

INSPECTION REPORT

HARDWICK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ferriston, Banbury

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 122999

Headteacher: Mrs Julie Hawkin

Lead inspector: Mr Glyn Gaskill

Dates of inspection: 27th - 30th September 2004

Inspection number: 269468

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	269
School address:	Ferriston Banbury Oxfordshire
Postcode:	OX16 1XE
Telephone number:	01295 258355
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Jackie Cunningham
Date of previous inspection:	7 th June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves an area to the northern edge of Banbury. The school is slightly larger in size than most primary schools. The socio-economic background of the area is below average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average and has changed little in recent years. Four out of five pupils are of white British ethnic background, with the remainder coming from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. A very small number of pupils are at an early stage of using English as an additional language. The movement of pupils in and out of the school during the school year is significantly more than average. When they enter the Foundation Stage, children's attainment is below average. Over the last few years, the number of pupils on the special educational needs register has increased significantly and currently is 19 per cent of pupils, which is above the national average. Less than one per cent have a statement of special educational needs, which is below the national average. The school is involved in initiatives connected with the *Leadership development strategy in primary schools*, *Networked learning communities* and an attached centre for Hardwick families and under-fives (CHUFF).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22951	Glyn Gaskill	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music
31754	Charlotte Roberson	Lay inspector	
31334	Barbara Atcheson	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Religious education Foundation Stage ¹
16930	Jeffery Plumb	Team inspector	English Physical education Information and communication technology, Special educational needs Personal, social and health education and citizenship English as an additional language

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¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also include knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school which provides a **satisfactory** standard of education for its pupils. Pupils' standards of work are below average, but their achievement is satisfactory and often good. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory and attitudes are good. The new headteacher provides very good leadership. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are below average in writing and mathematics across the school.
- There are very good links with the community and parents are happy to send their children to the school.
- The school's behaviour policy is successfully used in nearly all classes, but strategies are not in place to provide for pupils with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- Many pupils benefit from a very good range of activities in addition to class lessons.
- Overall, teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good; in Years 5 and 6 it is good and it is never less than satisfactory elsewhere.
- The roles and responsibilities of the leadership team are not sufficiently clear.
- Staff and governors have a shared commitment and capacity to improve.
- The plans for school improvement do not clearly state priorities or funding.
- There is general recognition, within the school and the community, of improvements to provision in recent years.

Since the school was last inspected, in June 1999, improvement has been **satisfactory**. Teaching has improved significantly. Standards have improved markedly in information and communication technology (ICT), but less so in mathematics and aspects of science and English. Library provision is much better.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Average points scores in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	E*	E	E*
Science	D	E*	E	E*

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - in the lowest 5% of schools*

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

Pupil's achievement is **satisfactory**. Pupils' overall achievement in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6 is good. The majority of pupils in Years 2 and 4 are achieving well. Achievement in physical education, mathematics and reading is good. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children should meet the expected learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, physical and creative development, but do not quite meet the remainder. Inspection evidence found average standards in nearly all subjects; but in English in Year 2, mathematics in Years 2 and 4 and science in Year 6, standards were below average. In English, writing is below average in Year 2 and just below average in Year 6, with other aspects of English being average. There is a high movement of pupils in and out of the school during the school year, with a high proportion of special educational needs pupils joining. Overall, National Curriculum test results for Years 2 and 6 went down significantly in 2002 to become in the bottom five per cent of all and similar schools, but have steadily improved since.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their moral, social and cultural development, are **good**. Their spiritual development is satisfactory. Behaviour is satisfactory and attitudes are good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education for its pupils.

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. At times, teaching is very good for most pupils in Years 2 and 4 and all pupils in Year 6, and mainly very good and occasionally excellent in Year 5. Many of the teaching staff and initiatives to improve standards are relatively new. Because of this, the impact on pupils' achievement is not firmly established. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Due to circumstances beyond the control of the school, the small number of pupils at an early stage of using English as an additional language lack support. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who are fluent in speaking English as an additional language is satisfactory overall.

The use of assessment to raise standards is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory elsewhere. Assessment is used well to guide curriculum planning and additional provision, particularly in mathematics. These systems are becoming more established and having an increasingly positive effect on pupils' achievement. In particular, the use of precise descriptions of what pupils are expected to learn is becoming more effective in raising standards. The administration for assessment lacks simplicity and is unnecessarily demanding on teachers' time.

Taken as a whole, the curriculum is satisfactory, but good for the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and physical education. Pupils are not involved in an act of collective worship every day. The provision for learning activities in addition to normal lesson times is a great strength of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The recently appointed headteacher provides very good leadership. The school has climbed out of a time of very low morale to develop a common commitment for continual improvement and the capacity to make progress. The leadership of key staff is satisfactory, but what each individual does needs clarifying, particularly the role of the deputy headteacher. The relatively new governing body is well structured and provides satisfactory governance, although it does not meet its statutory obligation to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. The school has been over-optimistic in its self-evaluation of what it does. Planning for school improvement is too ambitious and lacks clarity of how improvements will be funded. Financial planning and control are satisfactory. Staff development is good, making a positive contribution to pupils' achievement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Links with parents are good. Parents welcome the way staff are approachable and recognise improvements made to the school in recent times. They appreciate the close links with the attached centre for families and under-fives. In general, links with the community are very strong, with a common resolve that they continue to develop. Pupils take a good interest in extra-curricular activities and benefit well from links with other schools and colleges.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in writing and mathematics across the school and in science in Years 3 to 6;
- establish effective strategies to meet the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties;
- clarify the role and responsibilities of the management team and link realistic plans for school improvement with the budget;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- provide a daily act of collective worship.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' overall achievement is **satisfactory** and their standards of attainment are **below average overall**.

Achievement is **good** in the Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6, and for most pupils in Years 2 and 4.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage, Years 5 and 6, and most of Years 2 and 4.
- Standards are below average across the school in writing and mathematics and in science in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are not making sufficient progress.
- Standards are improving, particularly in reading.
- Pupils' achievement in physical education and mathematics is good across the school.
- National Curriculum test results are low, but improving.

Commentary

1. When children start in the Foundation Stage, their personal and mathematical skills are below average and their language skills are well below average. They achieve well in their mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, and very well in the other four areas of learning. This is because of high quality teaching of an interesting curriculum. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children are on course to attain the learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development. Most will not quite reach the learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
2. For seven-year-olds, inspection evidence found standards to be average in most subjects, but below in writing and mathematics. For eleven-year-olds, standards are below average in mathematics and science and slightly below in writing. In the remainder of subjects, standards are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained in most subjects but improved, across the school, in ICT and design and technology and, for seven-year-olds, in science. Many of the teaching staff are relatively new and several initiatives have been set up recently. There has been a noticeable improvement in reading across the school because it has been a successful focus for development. Other initiatives, for example in mathematics, are not established to the same effect. In general, pupils are making satisfactory progress and generally achieving similarly to pupils in comparable schools.
3. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory. At its best, pupils with special educational needs make rapid gains in confidence and self-esteem. The pupil with a statement of special educational needs makes good progress. Too often, in the Year 3/4 class, pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties underachieve because there is not an effective whole-school behaviour management strategy to meet their needs.
4. The achievement of pupils at an early stage of using English as an additional language is not as good as it should be because of a lack of specialist teaching. The achievement of those pupils not at an early stage of using English as an additional language is satisfactory. Their attainment is variable, but some are among the highest attainers by Year 6.

5. The average points score for the National Curriculum tests in 2003 are shown in the tables below:

Standards in national tests (SATs) at the end of Year 2 –average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.3 (13.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.4 (12.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.8 (14.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Standards in national tests(SATs) at the end of Year 6 –average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.1 (24.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	23.4 (22.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	25.7 (24.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. Between 1998 and 2003, the trend in the school's average points score in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 was below the national trend and at the end of Year 6 was broadly in line with the national trend. In 2002, results declined to a low level at the end of Year 2 and a very low level at the end of Year 6. In 2003, all results improved in both years and the unvalidated 2004 results continue this upward trend.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to their work and towards others in the school are **good**. Behaviour is **satisfactory**. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance is **satisfactory** and punctuality is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils respond well when whole-school strategies to promote good behaviour are used.
- There are no common procedures to manage the behaviour of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- Pupils have a good interest in school life and the range of activities provided.
- The rate of exclusions is high for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school does not plan specifically for the development of spiritual awareness

Commentary

7. Well-planned transition procedures combined with a secure caring atmosphere enable children in the Foundation Stage to settle quickly into the routines of school life. Pupils of all ages are keen to come to school. They make the most of good opportunities to work in co-operation with others. Pupils are helpful and considerate to each other and to visitors and adults in the school. Behaviour in lessons is satisfactory and often good. In the vast majority of cases, pupils have positive attitudes to their learning.
8. At playtime, most pupils play happily and co-operatively, but a significant minority of pupils, mainly boys, are boisterous. There is little to keep older pupils occupied in the playgrounds. All pupils are familiar with the rewards and sanctions policy, known as 'SMILES'. They are highly motivated to gain rewards from the system. They consider the sanctions fair, including pupils who speak from first-hand experience. However, procedures are not consistently applied in a

small number of classes. Several staff are skilled in managing the behaviour of the small minority of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Because there is a lack of a whole-school policy to respond to their challenging behaviour, it is not always controlled in a minority of classes, leading to a very negative effect on their achievement. The number of exclusion days for 2003/2004 was high at forty-two days and related to the same minority of boys, half of whom were in Year 6. One of the pupils concerned in Year 2 has moved to more suitable provision. All these boys were on the special educational needs register. This is an unsatisfactory situation.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	224	16	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	10	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	20	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

9. Parents consider behaviour of the majority to be good in general. Both parents and pupils feel that should bullying occur and the school is informed, the matter is dealt with quickly and effectively. Parents feel that all pupils are treated fairly and have equal access to what the school provides.
10. Most pupils are self-assured and willing to try new things. In the Foundation Stage, children choose when to have their snack, selecting their own fruit and biscuits. Older pupils take on responsibilities that help with the smooth running of the school. The school council is at an early stage of development, but it was involved in the appointment of the new headteacher,
11. All pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They know about their local community through activities such as singing to the elderly and delivering harvest boxes. They are gaining a sense of the wider world through links with international schools in the programme for European and international co-operation. They learn to appreciate the cultures and traditions of people from other ethnic backgrounds through cookery, dance and music from their own and other lands. There are few activities which are specifically planned to encourage pupils' spiritual development beyond reflecting on a theme and saying prayers in assembly. Music making for assemblies involving Years 3 to 6 makes a significant contribution to pupils' social and spiritual development.
12. Attendance figures since 2002 are consistently very close to those seen in schools nationally and are satisfactory. Illness is the main reason why a pupil remains at home and only a very small number of pupils stay away from school without a valid reason. The school has successful strategies in place, which are supported by parents, to encourage pupils to attend every day. Attendance is properly recorded and monitored by staff and parents are supportive

of the school's policy to let them promptly know why a child may be away. Pupils arrive on time and punctuality is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (2003 -2004)

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.5 %
National data:	5.1 %

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.2 %
National data:	0.4 %

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. Teaching is good and the overall curriculum is satisfactory. Activities additional to lessons are very good. Provision for care is good. Links with the local community are very good and partnerships with parents, other schools and colleges are good.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is **good** and leads to **good** learning by pupils. The use of assessment and its effect on raising standards is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and in Year 5.
- Assessment in the Foundation Stage is having a positive effect on standards.
- In Years 1 to 6, the use of assessment is satisfactory, but too demanding on teachers' time.
- There is no specialist teaching for pupils at an early stage of using English as an additional language.
- Teachers work hard to get pupils involved in their learning.
- Good use is made of homework.
- Planning for teaching is consistent and clear.

Commentary

13. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when 10 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory and 30 per cent was good or better. The observed teaching in the current inspection was very good the Foundation Stage. The teaching observed in Year 5 was very good and, on occasion, excellent. At times, teaching was very good for most pupils in Years 2 and 4 and for all pupils in Year 6. Elsewhere, the teaching was never less than satisfactory and often good. There are several relatively recent appointments to the teaching staff and also recent initiatives to raise standards. Because of this relative newness, the effect on pupils' overall achievement lags behind the quality of the teaching, with pupils making satisfactory progress.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	12 (27%)	16 (37%)	15 (34%)	0	0	0

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

14. In the Foundation Stage, children learn well because of the very good teaching. The teacher's command of the Foundation Stage curriculum is very secure and there are high expectations of the children. The needs of children are met by the significant time given to consolidate small steps in their learning. Good deployment of the well-trained teaching assistant extends and supports learning in an effective way.
15. Nearly all teachers make effective use of the school's behaviour policy. The minority of pupils who have challenging behaviour respond positively when this is used skilfully and their progress is not held back. The lack of effective strategies to deal with pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties results in these pupils missing out on aspects of their learning. Planning for teaching is thorough and consistent across year groups. Teachers make pupils think more deeply and explore their understanding by skilful use of questions. This is effectively done at different stages of the lesson. One weakness in questioning is the limited opportunity pupils have to give their own evaluation of each other's work, for example in art or music.
16. Teachers use a good range of strategies to quickly activate and then maintain pupils' interest in the lesson. There are several instances where teachers give examples of work to illustrate what they want pupils to do and this gives pupils a good start to their new learning. Higher attaining pupils are given work which stretches their understanding, but there are a few instances where this could be more thorough. The development of pupils' skills to find out information for themselves is satisfactory and starts in Year 1. Homework supports learning well. All pupils' work, including homework, is regularly marked. There are several instances where marking gives guidance to help pupils make progress but this is not consistent. There is one large, white, computer display board (an interactive whiteboard) which is used to very good effect in many lessons.
17. Teachers carefully plan for specific support activities, provided by visiting specialist teachers and assistants, for pupils at an early stage of using English as an additional language. Circumstances beyond the control of the school have resulted in the support not being available, leading to unsatisfactory provision.
18. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning but this is not consistent across the school. Teachers and assistants plan flexibly to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. They make satisfactory use of pupils' individual education plans which leads to pupils making satisfactory progress.
19. There is a common system for recording the progress of all pupils across the curriculum. This is well understood by staff and used particularly effectively in English and mathematics to raise standards. Small steps for pupils' progress are identified. These steps are known as learning objectives and describe what the pupil needs to do to improve. This system is developing well where the objectives are precise and are supported with learning activities which are matched to the objective. There is still some way to go before this system is used effectively across the school. The administration of the assessment system is over-demanding on teachers' time.
20. Procedures for the assessment of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. Their needs are identified early. The school is trying hard to meet the needs of pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties but it does not have access to sufficient guidance. This results in unsatisfactory provision for these pupils.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** and fully inclusive curriculum that meets pupils' academic and personal needs. The curriculum is enriched by the **very good** opportunities for learning beyond lessons. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very strong extra-curricular programme supports the learning of many pupils.
- The school is not providing an act of collective worship every day.
- There is too great an increase in curricular demands when pupils move from the Foundation Stage to Year 1.

Commentary

21. The curriculum is suitably planned to make learning worthwhile for all pupils and they are prepared well for the next stage in their education. It meets all statutory requirements with one exception. The school omits provision for a daily act of collective worship. The curriculum for all National Curriculum subjects and religious education is satisfactory, and is sometimes enhanced by lessons for Year 6 given by teachers from the secondary school, for example in German. There have been positive developments in using the arts to support learning across the curriculum. This is seen when pupils set their multiplication table to a particular rhythm or use drama in the humanities.
22. A well-planned programme of personal, social and health education is taught and linked effectively to other subjects. The *Health Awareness Bus* and *Junior Citizen Day* give pupils the good insight to relate issues to real life. Teachers plan well in teams so that pupils of the same age have a similar curriculum.
23. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There are structured programmes to help them with their reading and writing, such as a phonics programme. However, there are no programmes, such as activities which explore the emotions, to support pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Although the school made realistic plans to meet the needs of pupils at an early stage of learning English, staffing shortages within the local education authority meant they could not be implemented.
24. The school supports pupils' learning further through a very strong extra-curricular programme, particularly in the arts and physical education. This is effectively incorporated into the curriculum and well attended. In the Foundation Stage, the *Forest School* initiative develops learning in a positive and imaginative way. Higher up the school, a programme of European and international co-operation activities provides an effective focal point for cross-curricular work. This broadens pupils' knowledge and understanding of life in other countries through links with European schools. The *Network Learning Communities* scheme provides members of the school council with a video conference link with councillors in other schools.
25. A broad and varied programme of residential visits for pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is well established. Pupils speak favourably of the fun they have on these visits which increases their confidence and social and personal skills. Several visitors to the school provide interesting stimuli for pupils' learning. One good example is that of an Egyptologist who made a life-sized mummy. This prompted pupils to write their own explanation of the mystery surrounding a burial of Egyptian royalty. The school also provides subject days and arts weeks which enrich and bring added relevance to the curriculum. Overall, pupils have a satisfactory opportunity to access what the school provides.
26. The curriculum change when children move from the Foundation Stage to Year 1 does not sufficiently consider that most of the children have not yet reached the early learning goals in all areas of learning. The change in demand is too great for many.
27. Accommodation is satisfactory overall with some considerable strengths, but also significant weaknesses. Accommodation and resources in the Foundation Stage are good overall, despite the sloping nature of the outside area. The Foundation Stage classrooms are separate from the main school but next door to the family centre, which does not always help with movement of children or communication. There are extensive grounds with large grassed and

hard-surfaced areas which are well looked after, particularly since a secure perimeter fence was put up in recent times. In the main school building there is a spacious hall and, recently developed, good accommodation for ICT and the library. Several classrooms, as the school grounds, are on several levels with many steps. One of the few grumbles the pupils have of the school is that this presents a problem for those who have difficulty walking. The local education authority and governors are progressing plans to make the situation more acceptable. Plans are also in hand to improve the infant toilets which are inadequate.

28. There are not enough bi-lingual learning resources to support pupils using English as an additional language. The resources to support pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. Much improvement has taken place in recent years in the quality and quantity of learning resources and their organisation, particularly in ICT. The new computers are not linked on a network. Programs have to be loaded separately on each computer and the computers are not always reliable. This leads to great frustration and inefficient use of teaching and learning time. Overall, the provision for learning resources is satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care and welfare, including the attention given to their health and safety, is **good** overall. Overall, they are given satisfactory advice, guidance and support based on monitoring. Pupils' views and opinions are being taken on board satisfactorily at present.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff are kind and caring towards pupils and supervise them carefully during play and dinner times.
- New pupils settle quickly and happily into the school.
- The school council is beginning to have an impact on school life.
- Procedures to promote attendance are good.

Commentary

29. Pupils have generally good and trusting relationships with adults in the school. The new headteacher is sensibly maintaining a daily presence on the playground. This reassures parents of her strong commitment to ensuring all pupils are well looked after and supported throughout the day. All staff keep a vigilant eye on pupils at play and during lessons, and there are many examples of kindness shown towards individuals. Those responsible for child protection are experienced and efficient. Much time has been spent on attending meetings for more vulnerable children. Families speak well of the support which teachers give them to sort out and talk through difficulties as they arise. Governors and pupils are only too aware of the hazards of the site, for example the large outdoor areas, many steps and numerous doors, which make supervision very challenging. Play equipment has recently been provided in the outside play areas for younger pupils at break times. Supervisors make sure pupils are playing well and enjoying themselves. The Years 3 to 6 play area is drab with very little to occupy the pupils in their break times, making their supervision demanding.
30. A real strength is the way the very youngest children are introduced into school life. The majority attends the centre for Hardwick families and under-fives adjacent to the Foundation Stage unit. The very good links between the school and the centre enable the new intake of children to quickly adjust to life in the Foundation Stage. This is because there are shared developments, resources and information about the children. In addition to new children in the Foundation Stage, several new pupils have joined the school this term. They have all settled happily. They are welcomed into new classrooms and given a "buddy" and soon make friends. They feel secure with their new teacher and classroom routines.
31. Risk assessments are being used well to ensure pupils are well cared for. Training and advice are routinely sought in a number of areas, but the headteacher is well aware that there is a

need for annually reviewing some areas to do with pupils' support and safety. Medicines are administered properly and stored under lock and key, but it is a weakness that arrangements do not include the routine recording of such administration. Particular successes have been in the monitoring and promoting of attendance. A central log of all behaviour incidents is not currently kept. Lack of this recording does not provide reliable evidence to allow for improvement. Exclusions and racist incidents are properly recorded and reported on.

32. There is satisfactory support from external agencies such as the school's educational psychologist, the local education authority's behavioural support team and the advisory teacher for autism. However, the school has insufficient educational psychologist time which means that most of his time is taken up with assessment when he is in school and so he does not have sufficient time to advise or train staff to manage pupils with challenging behaviour. The long-term medical needs of pupils are managed well and the school disposes of its clinical waste correctly.
33. The school satisfactorily seeks and acts upon pupils' views. Questionnaires have been used to seek out pupils' perceptions of the school. One outcome of this was to provide additional clubs. Most of the other points raised are shared by adults. A school council was set up last year with representatives from all classes from Year 3 upwards. Whilst this is in its early stages of development, it is providing a good structure for pupils to express their views and also share ideas with pupils from other schools when they attend conferences.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with the community are **very good** and the commitment to ensuring they continue to develop is very evident. Partnerships and links with parents are **good**. Links with other schools and colleges are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of the local community speak of improvements in recent years.
- The adjacent family unit enables parents to become more involved in their children's learning in the Foundation Stage.
- The headteacher is very committed to consulting widely with all parents.
- The school makes very good use of community organisations.

Commentary

34. Parents now have faith and trust in the school after a time when this was not the case. They find staff are approachable and helpful. Parents' evenings and review meetings are well attended. The new headteacher is continuing the routine of sending a weekly, well-written newsletter which keeps parents well informed. Communications from the school to the home are good.
35. The school is committed to promoting strong links with the attached family centre and the Foundation Stage unit. The recent Quality Assurance Award from the local education authority recognised the success of this partnership. Parents appreciate the opportunities to become more involved in their children's education because of this close working. These links make a very good contribution to children's development especially in their social and personal skills.
36. The views of parents are effectively sought and acted upon, for example in planning for school improvement. Any complaints and concerns are resolved quickly. The involvement of parents/carers in the development and use of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory but pupils are not involved, which goes against the spirit of the Code of Practice. Effective procedures are in place for the involvement of the parents of the pupil with a statement. Historically there has been much good work with parents of pupils

using English as an additional language, but this is not currently happening because of the current staffing difficulties.

37. There is much appreciated volunteer help with reading in several classes but the number of adults involved is small. Two parents work tirelessly to raise funds for the school through the Parent Teacher Association. A significant number of parents are very supportive of their children's learning and appreciate the ways in which the school helps them to do this.
38. Community links are very good. They are varied and include the local church, street wardens, several sports clubs and a local employer. Pupils benefit greatly from these connections. Through the *Networked Learning Community*, links are developing with other schools to the benefit of staff development and pupils' learning. Links with local schools benefits the curriculum, particularly in sport. Contact with schools in mainland Europe is improving pupils' cultural awareness. Partnerships with colleges and universities are very secure and impact positively on pupils' learning and staff development. There are strong links with secondary schools which provide for a smooth transfer. Pupils get to know those from other schools who will be transferring at the same time. Records and achievements are shared between staff, including special educational needs departments, so that pupils settle well and quickly.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. The newly appointed headteacher provides **very good** leadership. The overall effectiveness of the school is **satisfactory**. Governance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher leads by example.
- There is a common commitment and capacity for improvement.
- There are too many priorities on the school improvement plan and they are not all tightly matched to funding.
- The deputy headteacher is not sufficiently involved in the development of the school.
- There is not an effective management strategy to meet the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- There is a weakness in the provision for pupils who are at an early stage of using English as an additional language.
- Staff development is good and makes a valuable contribution to raising pupils' achievement.
- Governors are not sufficiently involved in whole-school decision making.

Commentary

39. The very good leadership of the newly appointed headteacher has strengthened and enabled worthwhile initiatives to be put in hand which have led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Although these have not yet fully impacted on standards, pupils are now achieving well in lessons and there are several indications of higher standards. She has gained the support of all staff and governors. There are still weaknesses in the leadership provided by the deputy headteacher and the collective leadership of other senior managers, but plans have already been made to overcome these.
40. Although the management of the Foundation Stage is good, communication and planning between the Foundation Stage manager and the manager of Key Stage 1 is not as sharp as it ought to be. The management of special educational needs has a number of strong features, but there are significant weaknesses in the management strategy for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This has contributed to a high number of exclusions of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties on the special educational needs register. The small number of pupils who are at the early stage of acquiring English as an additional language are not being provided for as the school has planned. This is because the provision purchased

from the local education authority is not available because of staffing shortages. The school has not found a way to get its money back so that it can purchase this service from elsewhere.

41. The leadership and management provided by subject leaders are satisfactory. Several subject leaders, particularly in English and mathematics, are checking how teachers teach and the work pupils do, but this is not established across the curriculum. Not all co-ordinators are effective in analysing performance data from test results to inform planning to raise standards in their subjects, but this is becoming well established in mathematics.
42. Recently there have been new initiatives to raise standards and several new teacher appointments. These changes are starting to have a positive effect on standards. Performance management is satisfactory and equally involves teaching assistants who consider that they are valued. Continuing professional development is good and makes a valuable contribution to raising achievement. Induction procedures for newly qualified teachers are effective.
43. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body meets all of its statutory requirements with the exception of the provision of a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. As the governors have not been told about this omission, the judgement on governance remains at satisfactory. The chairperson and a significant number of other members of the governing body are new. They have good committee structures in place, with clear terms of reference. Their role as critical friend to the headteacher is just beginning to develop. They have not been sufficiently involved in whole-school planning. Although involved in budget decisions they have not been pro-active in setting the budget. The current school improvement plan has too many priorities and because many are not linked to financial planning they have not been realised. The chairperson and the headteacher have the capacity to manage significant improvement. They have identified the need to prioritise much more sharply and allocate funding to the priorities. Financial planning is satisfactory overall and the maximum available funding is spent on pupils currently on roll. The governors have made the difficult decision to cut teaching assistants in order to set a balanced budget. Whilst much debate was given to this, there was no reference to benchmark data about spending in similar schools. The headteacher and chair of governors recognise the importance of putting together a number of budget options and of involving all staff, governors and, most importantly, the curriculum needs of all pupils in the final decisions that are made. Financial control and routine management are satisfactory.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	654,043
Total expenditure	684,789
Expenditure per pupil	2,717

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	45,713
Balance carried forward to the next	14,967

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 **good**.

44. Children enter the Foundation Stage with a very wide range of attainment. For the majority of children, attainment on entry is below the national average and well below in communication, language and literacy.
45. Because of the very good teaching, children achieve well. Children need significant time to make and consolidate small steps in their learning. The teacher's command of the Foundation Stage curriculum is very secure and there are high expectations of the children. Good deployment of the well-trained teaching assistant extends and supports learning in an effective way. This leads to children achieving well in communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development, physical and creative development. Their achievement in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. By the time they enter Year 1, most children's attainment is below the national average in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In their personal, social and emotional development and their creative and physical development, most children will have attained the national expectations.
46. The use of the outdoor environment to support learning, through the Forest School Project, enhances the well-planned curriculum. Very effective cross-curricular work helps children to make secure links across different areas of learning. Well-organised planning provides meaningful activities, and thorough assessment, monitoring and tracking of children's activities ensure that all children benefit from their experiences in the secure, welcoming atmosphere of the class. The staff work very well together as a team. Their sensitive intervention helps all children to succeed.
47. The accommodation is good and benefits from a large outdoor area, which has been imaginatively planned to minimise its natural slope. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve in line with their peers because of the good support they receive from an early stage. Very good induction procedures, enhanced by strong links with the pre-school provision, form a sound basis for good relationships with parents. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and children achieve highly.
- Adults provide very good role models of caring and considerate behaviour.
- Children are given choices in their play and this develops their independence very well.
- Staff have very good knowledge of the children's needs and give this area of learning high priority in all teaching plans.

Commentary

48. Attainment on entry is below the national average in this area of learning. Very good teaching and learning enables children to achieve well so that most children are in line with the nationally expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Staff are very skilful at planning stimulating experiences to capture the children's interest. These help the children develop concentration skills so that they remain on task for longer periods of time. Children separate

from their parents and carers easily because of the warm welcoming atmosphere and the very good links with the pre-school provision.

49. Children are trained well to tidy up after activities. They learn about hygiene as they wash their hands before eating or after using the toilet. Children are happy in school and join in activities willingly and co-operatively, benefiting from the wide variety of activities planned to develop increasing co-operation. As a result, children become more involved and confident in learning and are beginning to take responsibility for their own learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and the children achieve well.
- Carefully planned activities make sure that children's learning is secure.
- Staff effectively model the use of language as a tool for thinking.
- The transition between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 needs to be more carefully planned to provide a continuous programme of learning.

Commentary

50. When children enter the Foundation Stage they listen to favourite stories and songs. As a result of very good teaching and consistent consolidation of learning, they begin to join in. There are many effective opportunities for children to increase hand-eye co-ordination in order to support the very early stage of writing. Good provision helps children to increase their skills and confidence when using a pencil to trace over letters. Practice in the sand tray provides a good opportunity for children to consolidate each new letter that they learn. Children enjoy books and regular story times increase children's awareness of books and their enjoyment of stories. By the end of the year, most children, including those with English as a second language, have achieved well and reach goals just below those expected as a result of the very good teaching and support.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities based on different learning styles have a positive influence on standards.
- The transition between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 needs to be more carefully planned to provide a continuous programme of learning.

Commentary

51. Children's learning is made exciting and enjoyable. Songs with actions help children to reinforce their learning in different ways. The use of games in the outside area reinforces the mathematical terms in real situations. Good direct teaching enables at least half of the children to count to five with support, whilst the higher achievers count up to ten with support. Children are working at full capacity all the time. Good cross-curricular links by the teacher extend the children's learning. Teaching is good and activities are well planned to meet the learning needs of all children. A great deal of consolidation is needed to make learning secure. Achievement is satisfactory so that, by the end of the year, most children reach goals just below those expected. When children start in Year 1, the curriculum they have is, at times, too great a leap in demand because of a lack of matching the Foundation Stage curriculum with that in Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff use questioning very effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.
- The Forest School Project develops learning in a positive and imaginative way.

Commentary

52. On entry to the Foundation Stage, the attainment of most children is below that expected for their age. The Forest School Project supports learning well, stimulating children's curiosity and enhancing their understanding of the outside world. Good cross-curricular links reinforce learning in other areas. By the time that they enter Year 1, most children have not yet reached the early learning goals, but achievement is satisfactory because good teaching and well-planned activities ensure that children benefit from the consolidation needed to make learning secure. The transition between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 needs to be more carefully planned to provide a continuous programme of learning as these children are still working towards the early learning goals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is very good and children achieve well.
- Learning in the outside classroom is effectively planned to give children a good variety of stimulating activities.

Commentary

53. Attainment on entry is below the national average in this area of learning. Most children are in line with the nationally expected learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Very good, direct teaching helps children to make very good progress in their skills so that they move with a high degree of control. In their lessons in the hall, all children are actively involved at all times. They make noticeable improvement in the way they use space and respond to instruction. Children develop their manipulative skills well by handling dough, scissors and brushes, and manipulate small construction equipment with increasing dexterity. Very good teaching ensures that children achieve well. Most children are in line with the nationally expected learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and a wide range of imaginatively planned activities extends the children's experience.
- Skills such as cutting and sticking are developed well and the children's achievement is good.
- Role-play and other well-planned, stimulating activities encourage the children to use their imagination.

Commentary

54. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and children achieve well. A well-planned curriculum, together with a wide variety of materials and media, allows children to explore colour, texture, shape and form, using different tools with safety. They gain great enjoyment as they experiment with colour as they paint. The children sing simple songs from memory and match movements to the words. The teacher's commitment and enthusiasm create a very positive working atmosphere and, as a result, children have the confidence to try new skills. All children are in line to achieve the early learning goals in creative development by the time they enter Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are not high enough.
- Standards in reading are improving because of the effective implementation of strategies put in place to raise standards.
- Achievement is good in Years 5 and 6 because teaching is good in these years.
- The lack of a consistent strategy to manage challenging behaviour has a negative impact on learning in a minority of lessons.
- The analysis of test results is not sharp enough and is not used as effectively as it could be to plan to raise standards.

Commentary

55. Standards have improved in reading since the last inspection. However, because standards in writing remain below average, improvement overall is satisfactory. Standards in Year 2 are broadly average in speaking, listening and reading, but below in writing. In the 2003 national tests for seven-year-olds, the results were below average in reading and well below average in writing compared to all schools and similar schools. Results in the 2004 tests are similar, but with a slight improvement in writing. Standards in Year 6 are average in reading and very close to average in writing. This is because teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good and in these years, achievement is good. In the 2003 national tests for eleven-year-olds, results were well below average compared to all schools, but average compared to similar schools. Results in the 2004 tests for Year 6 pupils show a significant improvement.
56. Speaking and listening skills are in line with the national average by Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory across the school. By Year 2, most pupils answer questions in sentences, using interesting words. They listen attentively in lessons and assemblies. Concentration is satisfactory, for example when pupils in Year 1 listen to stories on the computer. By Year 6, pupils speak and listen confidently in a range of situations. Teachers provide a wide range of stimulating experiences to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, including opportunities for them to make presentations to parents. Structured lessons to promote speaking and listening skills are enjoyable and interesting and so make a valuable contribution to pupils' acquisition of skills, such as speaking softly and loudly and using expression to good effect according to the purpose in hand.
57. Standards in reading are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory. Because of effective strategies, pupils with special educational needs are given satisfactory support to develop important reading skills and so make satisfactory gains in confidence as readers. Strategies to support pupils who are at an early stage of using English as an additional language are not sufficient. This is because staffing difficulties outside the control of the school lead to these pupils not always getting the support they need. As a result, these pupils do not always do as well with their reading as they could. By Year 6, many pupils are good readers and they enjoy reading a wide range of books.
58. Writing skills are below average by Year 2. Achievement is satisfactory. By Year 6 standards in writing are close to the national average because achievement in Years 5 and 6 is good. This is because of the demanding and challenging teaching in these year groups which take the pupils on in leaps and bounds in their writing. Currently, too many pupils in Year 2 do not write creatively and at length, and find it particularly difficult to elaborate their ideas. Also, punctuation is too often not used consistently and accurately. By Year 6, many pupils write

well. Their characters in narratives come alive with interesting descriptive words, but there is scope to develop composition skills with the higher attaining writers even further.

59. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. The best teaching is in Years 5 and 6, and for most pupils in Year 2 and Year 4. It is characterised by a cracking pace, very effective use of questions based on thorough subject knowledge and very good relationships as seen in a Year 5/6 lesson on identifying old fashioned words from text. In this lesson, pupils' comprehension skills were deepened, they made rapid gains in their understanding of genre and developed the important reading skill of scanning. Higher attaining pupils identified the type of writing and gave their reasons why it fell into a particular category. Where teaching has shortcomings, not all pupils are clear about what is expected of them as in the lesson where pupils were asked to write in the first person using the past tense. Because the teacher did not demonstrate an example of such writing, the lower attainers floundered, the pace dropped and learning was not as effective as it could be. Lack of a strategy to manage challenging behaviour in a Year 3/4 lesson had a negative impact on the learning of the whole class.
60. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The strategies to improve standards in reading have been successful. Teaching and learning are monitored, but the skill of identifying the connection between teaching and learning is not sharp enough. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but the analysis of performance data and its use to inform planning to raise standards is not good enough. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. Pupils' use of their literacy skills in other subjects is satisfactory. Speaking and listening skills are developed satisfactorily. For example in personal, social and health education, pupils are encouraged to work in small groups and then to elect a spokesperson to feed back to the rest of the class. Pupils write in several subjects, for example when pupils write about their educational visits in geography. More could be done to show pupils examples or structures for good writing before setting them off to work. This is particularly the case in science.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils' achieve well.
- Standards seen in the classroom show improvement as a result of planned initiatives but have not yet caught up with the quality of provision.
- Work is not consistently planned to correspond with the learning needs of the higher achievers.
- Problem solving is an area of weakness across the school.

Commentary

62. Inspection evidence found standards in mathematics in Years 2 and 6 to be below the national average. Overall standards for pupils at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6 improved in 2003, from a low point in 2002. There are indications of recent accelerated improvements in the rate of pupils' achievement. A thorough analysis of results for 2004 shows significant progress in Years 5 and 6, reflecting the benefits of additional support such as Booster classes and Easter school. Due to recent initiatives to raise standards, such as the additional support, pupils are achieving well overall, particularly in Years 5 and 6, although this has not yet fully impacted on standards.

63. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall as most teachers are now secure in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. Where the teaching is very good in Years 5 and 6, there is a very good pace and level of challenge for all, with lively, interesting activities planned to consolidate learning in a variety of ways. Achievement in these lessons is very high. In lessons where the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, achievement is satisfactory. Work is not consistently planned to correspond with the learning needs of the higher achievers which leads to their variable progress.
64. Overall, there is a good coverage of the curriculum for mathematics, although there is a need for a greater emphasis on the acquisition of skills and the knowledge and understanding of procedures for problem solving. Pupils' progress is effectively tracked to identify those above and below the average and to identify unsatisfactory progress. Small step targets are then set and shared with pupils to improve standards. Homework consolidates learning well. Marking is not always consistent, but where it is good it fosters improvement. Some work remains unchecked and at times does not indicate how pupils might improve. Relationships are good and pupils enjoy mathematics. Teaching assistants are well deployed and support pupils well. There is a minority of pupils with very challenging behaviour. Where this is dealt with well, it has a minimum influence on the learning of others. Where teachers are less skilled, it does affect the ability of others to maintain concentration.
65. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for further development. She has introduced initiatives, which are beginning to have a positive influence on standards. She has had the opportunity to monitor teaching through lesson observation, analysing the quality of pupils' work and talking to the teachers about their concerns. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics across the curriculum. Links with ICT are included in the curriculum planning and effectively used to support learning. The use of graphs is particularly well developed in Year 6 science. Pupils measure accurately in design and technology work.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' make good progress in the older classes.
- Teaching methods in the older classes successfully engage pupils in their learning.
- Aspects of assessment are not sufficiently helping pupils to progress.
- Pupils' investigative work lacks organisation.
- Teachers' planning is clearly presented.

Commentary

67. At the end of Year 2, standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. At the end of Year 6, standards are below average, but this is because, in recent years, pupils' progress has been slow in Years 3 and 4. However, there has been significant improvement recently in the older year groups and achievement is now satisfactory. In 2002, the National Curriculum test results for eleven-year-olds dipped to a very low level. The results in 2003 and 2004 show a modest but positive upward trend. Pupils are familiar with the concept of 'fair testing' and presenting their data in tabular form from an early age. The use of graphs is particularly well developed in Year 6. Satisfactory use is made of ICT, for example, in measuring temperature change. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Whilst these aspects of

investigative work develop well, pupils' ability to raise their own questions to find possible answers through methodical experimental work is below average. The application of scientific knowledge and understanding when they make predictions and conclusions is not sufficiently evident in their written work. Pupils' limited writing abilities limit their ability to show their scientific skills in their written work.

68. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching is always satisfactory or better. There is mainly good teaching for most of Year 4 and all of Years 5 and 6. In the good teaching seen, pupils were given a clear indication of what they were expected to learn and the activities provided were well matched to these objectives. In the better lessons, higher attaining pupils were given challenging tasks, which was not always the case in other situations. This leads to inconsistent progress. Pupils respond positively to the school's behaviour policy, but in a few classes, teachers have to work hard to retain the concentration of a few pupils with behavioural problems. This is done skilfully and effectively in nearly all instances so the learning of the whole class is not interrupted. There are several examples where marking is very helpful in guiding pupils' progress, but it is not consistent and not always obvious what resulting action has been taken by the pupil. Teachers make satisfactory use of assessment in their planning. There are regular year team planning sessions which provide a common curriculum for pupils. The assessment scheme used by teachers promotes progress in nearly all areas of science, but does not provide guidance in all aspects of investigative work. Assessment is satisfactory overall, but too demanding on teachers' administrative time.
69. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There has been positive action taken to improve aspects of investigative work and learning resources have improved. Science does not have a priority in the plans for school improvement, but there has been some limited monitoring of teaching and learning to support modest development. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising and the quality of teaching and learning is improving.
- Teachers use computers well to support their teaching across subjects.
- The capacity for further improvement is good.

Commentary

70. Attainment by Years 2 and 6 is average. Achievement is satisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and is due to the fact that teachers are far more confident in the use of ICT to support their teaching. Improved resources also contribute to standards being better now than at that time. For example, Year 5 pupils now use sensors to measure heat and sound during their science investigations.
71. By Year 2, pupils are able to select a program, complete their tasks, save their work, send it to the printer and log off independently. Their control using the mouse, for example to click on edit and undo when they make a mistake with their work, is satisfactory. Year 1 pupils control programmable toys satisfactorily. They understand the importance of entering instructions on the computer to draw shapes on the screen. Year 6 pupils are able to put together a presentation of sound and graphics known as *PowerPoint*. They enjoy doing this. They also make rapid gains in confidence in their speaking and listening skills as they make their *PowerPoint* presentations to a group of parents. The presentation they made to parents of younger children to promote the annual school trip to Llandudno was impressive. Effective planning ensures that extension activities are provided to challenge and extend more able

pupils and so their achievement is satisfactory. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory because teachers know their needs and support them well.

72. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. The discrete ICT lessons are taught in the computer suites, but computers are also used well in classrooms. In the best lessons, what they are to learn is shared with the pupils before they are sent to work on the computers to carry out challenging activities. Teaching in these lessons is characterised by very good demonstrations based on secure subject knowledge. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson when the pupils, having watched a skilful demonstration by the teacher, used a wide range of the program tools to create warm and cold pictures in the style of Mondrian. Where teaching is satisfactory, there are shortcomings which impede learning. Much of this is due to the fact that each computer has to have a program loaded. This is very demanding on the skills of younger pupils, particularly when the computers are not always reliable.
73. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Planning for the use of computers across subjects is satisfactory. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The subject leader has a clear vision of what needs to be done to improve the subject and a good action plan to manage change. She has identified the need to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. The use of ICT across subjects is satisfactory. This is a very significant improvement since the last inspection. In several subjects, pupils use the Internet and CD ROMS to find information. Satisfactory use is made of computers to develop pupils' data-handling skills. Year 1 pupils use computers to listen to stories in English. Small groups of pupils with special educational needs use computer programs successfully to improve their reading and writing skills.

HUMANITIES

75. There was not enough evidence available to make an overall judgement on provision or teaching in geography and history. Two lessons in total were observed. Pupils' previous written work and curriculum planning were looked at.
76. It was not possible to see any lessons in **geography**. The standard of work in pupils' books is average across the school. The evidence available shows that planning for the teaching of geography through the school is satisfactory and takes appropriate account of national guidance. Pupils in Year 2 develop satisfactory geography skills through a farm visit, the comparison of different locations in Banbury and Mexico and a growing use of maps. In Year 6, pupils use the Internet for background research to support their learning. They develop their subject skills by considering the effect of people on the environment, comparing the geography of mountains and rivers using various scales of maps covering different areas of the world.
77. There was satisfactory teaching in the two lessons observed in **history**. One lesson was in Key Stage 1, the second in Key Stage 2. Standards in these lessons and in pupils' previously completed written work were average. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop their historical skills, knowledge and understanding satisfactorily as they discuss and compare, for instance, old and new toys. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' work shows a good coverage of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 4 make suitable use of the Internet to research questions about King Henry VIII, but the fact that computers are not networked and some are not in full working order sometimes hinders pupils' learning. Year 6 use ICT well in order to present their work neatly. Coverage of the units of study is sound and pupils produce a good volume of work. They demonstrate the use of different sources to increase their knowledge and understanding of events in Britain since 1930. Good use of first-hand experience is evidenced in interviews held with members of the local community who lived through that era. In Years 3 and 4, a visiting expert in Egyptology, who made a life-sized mummy, has provided a good stimulus for pupils to begin to formulate their own ideas about reasons why people acted as they did.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Variation in the quality of teaching and learning from class to class influences the achievement of pupils and their learning.
- Visits to different churches provide pupils with good first-hand experience.
- Assessment systems need refining in order to plan more effectively for learning.

Commentary

78. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since then and remain in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils learn about Christianity and Judaism. In Years 3 to 6, they also learn about Hinduism in line with the locally agreed syllabus.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although it does vary from class to class and this influences the achievement of pupils. Where the quality of teaching and learning is very good, all pupils are actively involved in their learning. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and both planning and preparation are meticulous. High standards of work are expected and, as a result, pupils achieve highly. In a Year 5/6 lesson, pupils recalled dipping apples in honey at New Year, and different tasks dependent on the learning needs of the pupils reinforced learning well. Building on a secure knowledge and understanding of previous work, all pupils in this lesson achieved highly. Role-play is used well to consolidate learning in a meaningful way. For example, role play followed good direct teaching about the Jewish creation story in a Year 3 lesson and a Year 1 lesson, and this, coupled with the teachers' very secure knowledge and understanding of her subject and her enthusiasm, created a good learning atmosphere and consolidated learning well. Where teaching is satisfactory, the teacher has to work hard to get sensible answers from pupils. Jewish artefacts are used effectively to convey the meaning of Yom Kippur to pupils in Year 6. Analysis of work shows that in some classes all groups complete the same work. This means that the work of lower achieving pupils is limited by their skills of reading and writing.
80. Assessment systems need refining in order to plan more effectively for learning. Although there are no visits to places of worship from different religions, visits to different churches provide pupils with good first-hand experience and the opportunity to compare and contrast different places of worship within Christianity. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. Art and design and design and technology were sampled. Physical education and music are reported in depth. The arts and physical subjects have been successfully applied in several areas of the curriculum to stimulate learning.
82. The most impressive feature of **art and design** is the arts week that was held last year. During this time, all pupils and staff, including office staff, benefited from several visiting experts working in a wide range of material and processes. The clay masks, depicting African culture, are particularly impressive. The overall quality of work during the arts week was well above average. Standards at other times are average. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good. Pupils made positive improvement to their skills through patient guidance from the teacher. The organisation and quality of materials for both lessons was very good, leading to very good use of time and stimulating pupils' involvement. Pupils do not discuss sufficiently the quality of their own work against given objectives or criteria. Pupils' work in sketchbooks is satisfactory. There are a few examples of particular techniques being

carefully developed. The design process does not always feature before the final work is started. The quality of display of works of art by pupils and famous artists is variable across the school. This reduces the development of pupils' skills of evaluation. Art is popular with pupils, as is shown by their positive response to the art clubs provided in addition to lessons. Leadership of the subject is good and management is satisfactory. There is no formal checking of teaching and learning. The development of the curriculum over the last year has had a positive effect on the status of the subject in the school.

83. No lessons were observed in **design and technology**. From looking at pupils' written work and photographs of their activities over the last year, standards appear satisfactory in both key stages. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were poor across the school. Throughout the school, pupils have worked with a satisfactory range of materials and required techniques. The use of moving parts, or mechanisms, features well. In Year 2, pupils have included all aspects of the design process in their written work, particularly the initial designing and planning of what they intend to do and an evaluation of the final product. All their projects have a specific function or purpose. These aspects are not as obvious in the written work of Year 6. A particularly good project in Year 6 was the preparation of a meal typical of another country and served in a true restaurant atmosphere.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music plays an important role in pupils' personal development.
- Strong leadership of the subject is reflected through the enthusiastic teaching of music in assemblies.
- The curriculum for music is well structured.
- Learning resources are not always sufficient to support learning.

Commentary

84. Standards are average at the end of both Years 2 and 6 and achievement is satisfactory. Across the school, pupils have a great enthusiasm for performing music. When the music is not over-demanding, the quality of singing in Years 3 to 6 is good and gives a lift to the spirits of those performing and listening. Recorded music features regularly in assemblies, with pupils' appreciation being satisfactorily promoted. Singing is not sufficiently established on the same regular basis. Pupils listen thoughtfully to recorded and live performances but have limited opportunities to express their own views on what they hear. Pupils use a wide range of percussion instruments to perform music from different cultures. The influence of samba music promotes great enthusiasm in class and assemblies. Pupils keep a basic beat well, but need significant help to sustain this when a second layer of rhythm is used. Pupils in all classes produce satisfactory written work in the subject.
85. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with very good teaching in Year 5. The very good teaching is due to very secure knowledge of the subject and giving pupils the confidence to perform. The planned curriculum supports the non-specialist teacher well. ICT was not used at the time of the last inspection, but now creatively features in pupils' composition and appreciation. There are areas where the learning resources available are not sufficient to involve all pupils or deepen their understanding. This was seen where there were too many pupils sharing a single instrument and also when images of newly introduced instruments were not to hand. In addition to promoting pupils' self-confidence and social development, performances in school, churches and shopping areas enhance the reputation of the school in the community. Pupils take up the good opportunities offered in extra-curricular music making, with the samba band running workshops for teachers in training. Procedures for assessment

are satisfactory. The day-visit of a professional musician has had a very positive influence on pupils' appreciation of music.

86. Leadership of the subject is good with very knowledgeable enthusiasm providing a zest to charge up pupils' and adults' enthusiasm. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Until recently, singing had a separate leader but both roles have now been brought together. This is resulting in planning for a more cohesive development of the subject but it is too early for this to have affected standards. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of gifted and talented pupils is very good because of the opportunities they are given to excel.
- The wide range of after-school clubs open to all pupils makes a very valuable contribution to physical education.
- Attainment in swimming by Year 6 is below national expectations for too many pupils.
- Links with other subjects are good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The newly appointed co-ordinator has an exciting vision and a good action plan to develop the subject.

Commentary

87. Attainment is average overall at the end of Years 2 and 6, except for swimming, where too few pupils are able to swim the required 25 metres. All pupils who start in Year 3 and finish in Year 6 do meet the national standard expected in swimming, but many of the pupils who join the school at other than the usual times do not. These latecomers present the school with a real challenge and this currently has a negative impact on standards. Achievement in gymnastics, games and dance is good. In athletics and games the achievement of gifted and talented pupils is very good because of the opportunities the school provides for them. Individual pupils represent the County in athletic events and one girl pupil plays in the Arsenal youth team. Boys and girls football teams have been champions in the local schools competitions in recent years. Yet the school is inclusive and all pupils have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of after-school clubs such as tag rugby and so enhance their game skills. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because teachers plan effectively and work very hard to improve the co-ordination skills of these pupils.
88. Teaching and learning are good. Considerable creativity goes into linking physical education with other subjects, such as the link between dance and religious education in Year 1 and between dance and design and technology in Year 6. Teaching is challenging, expectations are high and every opportunity is taken to make learning fun and enjoyable. Teachers, particularly in Years 5 and 6, have very good subject knowledge and demonstrate important skills and techniques to pupils. This results in the pupils, on these occasions, making very good gains in their acquisition of new skills and improved performance, as seen in the Year 5/6 games lesson with a focus on 'tag rugby'. All teaching emphasises the importance of getting the heart pumping during the warm-up session and uses questions effectively to reinforce the importance of exercise in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Teaching contributes well to pupils' personal development as seen in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were encouraged to undress and dress independently and at speed for their lessons. In all lessons, there is a strategy to include pupils who cannot participate because of an injury or not having the correct footwear. Thorough risk assessments are carried out in respect of all planned activities, including an exciting visit to an outdoor adventure centre for pupils in Year 3.

89. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader, very new in post, has an exciting vision to develop the subject further and a realistic plan to achieve this. She has introduced a new programme to improve athletics. Assessment is satisfactory. Overall, the improvement in teachers' confidence and skill in teaching the subject has been satisfactory since the last inspection. The good achievement found at that time has been maintained and improved even further.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

90. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make a judgement on overall provision. The programme is planned effectively and each class has a specific time slot within the week for this aspect of pupils' education. In the few lessons observed, class discussions and games that promote friendship, sharing and caring are used to good effect. These lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils' thinking skills as they make decisions in small collaborative groups to solve problems. Some aspects of the programme are supported in other subjects, like 'the importance of healthy eating' and the 'dangers of smoking' in science, which help pupils' understanding of the importance of a balanced diet and the risks of substance abuse. The policy and planning for sex education are good.
91. Effective use is made of questionnaires to gather views from the pupils as to how aspects of school life can be improved for them. Following a recent consultation with pupils, a quiet area has been set up for them. The school council is at an early stage of development, but is already considering how to best develop a playground buddy system. A task force has recently been set up, involving pupils, governors and subject leaders, to submit a plan to achieve *Healthy School* status. Whole-school activities are used well to promote the pupils' awareness of citizenship. Following the harvest assembly each year, pupils in Year 6, under careful supervision to ensure safety, distribute the produce they bring to school to elderly citizens who live near to the school. The school welcomes additional input from local education authority initiatives and the local health trust. The *Life Education Bus* makes a valuable contribution to raising pupils' awareness of the misuse of drugs and the pupils are excited about getting involved in a re-cycling project.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
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 (ethos)	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).