive impact on the standards and achievement in these subjects.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4	17	3	0	0	0	0

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

13 The teaching of basic skills is very good and teachers make lessons interesting, which results in pupils being attentive and eager to answer questions. Teachers' planning ensures that pupils' literacy and numeracy skills develop very effectively. They do this by using the recommendations of the literacy and numeracy strategies and plan lessons that are challenging and interesting. For example, in an excellent English lesson for pupils in Year 2, they were challenged well to use their knowledge to describe and think deeply about the meaning of the story of the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff'. They successfully explained the use of speech marks and question marks when extending their knowledge of punctuation. The pace of lessons is very good and pupils have excellent relationships with teachers and adults in the classroom, which means that pupils are very keen to please teachers and do well.

14 Teachers know and manage their pupils very well and provide very good support for different activities. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils create a secure climate in which to learn. The school has an established system to encourage pupils to read and learn spellings at home and this has a very positive effect on their learning. The school ensures that all pupils, whatever their abilities, are included in all activities, which makes a very positive contribution to their learning. Parents are very positive about the quality of teaching in the school and comments in the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting show the high level of confidence they have in all teachers at the school.

15 The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good because teachers plan activities very well and ensure these are closely matched to pupils' needs. This is the main reason why pupils achieve so well. Work is very well planned with daily targets and these are matched closely to pupils' needs. Pupils help to assess their own learning at the end of the week and this leads to very good levels of motivation. The teaching assistants, who provide outstanding support, work closely with the class teachers to plan and record the progress pupils are making. Those supporting the pupils with autism are highly skilled in planning clear rules and routines and building in simple choices throughout the day. These pupils are slowly being successfully taught how to learn in a group.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good and enriched by a very good range of learning experiences. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. The accommodation and resources are good and allow the curriculum to be taught effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in English, mathematics, science and Foundation Stage is very effectively planned and enables pupils to achieve highly.
- Outstanding provision is made for pupils with special educational needs in this very inclusive school.
- Very effective links are made across subjects and this has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and their levels of motivation.
- Visits and visitors enrich the curriculum very well.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education receives a high focus and is excellent.
- Although the accommodation is good, the school has recognised the need to develop the grounds further.

Commentary

16 The very broad, balanced and imaginative curriculum is a key factor in pupils attaining high standards and achieving very well. Although the curriculum is strong and effective in all subjects, it is in English, mathematics, science and the Foundation Stage that it is at its very best. In these subjects, the teachers plan activities that challenge all pupils particularly well. The school is very receptive to new ideas and staff have taken these on board to develop the curriculum further. Throughout the school, the systems of planning the curriculum are very good and ensure that all subjects are covered in depth and pupils gain a wide range of knowledge and skills. National guidelines have been adapted to suit the school and especially the mixed age classes.

17 The quality of curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is very good and provides children with a rich and exciting array of educational opportunities, which bring learning to life. Throughout the school, planning is used very effectively to link subjects together in order to enhance the learning. The school has been particularly successful in extending English, mathematics and ICT across the curriculum. A recent project called "forging the future" gave pupils considerable experience of a very good range of cultural and creative topics that incorporated many different subjects. Pupils' learning is enriched by a very good number of visits to places of interest, visitors to the school and a few after school clubs. Because the curriculum is rich and varied, pupils are highly motivated in lessons and their eagerness to learn is a significant reason for the high levels of achievement.

18 The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent. The curriculum is rigorously planned to ensure that all pupils receive the help identified in their targets and achieve as well as they can. They benefit from excellent support from teaching assistants, a good range of resources and have equal opportunities to every aspect of the curriculum. The individual education plans for these pupils are excellent. They are written in such a way as to be easily understood by pupils and their parents and enable the staff to translate the targets into very effective planned tasks. The strong desire to integrate three autistic pupils successfully into the school is testimony to the commitment of the staff and children and show it is a very inclusive school.

19 Personal, social, health education and citizenship are given a high profile within the curriculum and pupils' skills are developed very well. A very good race equality policy is implemented very well. These aspects are promoted successfully in planned lessons and progress is recorded and monitored through the school. It is a very strong feature of the teaching from the time the pupils start school. Specific aspects such as sex education and drugs awareness is integrated into the science topics on growth and ourselves. The school has held a healthy schools award for the past four years.

20 Accommodation and resources for the Foundation Stage are very good and used very well to provide interesting and lively learning activities, such as water play, exploring the environment and role-play in many situations. Resources for other subjects are good and their effective use has a positive effect on both teaching and learning. The accommodation overall is good. It is well organised, scrupulously clean and well maintained. The number of staff is adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. Recent remodelling of the school has enhanced the teaching and learning and the building of a nursery unit has widened the facilities in the school and provided the opportunity for younger children in the village to benefit from nursery education. The improvements

needed to the grounds has been recognised by the school and improvements are planned to fully exploit the curriculum opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

The school has very good systems for ensuring that pupils feel secure and work in a healthy and safe environment. Provision for support, advice and guidance is excellent and has been improved since the last inspection. Pupils' personal and academic performance is exceptionally well monitored. The involvement of pupils in the work of the school is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has an excellent programme and procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development.
- Staff know pupils very well as a result, pupils build outstanding relationships with adults.
- Although newly established, the School Council is already seeking and acting on pupils' views.
- Pupils benefit from very good induction arrangements.
- The school is very inclusive and this is fully reflected in its excellent support for pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

21 The school provides very good levels of care and there is a shared concern for the well being and happiness of all pupils. Parents unanimously endorse this view. The governing body has very effective procedures in place for health and safety and checks are rigorously carried out and quickly acted upon. The school's child protection procedures are very good. Staff have been well trained and there is very good liaison with other agencies. All staff have had first aid training and accidents are formally recorded and closely monitored. The school has been awarded a healthy schools' status for several years and teaching often focuses on healthy living and eating.

22 The school provides outstanding support and guidance for pupils' personal development. All pupils are treated with sensitivity and respect. Because staff know pupils very well relationships between pupils and staff are excellent, pupils are happy to approach any adult in the school if they have a problem. Pupils speak very favourably of the help and support they receive from staff and from older pupils who support them through an informal "buddy" system. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of pupils' achievements. Very good assessment procedures are used to track their academic progress and excellent procedures are in place to monitor the personal development of all pupils including those with special educational needs. This contributes positively to the very good achievement. Pupils have a very good awareness of their own learning by being consulted about the progress they are making in the individual targets that are set for them. By seeking their views when the targets are reviewed, pupils are helped to evaluate their own work and consider ways to improve.

23 Pupils' views about the school are always listened to and, where possible, acted upon. The school has recognised the need to involve pupils more formally in the life and work of the school and a School Council has recently been established. Although it has only held one meeting it has a clear agenda and minutes are kept. It is made up of several pupils from each year group who have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibility in reflecting the views of pupils across the school.

24 The pupils who are new to the school benefit from very good induction procedures. This ensures that they settle quickly and happily into the routines of school life. Meetings are regularly arranged with parents and there are many opportunities for the nursery and reception children to visit the school before they start. The arrangements for pupils to transfer to the nearby junior school are very comprehensive, especially for the pupils who have special educational needs. Several visits are arranged in small groups and there are

frequent visits with parents. This ensures a smooth and effective transfer, significantly minimising the stress of settling into a new school.

25 The school has a very strong and effective policy and practice of inclusion and this works well for all pupils, but particularly for those with special educational needs. These pupils receive an outstanding level of care, support and guidance to enable them to take a full part in school life. Class support from teaching assistants is exceptionally skilful, sensitive and unobtrusive and is very effective in helping these pupils to achieve very well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has developed very good links with parents and the community. The links with other schools and colleges are very good. There are very good opportunities for pupils and parents to be involved in the work of the school. These aspects have improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very well informed and feel welcome in school and are very pleased with the education it provides.
- The wide variety of links with the community makes a very good contribution to the curriculum and pupils' personal development.
- Links with other schools in the area extend opportunities for pupils' learning and sporting activities very well.

Commentary

26 The school plays an important part in the life of the village and has built strong links with parents and the wider community. Parents are made very welcome in school and feel they can approach staff at the beginning and end of the school day with information or queries about their child. They are very pleased with all aspects of the school and particularly value the role it plays in the community. The school actively seeks parents' views through discussions and questionnaires and is prepared to act on them. For example, following a survey of parents' views in the spring term the school sent out a pack including information on the curriculum, diary dates for the rest of the year and agreed to hold termly meetings. In addition, parents are invited to curriculum meetings and receive very good information on topics to be covered in lessons. The high regard in which parents hold the school is reflected in the exceptionally positive parental survey. Only a very few parents have any concerns on any of the survey questions.

27 A very good range of information is provided for parents through the school prospectus, regular newsletters and annual reports on their children's achievements. These annual reports provide information both about what pupils have done and about how well they are achieving. The information to parents has improved since the last inspection. Many parents are very involved in the school and help in a variety of ways. During the inspection, a parent commented on the outstanding support given by all staff at the school and how this had a significant effect on the quality of education provided.

28 The links with parents of pupils who have special educational needs are very good and their views are always taken into account when preparing the reviews in pupils' individual education plans. As they are initially involved in the drawing up of the plan they are very keen to be involved in the monitoring of progress and they receive regular information of how well their children are doing. There is particularly close contact with the parents of pupils who have behavioural problems.

29 Links with the village and the wider community are extensive. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities such as participation in the Harvest Festival Service, members of the community working with pupils in school, for example, giving talks on their experiences. These initiatives add significant interest and technical experience to the curriculum. There is a very good range of productive links with other schools, particularly the local junior school, which increases the variety of opportunities open to pupils to engage in a variety of projects. For example, pupils and parents visit frequently and there is a joint prospectus for both schools. A large number of Year 1 pupils benefit from the football coaching provided by Chester le Street Council and Year 2 pupils benefit from ball skills coaching from a netball coach.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good. Leadership by the headteacher is excellent and by key staff very good. The governance of the school is very good. The leadership and management of the school have improved since the last inspection. The potential barrier to improvement of the recent disruption because of building work is overcome very well and pupils' achievements are not adversely affected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the headteacher are inspirational and highly influential in the work of the school.
- The contribution made by other key staff to the management of the school is very good.
- Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are very good.
- The analysis of test and assessment data is impressive and very effective.

Commentary

30 The manner in which the headteacher leads and manages the school is inspirational. Through her vibrant skills and passion for success there is a tremendous team spirit in the school. She sets high expectations for all who work at the school but nurtures the skills and talents of every individual. Her drive for excellence has been the main reason why the school has improved their already high standards since the last inspection. The headteacher places great store in teamwork and valuing the contributions made by every person who works at, studies in, or shows support for the school. In doing so, she has gained the total respect of pupils, staff, governors and parents.

31 A very able deputy headteacher supports the headteacher very well. In conjunction with the senior management team, the leadership and management of the school is complemented very well. The leadership and management of special educational needs by the headteacher are excellent. She is very committed to ensuring that all pupils with special educational needs receive the best possible provision to enable them to achieve as well as they can. She places a high focus on monitoring and evaluating the provision to ensure its effectiveness. The governors are very well informed about the provision. The provision for pupils who are gifted or talented is very well managed by the headteacher and staff who ensure the school responds appropriately to pupils' needs by providing work that is challenging. The result of all these initiatives is shown in the way that inclusion is a very important element of the work in the school. The headteacher and staff meet regularly to discuss common issues and oversee work in the different aspects and subjects of the school. The assessment of each pupil's knowledge, skills and understanding is used very well to plan the next step in their learning, especially in English, mathematics and science. This process has been instrumental in improving pupils' achievements. The leader of the Foundation Stage provides an excellent sense of purpose with a series of well planned activities that interest and motivate children and lead to good acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding.

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32 This school knows where it is going and how it will get there. For example, the headteacher's excellent leadership has ensured that any difficulties are identified and dealt with as they arise. This is shown in the way the recent building work and alterations in the school did not disrupt pupils' education. The promotion of pupils' personal development, as well as a commitment to making learning relevant and interesting, is fundamental to the headteacher's vision for the school. The whole school community shares this inclusive ethos, which creates a warm, family atmosphere in school. The effective professional development of all staff is very well managed and

is closely linked to the school's priorities. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators monitor their colleagues' teaching, especially in English, mathematics, science, ICT and the Foundation Stage, check lesson plans and scrutinise samples of pupils' work. As a result, pupils' achievements are consistently high.

33 The governing body is very involved in improving pupils' achievements and providing constructive criticism of the work of the school. Governors have kept a close eye on the extent to which the key issues arising from the last report have been addressed. They have a clear idea of pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science. There is written monitoring information on the budget that governors discuss to ensure that expenditure is closely monitored. As a result, they ensure that the school gets very good value for money. Governors have a very good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development and support the work of the school in a committed manner. Governors are fully involved in strategic planning and relationships between governors and school are excellent. The chair of governors plays a particularly important role in the management of the school and is particularly successful in acting as a "critical friend", in monitoring the work of the school and in putting professional skills to very effective use in supporting and improving the work of the school.

34 The governing body is very committed to providing a successful service for the school and this is demonstrated clearly by the governors' arrangements to appoint individual governors to be regular visitors to each class when they see how pupils are developing. Governors follow pupils' progress in subjects and report back to their colleagues after visits and this ensures all governors understand how effectively the curriculum is covered. The headteacher provides regular, clear reports on the progress of all aspects of school life which, coupled with their own monitoring, ensure that governors are kept up to date with all initiatives the school undertakes. The high carry over figure, shown below, from the previous year came from new funds allocated to the school late in the financial year to help establish the new nursery, improve the resources for ICT and to fund the provision for teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs. These have been used wisely to establish, in the near future, a new computer suite and employ and train teaching assistants who play an excellent role in the education of pupils. The school provides very good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	£402,351	Balance from previous year	£29,652
Total expenditure	£391,793	Balance carried forward to the next	£40,210
Expenditure per pupil	£2,683		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35 Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good, in the nursery it is excellent. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Children achieve very well from a below average starting point in all areas of learning. There is an exceptionally strong drive for learning in the Foundation Stage and there are many reasons why children are achieving so well. Teaching is very good in all areas of learning. All staff have high expectations and they provide a very good and imaginative curriculum, which meets children's needs extremely well. Staffing levels are generous and all children are supported very well. Relationships are excellent and, as a result, the children's personal skills rapidly improve. Outstanding leadership and management have integrated the new nursery into the school and there are very good procedures in planning, monitoring and assessment. Assessments are used very well to plan work at the correct level for all children, including those with special educational needs. The accommodation is good, however, following the move of classrooms there is no area for children in the reception classes to have daily outdoor access. The high quality resources provide children with an exciting place in which to learn.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve very well because teachers understand the needs of children very well.
- Excellent relationships between children and adults create an atmosphere of highly effective learning.
- Teachers' planning is very good and they make lessons interesting and exciting.

Commentary

36 In personal, social and emotional development, teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well in this aspect of their education. They make rapid progress and by the time they start in Year 1 many children are working above the levels expected for their age. The excellent relationships between all the adults working with children set an excellent example. Consequently, children learn to take turns and share resources. The staff work very well together to maintain consistently very high expectations of children. All adults give very good encouragement to children which means that children readily join in activities. For example, in a short session of imaginative play children talked in the "Bakers' Shop" about selling cakes when they came out of the oven. Behaviour is very good in a range of situations. Children know the routines and keep to them; they behave very sensibly and become more independent. For example, in the nursery, children enter in the morning, hang up their coats and choose activities from around the room confidently and independently. Children of all abilities respond very well and find their work enjoyable because it is pitched at the correct level to provide interesting challenges. Examples of children's previous work in the reception classes shows a very good range of activities that promote their personal development, for example, they show

respect for other faiths and know the story of Noah's Ark and the meaning of the rainbow as God's promise to all people.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve very well because teachers provide an excellent range of activities that ensure children learn very well.
- Reading and writing are threaded through all the areas of learning very well.
- Every opportunity is seized upon to enhance children's communication skills.

Commentary

37 In all activities, there are excellent opportunities for the children to develop their language skills, which are often below average when they start school. All children achieve very well, attainment is often above the expected level by the time the children start in Year 1. Skills in literacy and language are developed systematically through carefully planned activities. Children are encouraged to become aware of the importance of the skills of reading and writing through very well planned focused activities. For example, in a lesson in the reception class using the topic "All about me" the teacher focussed on the letter "r" and reinforced the sound it made in the story. Through various activities, children quickly learn to write the letters in the air and recognise them when looking through storybooks. There are excellent opportunities in the nursery for children to use language. For example, they select their own name when they enter in the morning and place it in the correct position on "Mr Humpty Dumpty's Wall". Children are given many opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills through purposeful and imaginative play, such as the "Bakers' Shop" and through responding to stories and repeating rhymes. There are plenty of opportunities for children to share books throughout the day. They enjoy looking at the attractive books in the classrooms. Children enjoy listening to their teachers reading to them and they quickly remember repeating words or phrases. In the nursery, the sharing of books, listening to stories, playing games and singing rhymes are meticulously planned so that children quickly learn letter sounds and a few simple words. Their learning is fun and highly effective. The very good progress and provision continue in reception classes, with a wealth of opportunities for language development to flourish.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve very well because teaching is of a high standard and places a strong emphasis on learning through practical activities.
- Mathematical skills are put to very good use across many areas of learning.
- Teaching assistants provide excellent support for all activities.

Commentary

38 The high quality teaching of practical activities helps children to achieve very well and many attain above the levels expected by the time that they start in Year 1. Many mathematical activities are of a practical nature and, together with the good resources, support children's learning well. This is because of the strong emphasis placed on developing not only number skills but also the use of opportunities in other areas of learning to promote and develop mathematical links. For example, in an excellent outdoor session in the nursery, children filled containers with water and talked excitedly about how it flowed down a series of pipes. Adults stress mathematical language right from the start so that children use this when they talk about their ideas. For example, in a lesson in a reception class developing their number skills, children selected the correct number of features to place on a face and talked enthusiastically about their finished product. This idea of grouping was reinforced very well by teaching assistants when children were taught to use the language of "more than" or "less than" when talking about how they were

making play dough. Very good links are made with literacy when children sing number rhymes and they learn to count up to and count back from a given number in the songs.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve very well because teachers have very high expectations and an excellent knowledge in this area of learning.
- Teaching is very good and provides children with countless opportunities to learn about the world around them.
- All the available space is used to provide a good range of direct experiences.

Commentary

39 Teaching and learning are very good and help to ensure that all children achieve very well. In the nursery, children are provided with a wealth of opportunities to learn about their world. The outdoor area is an excellent resource and the teacher ensures that it is used daily to allow children to explore. The children using the "fire engine" provide a quick response to others claiming that their house is on fire. Visits and visitors strongly support this area of learning and help many children to reach the levels above those expected by the end of the reception year. This represents significant progress. The imaginative play areas are changed regularly to keep interest levels high and whether it is in the kitchen, the bakers' shop or the fire station, the children are consistently challenged in their learning. In religious education, the children celebrate many of the important festivals of the world, by dressing up at Christmas and listening to stories in assemblies. Children in the nursery explore the properties of different materials and this work is developed very well in the reception class when children are blindfolded and have to describe the substance they are feeling. For example, the prompting by a teaching assistant helped one child to describe rice as small, cold and hard. Computers are used regularly. At first, children in the nursery need a lot of adult help but by the end of reception they are moving the mouse confidently to make pictures and patterns and use the keyboard to write their names.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Access to a large hall is good so that children achieve well in moving within a large space with control and co-ordination. However, following the move of classrooms there is no area for children in the reception classes to have daily outdoor access.
- Children in the nursery have excellent access to a safe, secure space where they can choose to use large apparatus on a daily basis.
- The teachers plan a wide range of activities that develop physical skills alongside other learning.

Commentary

40 Most children comfortably reach expected standards by the end of the reception year. Even though there is no dedicated, secure outdoor area for the children in the reception classes, teachers overcome this by using the facilities in the nursery regularly. In addition, they use the well resourced hall to develop their sense of space and they move with control and co-ordination. In the nursery, the recent purchase of new bicycles and scooters allows the children to practise pedalling and steering and they move round the playground safely, avoiding obstacles. There were no collisions and the children quickly learned how to manipulate their pedal toys. During these sessions, children use climbing and other equipment and develop their body control. In one very good physical education lesson in a reception class, children knew the importance of warming up and used different ways of moving well as they walked, ran, jumped and skipped round the hall. Many have good awareness of space and work hard to avoid collisions. The use of scissors, paint brushes, pencils and other tools is a daily activity and provides children with many opportunities to develop their physical skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All children achieve very well because teaching and learning are very good.
- Children are provided with a vibrant range of activities that enrich their learning.

Commentary

41 Staff plan a wide range of stimulating activities and, with very good teaching and high levels of support, the children achieve particularly well with many attaining above the levels expected for their age by the end of the reception year. The children in the nursery need a lot of help to learn important skills when they first start school and, therefore, the direct teaching of specific skills is the focus of many activities, along with very good opportunities for play. They are taught, for example, the skills needed to mix paint and use brushes to express their ideas in imaginative paintings. They quickly learn how to use scissors and glue and confidently make models of houses. They listen to music and use instruments to make their own simple compositions. For example, in a very good session using music as the focus, children showed their own response as the teacher encouraged them to listen for firework sounds in the music. This excellent link to their current development was also used when children watched a sparkler burn and then painted and decorated their own pictures using a very good range of materials. As in other areas, because of the excellent support by teaching assistants, there are many opportunities for staff to talk with children as they play in order to extend vocabulary and ideas.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achieve very well because teaching and learning are very good and all pupils, whatever their ability, are challenged very well in their learning.
- Assessment is very good and ensures that work is set at the correct levels for all pupils.
- All staff working with pupils with special educational needs have very high expectations and pupils are left in no doubt as to what is expected of them in terms of quality and quantity of work.
- The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and clearly committed to maintaining high achievement.

Commentary

42 In Year 2, pupils' attainment in English is well above the levels expected for their age and their achievement is very good. Pupils with special educational needs and those that are gifted or talented make very good progress in lessons. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is high and they achieve very well. Listening is a particular strength and receives a high focus in the very good teaching. Pupils listen very attentively to questions and explanations so they know what is expected of them and very effective learning occurs. Every opportunity is used both in literacy lessons and throughout the day to improve vocabulary and the fluency of their speech. Assemblies are often used to help pupils express their ideas more fluently and role-play is a regular feature of lessons. By Year 2, nearly all pupils express their ideas confidently and they are encouraged by the staff to use their broadening vocabulary to increase the detail and clarity of their speech.

43 Pupils' attainment in reading is high and they achieve very well because skills are taught very effectively and progress is assessed and reviewed regularly. Staff have worked well to drive up standards in reading since the last inspection. Letter sounds are practised regularly from an early age and pupils quickly learn the strategies to read words and sentences confidently. During a session in Year 1 when pupils were reading "The Three Billy Goats Gruff", the teacher helped them to read with more expression and focus on reading accurately from the repetitive phrases. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 regularly use the library to find information. They have favourite authors and know the types of books they prefer. They read confidently, with fluency and expression. All pupils are encouraged to read at home with their parents and the effective use of diaries to pass on information about reading progress is helping pupils to move forward significantly in reading.

44 Pupils achieve very well in writing and their attainment is high because the teaching is very good and some literacy sessions have been lengthened to allow more time for extended writing. The writing in books and on display shows many examples of writing being practised across the curriculum and for many different purposes. ICT is regularly used to help pupils to present their work well. Highly skilled teaching in the "word work" and the "shared writing" sessions enables all pupils, including those with special educational

needs, to improve their spellings, grammar and punctuation and they structure their writing well. In a lesson in Year 2, for example, the teacher used four versions of "Little Red Riding Hood" in a very challenging way to help pupils to rewrite the story. Handwriting is taught regularly and many pupils by Year 2 join their writing with a good legible style. The higher attaining pupils write expressively and accurately.

45 Teachers' planning is thorough and specialist teaching is used effectively for all Year 2 pupils and some of Year 1. This initiative has a very positive impact on pupils' learning, as basic skills are taught extremely well. The great strength in the teaching is that planned tasks take very good account of the differing ability levels. This is because very good procedures are in place for assessing, tracking and target setting. Expectations are high in the teaching and pupils are left in no doubt as to what is expected of them in terms of quality and quantity of work. Self-esteem is high, contributing significantly to the very good achievement. Teaching assistants, who work with pupils with special educational needs, play a pivotal role in supporting and enhancing learning, which is very good. Their contributions are very significant and highly valued by teachers, parents and pupils.

46 The leadership and management of English are very good and have raised standards in English since the last inspection. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and clearly committed to maintaining high achievement. The monitoring of teaching and learning has been very effective in maintaining high expectations and ensuring very strong and effective teamwork among the staff.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47 The school gives a very good emphasis on promoting literacy across the curriculum and planned opportunities significantly enrich speaking and listening, reading and writing. Science is used particularly well to extend the range and variety of writing and religious, personal and social education lessons are used very successfully to widen pupils' discussion skills. The very good focus on teaching literacy skills in most other subjects makes an important contribution to how well pupils achieve.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good because teachers know individual pupils very well and ensure that suitable work is planned to meet their different needs.
- There is very good emphasis on the teaching of basic number skills.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils, as a result, pupils have excellent attitudes to the subject.
- The co-ordinator ensures that information from assessments is used very well to guide teachers' planning.

Commentary

48 In Year 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics is well above the levels expected for their age and their achievement is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those that are gifted or talented make very good progress in lessons. Pupils achieve very well because they work hard, the

teaching is very good and lessons are very well planned. For example, teachers plan suitable activities for the full ability range in each class by setting work at different levels. This ensures pupils understand what they are doing, they build effectively on what they have previously learnt and so achieve very well. Higher attaining pupils achieve very well because teachers set different tasks for them at suitably challenging levels. New learning targets are shared with pupils so that they are aware of what they are supposed to know and do by the end of the lesson. Teachers are very knowledgeable and enthusiastic which motivates pupils very well. Pupils are encouraged to use the correct mathematical terms and to focus on the tasks set. There are no significant differences in the achievements of girls and boys currently in the school.

49 Pupils in Year 1 build on the very positive start they have in the Foundation Stage through a range of practically based activities. They learn to count, add and subtract with increasing accuracy. There is very good emphasis on the teaching of basic number skills. For example, in Year 2, pupils use number lines and squares from one to 100 and select cards to fill in the missing numbers in short sequences. In discussions, pupils explain clearly how they can make graphs of the results of surveys about their own bodies, for example, eye or hair colour. In a very good lesson in Year 1 and 2, pupils worked accurately with numbers when solving problems relating to doubling and halving. Pupils tackle problems, which involve simple fractions and use the knowledge well when splitting shapes into halves and quarters.

50 Pupils' very good achievements are the result of very good teaching throughout the school and the very effective leadership and management in the subject. For example, staff work closely together and frequently discuss pupils' progress and the success of particular projects. The co-ordinator has undertaken scrutiny of pupils' work as well as checking on teaching and learning. The information gained has been used very well to guide future school developments. Guidance for teachers is explicit and easy to follow. As a result, they use assessment very effectively to set targets for pupils. Pupils know how well they are achieving and what they must do next to improve further. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In addition, the analysis of test results is accurate and used well to find out which areas of mathematics need improving. Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, receive excellent support from the class teachers and teaching assistants.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51 Mathematics is used very well in a variety of ways across the curriculum and this enables pupils to make progress in other subjects. For example, pupils measure and record temperatures in science and collect data in a variety of subjects. There are sufficient opportunities and a good range of mathematical programs for pupils to use ICT to further enhance their skills. For example, in a very good Year 1 and 2 session, a pupil used a program to enhance skills identifying numbers that were smaller or larger than a given number on the screen.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject and this leads to pupils' very good learning.
- There is a clear focus on investigation and experimentation during lessons.
- The science co-ordinator knows the strengths of the subject very well.

Commentary

52 In Year 2, pupils' attainment in science is well above the levels expected for their age and their achievement is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or who are gifted and talented, achieve very well and improve their knowledge, skills and understanding of scientific processes, because teaching is very good and pupils are very keen to learn. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subject content and have clear targets for lessons that are shared with pupils. This ensures that pupils learn new ideas securely and have a clear focus for their learning. In a very good lesson for pupils in the Year 1 and 2 class, there was very good pace, and the teacher used practical examples to emphasise the different movements pupils own bodies make. There were skilful and challenging questions asked that reinforced pupils' learning very well as they discussed the way they could walk, run, hop, jump and crawl.

53 A further strength of the teaching is that work in science is practical and involves pupils in challenging experimental work. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to make accurate measurements, to record data in graphs and tables and then to interpret data and draw conclusions. For example, in displays of pupils' work, their descriptions showed that pupils understood changes taking place when they melted chocolate. In further experimental work, they completed a graph to show the speed at which ice melts in different parts of the classroom. The emphasis on using key vocabulary is consistent throughout the school. Teachers ensure that pupils improve their literacy and numeracy skills well by encouraging the use of correct scientific language and by recording the progress of experiments accurately. For example, for pupils now in Year 2 their previous work shows accurate use of diagrams and labels to show simple electrical circuits and the different parts of a plant. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils make a very positive contribution to the pupils' excellent attitudes to the subject. Pupils with special educational needs receive excellent support from the teaching assistants, as a result, pupils feel confident when offering suggestions and answering questions in class.

54 The science co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management. A full audit of resources has been completed and new equipment bought to ensure pupils have sufficient for their experimental work. The checking of teaching and learning makes sure that teaching and the work carried out in science is very effective, as a result, pupils achieve very well when improving their knowledge, skills and understanding of the subject. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good resources for ICT, however the very good plans for the computer suite have not yet been implemented.
- All staff have very high expectations of pupils, as a result, pupils' attitudes and relationships are excellent.
- Pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop their confidence in using computers to find information and to support their work in other subjects.

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Commentary

55 In Year 2, pupils' attainment in ICT is above the levels expected for their age and their achievement is good. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Teaching and learning are good and many pupils use computers confidently. This has a significant impact on pupils' achievements, attainment and attitudes in lessons. For example, pupils in a reception and Year 1 class improved their knowledge of how to create a picture using different sizes of paintbrushes on the screen, they understood how to rub out parts they did not like and explained how to print the finished pictures. The teacher used the computer very effectively to demonstrate how to change colours and use different shapes to block in colours.

56 Pupils' folders and records for ICT show they use the computer to word process their work both when writing simple sentences for their stories and when typing instructions to make a floor robot move in a particular way. The school has access to good resources, which they use well, however, because of the recent building work, the ICT suite has not yet been completed and this limits the amount of time each pupil has using computers. Discussions with pupils and teachers show that a suite was in use and pupils' skills are at a good level because of this. Teaching and learning using classroom based computers are good and many pupils use computers confidently. This has a significant impact on pupils' achievements. Teachers expect the best from pupils, this means that when sharing their ideas with others, pupils show excellent attitudes to each other and to staff.

57 Pupils are provided with many good opportunities to develop their confidence in using computers. For example, in discussions with pupils in Year 2 they explained how to send e-mails, write instructions to move a floor robot and how they use computers to enhance their work in mathematics when collecting data and producing a graph of the results. The leadership and management of the subject are very good because there is clear guidance for the subject that teachers follow, and a well developed improvement

plan. This plan shows the detailed, continuing improvement intended and the appropriate training for staff as new initiatives are started, for example, when the planned interactive whiteboards are delivered in the near future. In addition, the co-ordinator ensures that all teachers use computers in many lessons which enhance teaching and pupils' understanding of the use of ICT considerably.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58 The school is making good progress in developing the use of ICT across the curriculum. Discussions with pupils across the school show they understand how computers can help them in many aspects of their school life, for example, creating graphs in mathematics, using word processing to write their stories to improve their language work and recording the results of experiments in science.

HUMANITIES

59 Work was sampled in geography and history, with no lessons seen in geography and one in history. As a result, there is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.

60 In **geography** in Year 2, pupils make good use of the local environment to carry out detailed work. They compare where they live with a contrasting locality, for example, the island of Struay. They use properties from both regions to compare their own village with the island, for example, they record lists that show differences in the landscape and numbers of cars in the areas. They link their studies of water to investigative work in science when they record the daily temperature.

61 In **history**, pupils in Year 2 know the story of the Great Fire of London, when it began and why it spread so quickly. They use their own diaries, written during the holiday, to compare with the diary written by Samuel Pepys. The teacher used a video recording very well to show how the fire spread through the streets. Very perceptive questioning made sure that pupils understood how the wooden buildings and limited fire fighting equipment made it very difficult to stop the spread of the fire. Pupils' written work shows that pupils understand life in Victorian times and compare it to their own lives. History and geography make a positive contribution to social, cultural and moral development by raising pupils' awareness of other cultures and societies.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are good because the co-ordinator has a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and has a strong commitment to further developments.
- The curriculum is planned well so that pupils make progressive gains in their knowledge about the faiths taught. Although a few examples of written work were seen in pupils' books, the quality did not reflect the very good range and standards of writing seen in other subjects.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

62 In Year 2, pupils' attainment in religious education is above the expectations in the Locally Agreed Syllabus and all pupils achieve well. Standards have risen since the last inspection when they were at average levels. The improved standards are due to better planning to cover the requirements of the syllabus and more time to reflect on religious issues in personal and social education lessons. These improvements have been made by the co-ordinator who has a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in provision and has a strong commitment to further developments.

63 The regular visits from the vicar and visits to local churches and the nearby cathedral have been used effectively to enrich the teaching of Christianity. The quality of teaching is good. As a result, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 show that they are beginning to link religious teaching with everyday life. They have a good knowledge and understanding of some of the features of churches and other places of worship and know why they are special. The school places great emphasis on caring for others and helping pupils to recognise the importance of family and friends. All pupils were actively involved in a role-play christening in the church and a wedding in school, both were led by the vicar. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the two occasions, for example, "We had a christening in church because God lives there and he will look after the baby".

64 Lessons make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural awareness. The teacher in Years 1 and 2 explored with pupils what Christians believe about God and who they think He is. The sensitive approach of the teacher helped pupils to discuss their ideas freely, knowing they would be valued. In raising pupils' awareness of other faiths and beliefs, important festivals such as Divali and the Chinese New Year are celebrated. Pupils dress up in costumes and celebrate by dancing and eating traditional foods. Very good links are made across subjects in the planned topics for religious education. When the "wedding" was performed, written invitations were made, music was played and a wedding cake was made in design and technology. There is a very good focus on using examples of good literature as well as the Bible to explore religious and moral themes across different religions, to give pupils time for reflection and to discuss issues of concern. Although a few examples of written work were seen in pupils' books, the quality did not reflect the very good range and standards of writing seen in other subjects.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65 Design and technology is reported fully below. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about provision in art and design, music or physical education as few lessons were seen. However, inspectors spoke to teachers and pupils about their work in these subjects and looked at planning and displays of pupils' work in art and craft. From this information, it is clear that the school is giving pupils relevant experiences in these subjects and covering all the requirements of the curriculum.

66 A wide and interesting variety of well presented pupils' work in **art and design** was seen on display. The quality of this work is good and shows that there is now more focus on teaching specific skills than at the time of the last inspection. This is also confirmed by the one lesson seen, in which the teacher demonstrated well the skills of press printing with polystyrene tiles. Teachers often use the works of well known artists to

help pupils with ideas and to learn new techniques. This approach was evident in much of the work seen on display, such as still life flowers using watercolours, pen and ink portraits and paintings of people and moving vehicles. The curriculum is enriched well for pupils through the work of visiting artists. Recent work has included a large collage based on a Chinese story about rivers and was used to celebrate the Chinese New Year and to enhance pupils' cultural awareness.

67 Pupils receive a weekly **music** lesson from their teacher and good planning ensures that all elements of the curriculum in music are covered. A few pupils in Year 2 learn to play the recorder and music is enriched by visiting musicians who lead workshops in the school. Recently the pupils in Year 2 played African drums for a performance of music around the world at a local arts centre. They regularly listen to music from other times and cultures. Music plays a part in many school productions. From the evidence of hearing singing in assemblies, the pupils have built up a good range of songs. They sing with great energy and enthusiasm, clearly enjoying their singing together. They quickly learn the words of hymns and generally keep in time when adding actions. Their singing is in tune and the words are clear and audible.

68 In **physical education**, it is evident that all strands of the subject are regularly taught. In a session in the hall, pupils in Year 1 and 2 used the apparatus very effectively to explore different movements. They crawled along benches, climbed the larger apparatus confidently and showed they were skilful when balancing on the beams. During the warm up session, pupils in Year 2 worked hard to improve their physical control as they moved from one movement to the next. Pupils know the requirements of a warm up and, in the short session, they improved their interpretation of music when imitating penguins and polar bears. In discussions with Year 2 pupils, they showed they are aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies. Pupils benefit from the extra curricular activities. For example, a large number stayed after school to play football with a local coach. They received very good coaching and thoroughly enjoyed the session.

Design and Technology

Provision in design and technology is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the planning and teaching of the subject.
- The skills for making articles are taught well, enabling good achievement.
- Good links are made with other subjects.

Commentary

69 In Year 2, pupils' attainment in design and technology is above the level expected for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in their learning and make good progress. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has worked hard to improve the planning and teaching, which now focuses more on teaching the skills of joining techniques and assembling components. Because of this, pupils' making skills have improved and the finished products are better made and more durable.

70 The quality of teaching is good overall. At times, it is very good and better than the last inspection. In Year 2, the teacher provided very good support in helping pupils to assemble the parts needed to make a moving vehicle. While closely supervising their work for health and safety reasons, freedom was given to measure and cut their pieces of dowelling for the axles, using a clamp and axle saw. This they did skilfully and with great care and concentration, totally engrossed in their tasks and eager to do well. They supported each other very well, sharing resources and helping to fix the wheels to the axles. Timely interventions by adults helped pupils to consider adaptations and improvements to make the mechanism work. In Year 1, pupils concentrated hard to make moving pictures based on pivots, after the teacher had carefully explained the design process and pupils worked on their own designs. The teacher provided very good support, emphasising the importance of using scissors safely and materials well to complete their tasks. In both lessons, relationships were excellent and pupils showed outstanding attitudes to their learning and consistently behaved very well. The pupils with special educational needs received very good levels of support and were totally integrated within the class.

71 Planning indicates that all elements of the curriculum are taught and pupils' books show that they are given the opportunity to design their articles first. The higher attaining pupils add measurements and label the designs. The endings of lessons are often used to evaluate how well the article has been made. During the lesson in Year 2, the pupils who had made the moving vehicles showed the rest of the class how well they moved. Although encouraged by the teacher to suggest ways of improving the vehicles, pupils, in their very caring concern for the feelings of others, were very reluctant to criticise the work of their friends.

72 Good connections are made with other subjects and the key skills of English and mathematics are promoted well. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 retell well known stories using finger puppets which they have made. The school is closely involved in the "healthy schools" project and food technology is linked well to this initiative. In Years 1

and 2, for example, pupils made soup and a fruit salad to share with parents after the harvest festival service.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

73 **Personal, social and health education** is an integral part of the curriculum and teachers make use of every opportunity to promote the positive values of the school. In assemblies, the themes help pupils to develop confidence to express themselves on issues that affect them, such as how to make others happy or how others may feel. Pupils are given time to reflect and consider issues during lessons and collective worship. During lessons and break times older pupils take responsibility; for instance they look after younger ones, tidy classrooms and put away chairs after lunch. At lunchtimes, pupils socialise well and chat happily to each other. The very high expectations of staff in all lessons and their example to pupils lead to the excellent relationships in school. Sex education is provided in the science curriculum and the school policy guides staff well in their approach to the subject. Pupils develop a sense of **citizenship** through a variety of approaches. They receive teaching and visits from a number of people who assist with pupils' learning about a range of aspects that help them to grow and develop towards being good citizens. For example, they are consulted on different aspects of school life, Year 2 pupils are all monitors and some are "buddies" and the formation of the School Council is regarded highly by its members. Pupils take part in community activities and regularly raise money to support charities.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	1
Attendance	3
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	1
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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