

INSPECTION REPORT

Slade Primary School

Tonbridge, Kent

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118285

Headteacher: Mrs Vivienne Resch

Lead inspector: David Speakman

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th November 2004

Inspection number: 269480

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: 315

School address: The Slade
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Kent
Postcode: TN9 1HR

Telephone number: 01732 350354
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Chris Avis

Date of previous inspection: 12-Jun-2000

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This primary school, which is larger than average, serves the local area in the centre of Tonbridge, Kent. The area from which the pupils come has a wide range of socio-economic characteristics, but is average overall. A below average proportion of pupils join or leave during the school year. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds but the majority (about 90 per cent) are classed as being of White British origin. Four are at an early stage of learning English and receive support through external funding. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average and 11 pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Special educational needs include specific and moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural problems, speech and communication, hearing and autism. The school also provides specialist support for children with hearing impairment. Although attainment on entry to the reception covers a wide range, it is normally below the nationally expected level for children of this age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20086	David Speakman	Lead inspector	Science French Information and communication technology Music
14756	John Lovell	Lay inspector	Personal, social and health education & citizenship
31334	Barbara Atcheson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage ¹ Mathematics Art and design Physical education
32505	Michelle Coles	Team inspector	English Religious education History Geography Design and technology
18498	Denise Morris	Team inspector	Specialist provision for hearing impaired pupils Special educational needs

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¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. 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 a **good** school that provides a good quality of education and gives good value for money. Pupils' attainment on entry is below average and because of good teaching, excellent levels of inclusion for all pupils, a very good ethos and good leadership and management, pupils achieve well and attain above average standards.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's excellent approach to full inclusion and equality of opportunity for all enables all pupils to achieve well. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and with hearing impairment is very good.
- As a result of good, well focused teaching at all stages of the school, pupils attain above average standards.
- Teaching assistants are very effective in what they do and they contribute very well to the very good quality provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The headteacher leads the school very well and sets a very clear vision for its future. The senior management team is very effective in its work
- The school has many strong and well established subject leaders but there is scope to develop further the roles of some subject leaders of non-core subjects.².
- Pupils' personal development is very good within the caring ethos of the school. They behave very well and have very good attitudes to school and learning.
- The good quality learning opportunities are very effectively enriched by extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school.
- The quality of the marking of pupils' work varies.
- Annual written reports on pupils' progress need to be reviewed.

The level of improvement since the previous inspection is good. Since its last inspection in 2000 the school has continually improved. High standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained. Strengths reported at that time have been maintained and the school has consolidated its strong position. The headteacher, who was new to the school at the time of the previous inspection, made a very good start in leading the school and this has been consolidated. The school has responded well to issues raised in the previous inspection and these have been met.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

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

A means that the school ranks in the top 5% of schools in that category.*

² Non core subjects are those other than English, mathematics and science.

Achievement is **good** overall. Children start in the Foundation Stage with attainment that covers a wide range but, overall, is below the nationally expected level for children of this age. A significant proportion of the children spend only one full term in reception and, although they achieve well in this short time, they do not attain the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in all areas of learning. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and standards are currently average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Further good achievement in Years 3 to 6 enables pupils to attain above average standards in English and mathematics and well above in science. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), French and music are above those nationally expected by the end of Year 6.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is **very good** and their cultural development is good. Pupils' attitudes towards school and learning and their behaviour are very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** at all stages of the school. Teachers have an excellent approach to managing the full inclusion of all pupils. They have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour, manage this very well and enable pupils to learn effectively within a good learning environment. Their subject knowledge is good and it is used well to plan challenging and interesting activities which engage pupils' attention and enthusiasm, leading to good learning throughout the school. Through effective encouragement to succeed and the accurate targeting of tasks to pupils' capability, pupils have good levels of confidence in their own ability to tackle new learning opportunities. Teachers use assessment data well to track pupils' progress and set challenging targets. However, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent in its quality. Lessons move at a brisk pace and good teaching methods promote effective learning. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good; teaching assistants provide very valuable and effective support.

The curriculum is good. The school provides a broad, balanced and rich curriculum. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly those of a sporting nature. The level of teachers and teaching assistants is very good and resources support the delivery of the curriculum well. The school shows very good levels of care, support and guidance for its pupils. The relationship between the school and its parents is good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and she is very effectively supported by members of the senior management team. They have a very clear, shared vision of the needs of the school, which is securely rooted in very effective school self-evaluation. They are supported well in this work by other staff with leadership responsibility. The governors provide good levels of challenge and support and contribute well to the work of the school. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with the school and its work. They like the caring nature of the school and feel that the staff work hard and expect their children to achieve well. They are happy with the quality of teaching and learning and feel that their children behave well in school.

There are concerns about the information they receive and the extent to which the school seeks and values their views. The inspection team agrees that the pupils' annual written reports are not clear enough in reporting on pupils' progress and targets for improvement. The school seeks the views of parents regularly and uses them in forward planning. Pupils have very high opinions of the school and they are very happy to be there.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the overall quality and consistency of marking of pupils' work;
- enhance aspects of the role of subject leaders where appropriate;
- improve the quality of information to parents on their children's progress in the pupils' annual written reports.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are **average** by the end of Year 2 and **above average** at the end of Year 6. Achievement is **good** at all stages of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and, although the majority do not meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception, they achieve well.
- Attainment in English and mathematics is above average by the end of Year 6 and well above average in science.
- All groups of pupils achieve well.
- Pupils achieve well in music and ICT and standards are good at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in French are good by the end of Year 6.

Commentary

1. In the last four years results for pupils at the end of Year 2 in the National Curriculum tests have mainly been average or below the national average when compared with schools nationally and well below average when compared with similar schools. Results were better in reading, writing and mathematics in 2003, but fell again in 2004. This reflects the high level of staff change that pupils in Year 2 have experienced and a reported variation in the quality of teaching and learning for these pupils. The school recognised the weaknesses and there has been a change in staffing this year which has resulted in improving standards. Inspection evidence indicates that this year standards are now average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Pupils achieve well in the infant classes, having entered Year 1 with below average attainment.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.9 (17.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.3 (15.0)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.6 (16.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In 2004, results in tests at the end of Year 6 were very high in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, attainment was well above average in English, above average in science and average in mathematics. Results have usually been above average in all subjects since 2000, except for 2003 when the proportion of pupils with special educational needs taking the tests was higher than usual. This year shows an improvement in results and, when these are compared with results of the same group of pupils when they were in Year 2, achievement in Years 3 to 6 has been

very high in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Currently, standards are above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. It is anticipated that extra support in the form of intervention programmes for groups of Year 6 pupils will raise standards in English and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.5 (26.3)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.1 (27.0)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.3 (28.9)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Achievement is good at all stages of the school and for all groups of pupils. Those with special educational needs make very good progress towards achieving their targets. Pupils with hearing impairment achieve very well because of the very good support they receive. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well, including the acquisition of the English language.
4. Children enter the reception with a wide range of attainment and because of limited language and social skills their overall attainment is below that expected for children of this age. The youngest children start school in January and therefore attend for less than two full terms in reception. As a result most do not attain the nationally expected early learning goals in any of the six areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. However, their achievement is good during their short time in reception.
5. In English, pupils develop good listening skills. They listen attentively to teachers and other pupils and show very good levels of understanding, particularly of specialist vocabulary in other subjects such as mathematics or science. Standards in speaking are good. Pupils speak well, clearly expressing themselves. They are good readers, reading confidently and with expression and interest, being able to discuss their reading in detail. Standards in writing are above average. Writing covers a wide range of styles. Spelling and punctuation are usually accurate and writing is well set out into paragraphs. In mathematics, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of number and of mathematics. Analysis of data shows that pupils need more practice in problem solving. They use and apply their number skills across the whole mathematics curriculum well and this supports the achievement of above average standards. In science, there is clear emphasis on practical work. Pupils perform a wide range of experiments and investigations and use this method of learning effectively to extend their knowledge and understanding in other areas of science, such as growth, changes in materials and devising procedures to separate different materials. Pupils have a very good understanding of fair testing and they know how to design experiments to investigate specific situations, predict results and then test out their predictions, clearly recording results and evaluating outcomes.
6. From a very early age, pupils are taught basic computer skills and become familiar with the keyboard, using the mouse and a good range of programs in different

subjects. This secure start enables pupils to achieve well and attain above average standards in ICT. Standards in music improve steadily through the school until, by the end of Year 6, they are above average. Music is given a high profile in the school and the school's practical, skills-based approach to learning gives all pupils the opportunity to develop a secure grounding in the core music skills of singing, listening, performing and composing. Standards of numeracy and ICT seen in other subjects are good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to their work and towards others in the school are **very good** and their behaviour is **very good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is **very good** and cultural development is **good**. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage settle well into school routines and learn to work and play together.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are very good and support the very good relationships in school.
- Attitudes and behaviour improve as pupils get older.
- Pupils show very positive attitudes towards the inclusion in school of the pupils from the Hearing Impaired Unit.
- The school has effective procedures to monitor and promote good attendance, to which parents give good support.

Commentary

7. Well-planned induction procedures combined with a secure caring atmosphere enable children in the Foundation Stage to settle quickly into the routines of school life and achieve well in developing their early personal skills. .
8. Very good behaviour, positive attitudes and very good levels of personal development together with very good relationships are evident and these support good achievement. Pupils are keen to come to school and are happy to work in co-operation with others. They are helpful and considerate. Pupils enjoy working and their attitude towards work is very positive. Behaviour and pupils' attitudes improve as pupils get older. All pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. At lunchtime pupils sit and chat quietly whilst eating their meal. Playtimes are pleasant and relaxed. This is a significant contributing factor in supporting pupils' good achievement and high standards. Behaviour is very good because pupils take ownership of their own behaviour, not because systems are imposed. Pupils are polite and show courtesy to visitors from an early age. There are very few incidents of bullying and these are dealt with very efficiently and effectively if they occur. Both pupils and parents support the very positive views on pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

<i>Categories used in the Annual School Census</i>	<i>No of pupils on roll</i>	<i>Number of fixed period exclusions</i>	<i>Number of permanent exclusions</i>
White – British	254	2	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	0	0

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

9. The school is an outstandingly inclusive school. Pupils from the Hearing Impaired Unit are fully integrated into the life of the school. They are settled and play a full and active role in lessons. Other pupils assume that these pupils are a part of school life. Mainstream pupils learn from the inclusion of hearing impaired pupils in the life of the school and all learn signing.
10. Pupils have good opportunities to exercise leadership and responsibility by undertaking jobs such as taking the register to the office or acting as 'buds' or 'buddies'. These pupils befriend anyone without a playmate and tend to those who have fallen down or need to be taken in to the teacher for care and attention. Pupils elect their own class representatives for the pupil council. The council makes important recommendations that are helpful in improving the smooth running of the school day, such as easing congestion in cloakrooms at peak times. They are involved in the plans for a new play area and provide very good role models by raising funds for 'Action Aid' and their drive to recycle waste paper. All of these activities together with extended residential visits for pupils in Year 6 contribute effectively to pupils' personal development, which is of very good quality.
11. Attendance and punctuality are good and have remained stable over recent years. The attendance levels reported at the time of the last inspection are broadly similar to those being recorded currently. Attendance is above the national average and unauthorised absence is below the national average. The school has effective procedures to monitor attendance and works in partnership with parents to promote good attendance and minimise avoidable absences such as holidays during term time. The education welfare officer provides good support.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.0%	School data:	0.0%
National data:	5.4%	National data:	0.4%

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **good**. Teaching is **good**. Assessment and its use in planning lessons are **good**. The curriculum is **good** and benefits from **very good** opportunities for enrichment. The school provides **very good** levels of guidance and support for its pupils and cares well for them. It has **good** links with parents. Links with the community and with other schools are **very good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** at each stage of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have an excellent approach to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils.
- Teaching assistants and specialist teachers provide very good support for pupils.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils and manage their behaviour very well.
- Very good teaching for pupils with special educational needs supports their very good achievement well.
- Team teaching in Years 5 and 6 enables pupils to experience specialist teaching ready for their move to secondary school.
- Assessment information is used well to plan challenging learning opportunities for pupils at all levels of attainment.
- The quality of marking of pupils' work is inconsistent.

Commentary

12. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Seventy-four per cent of teaching observed is good or better with approximately one third of lessons being very good. Teaching is good at each of the stages.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 51 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	17 (33%)	21 (41%)	12 (24%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

13. Teachers have excellent strategies for ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities in school. Lessons are planned to take account of pupils' individual needs and this concern is also reflected in the way lessons are taught and the matching of tasks to pupils' abilities. Teachers use a wide range of successful strategies to motivate, involve and challenge all pupils. Teachers regularly monitor the progress pupils are making and plan activities that interest pupils and move them confidently onto the next stages of learning.
14. Pupils with hearing impairment, and those with special educational needs, are very well supported by teaching assistants and specialist teachers. Teachers are skilled in providing a very wide range of multi-sensory resources so that pupils are keen to learn and take part fully in lessons. Teaching assistants are used very well and are very skilled in supporting pupils to make very good gains in learning. This also enables them to take part in the full range of learning activities available and to achieve well. All staff work closely to ensure that pupils' needs are being met and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement.
15. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Staff manage the behaviour of pupils very well and this enables all pupils to learn effectively within a positive learning environment. This is particularly so in the best lessons where the pupils are made to feel valued, are confident and enthusiastic in their learning and respond positively to very good teaching. Where teaching is satisfactory, pupils are less engaged in their learning. Where the quality of teaching and learning is good or very good, pupils are fully involved and are active learners. Teaching assistants are very actively involved with pupils and all relationships are of a very good quality. By the time they reach Years 5 and 6, pupils are confident, have developed high levels of maturity and learn independently and within groups, such as in planning practical work in science.
16. Teachers' subject knowledge is good overall. Team teaching in Years 5 and 6 enables pupils to be taught some lessons by teachers who are most skilled at the subject. This allows teachers to use their expertise effectively, which is of benefit to the pupils. This arrangement contributes positively to good pupil achievement in these classes. This is particularly evident in science and in ICT, where the teachers' very good subject knowledge enables them to set challenging tasks and to support pupils very effectively in their learning,
17. Procedures for the recording and assessment of pupil progress were judged to be good at the time of the previous inspection. This is still the case and assessment continues to be used effectively to plan tasks for pupils that are at an appropriate level, yet still challenging, giving pupils confidence to attempt new learning. However, the marking of pupils' work is of variable quality. Several examples were seen of pupils' work remaining unmarked, corrected inaccurately or nothing more written than a simple tick, giving little or no guidance for improvement. By contrast, in the best examples, teachers' comments are very detailed and

informative. The feedback helps pupils to know what they have to do to improve and leads them into new learning.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **good**, with a **very good** range of extra-curricular activities. The accommodation and resources are **good** and the match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum and the needs of pupils are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is excellent equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, ensuring very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Good accommodation and resources are used well to support learning.
- A very good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum and pupils' needs benefits learning and attainment very well and ensure that hearing impaired pupils are able to participate fully in all activities.
- Very good opportunities for extra-curricular activities, visits and support for learning outside the school day enrich the curriculum very well.

Commentary

18. The curriculum provides a broad range of worthwhile activities and experiences that meet the needs of pupils well. It meets all statutory requirements. The school is continuing to develop and improve the curriculum offered. The enclosed play area has enhanced the learning of children under five and the specialist teaching in Years 5 and 6 has promoted effective learning of older pupils. All pupils have greatly benefited from the special curriculum weeks and these provide good opportunities to link together subjects so that learning is exciting and meaningful for pupils. The curriculum for the personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good and includes provision for sex education and information about the use and misuse of drugs and other substances.
19. The staff work very hard to ensure that all pupils have excellent equality of access and opportunity. Work is planned to challenge all pupils at the correct level and, where pupils need extra help, staff identify this at an early stage and arrange for appropriate provision. The specific needs of the hearing impaired pupils are very well met because the school ensures that the necessary resources are available and are used well. This includes teachers and assistants using sign language to communicate instructions to pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to provide tasks that are closely linked to each pupil's ability. This ensures success. Pupils with English as an additional language are well provided for in the acquisition of English language skills and this supports further learning effectively.
20. Overall accommodation and resources are good. This judgement is similar to that made in 2000 when the school was last inspected. Particular strengths are the quality, accessibility and use of the computer suite, the number of interactive whiteboards that are used very effectively to support teaching and learning, and the specialist music room which is well equipped and used effectively to provide good quality learning. A weakness in the accommodation is the small size of the hall, which is currently used to store physical education apparatus and other equipment, further restricting its suitability for both teaching physical education and enabling the school

to welcome all parents at the same time for performances and events such as special assemblies.

21. Staffing meets the needs of the curriculum and pupils very well and has improved since the time of the last inspection. It is enhanced by the availability and use of teachers who are specialists in teaching hearing impaired pupils to support them very effectively in classrooms. Support staff are deployed very well and work very closely with class teachers, providing very good support to pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Advice for pupils' guidance and support is very **good**. The school provides **good** levels of care and is **effective** in the way that it consults pupils about aspects of its work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy very good relationships with staff which benefit the development of their self-esteem and confidence in seeking support.
- Pupils are supported very well in their personal and educational well-being.
- Pupils are involved well in contributing their views on how to improve the school's routines and facilities for the benefit of the whole school community.
- Health and safety is promoted very well on a day-to-day basis and a comprehensive portfolio of formal risk assessments is being developed. Provision of first aid is good.

Commentary

22. The good support, advice and guidance found at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained and there are some very strong features. The school makes good provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides pupils with very good support and guidance and they are involved well in aspects of the school's development.
23. The school provides a secure and happy environment in which pupils' individual well-being is effectively promoted. Pupils are supported very well because staff monitor their personal development carefully and have a good awareness of those factors that might affect their progress at school. Pupils' academic progress is tracked well, with good targeting and provision of further learning support where needed. The teaching and support staff know the pupils, and many of their families, very well and are sensitive to pupils' individual needs. Staff work hard to ensure that the best interests of pupils are met and are quick to respond to pupils' personal and social needs. The very good relationships between staff and pupils begin when children first start school and underpin the very good guidance that pupils and parents feel staff provide. Pupils turn readily to their teachers or support staff if they have any problems and the trusting relationships which pupils enjoy give them confidence to share their news or concerns and cope with the problems that they may encounter.
24. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to contribute to the development of the school through PSHE lessons, pupil surveys and the work of the school council. Pupils' views are listened to and they readily identify how their ideas have contributed to improving the community of the school, for example through developing class rules and a shared understanding about issues such as bullying and through the development of playground 'buddies' to provide peer support and company for pupils who may feel lonely. Pupils feel that their opinions are valued.
25. Child protection arrangements fully meet requirements and the headteacher, who is responsible for co-ordinating this area of activity, views this work as a priority. All staff are vigilant and work effectively within the agreed local education authority procedures and the requirements of the area child protection committee. First aid provision is good because of the large number of staff who have undertaken first aid

training and their understanding of individual pupils' needs. Accident records are limited in detail and are not formally monitored to identify potential risks.

26. Safe practice is promoted well on a day-to-day basis and in lessons such as design and technology where teachers emphasise safety issues in the handling of tools very well. Equipment is checked regularly, evacuation procedures practised and regular safety audits are completed. The school has a developing portfolio of risk assessments which includes full assessments for all visits. Whilst there is a good awareness of issues such as the management of pupils within the small hall that is cluttered with furniture, equipment and apparatus, this has not been formally assessed and some safety measures informally identified have not been maintained to the required standard.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** relationship with parents and **very good** links with the community and with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links with parents benefit a partnership to support children in their learning and personal development.
- Information to parents about pupils' progress varies in its quality and is satisfactory overall. Consultation with parents is very good and is used to develop the partnership between school and home.
- Parents are very involved in the life of the school.
- Very good links with other schools and the community make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning experiences.

Commentary

27. The good links with parents identified at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Parents are pleased with what the school does for their children and the progress that they make.
28. Parents are particularly pleased with the good standards of behaviour, the quality of teaching, the high expectations of staff, the quality of leadership and management and the arrangements to help children to settle in well. A small minority express some concerns about information provided to them about their child's progress, homework arrangements, the extent of consultation with parents and the comfort with which they feel that they can approach the school. Inspectors judged that information about progress is satisfactory but could be improved in some aspects, that homework arrangements are satisfactory, that the extent of consultation with parents is very good and that the school is approachable and welcomes the involvement of parents as partners.
29. The quality of information provided to parents about their children's progress is inconsistent. Although targets for improvement are often provided, they do not always clearly inform parents what their children need to do to move to the next stage of their learning. The school provides curriculum information to parents each term but, in many cases, this is too vague to inform parents sufficiently to help them to support their child's learning or to understand how to provide that support. Other

written information about the life and work of the school is good. The significant majority of parents are supportive of pupils' learning in and out of school and in extra-curricular activities. The parents' association (SPA) raises money through various activities and their contributions have enhanced pupils' learning experiences very effectively. Parents are very well informed about transfer arrangements at the age of eleven. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed at all stages.

30. Consultation is used constructively to involve parents very well in developing elements of the school's work and underpinning a partnership between school and home. Parents are invited to meetings each year to discuss the development of the school improvement plan and progress that has been made towards achieving its objectives. In the last year, parents have been surveyed about all aspects of the school's life. In each case, feedback has been provided to parents and their views make an important contribution to shaping aspects of the school's development. The school has a formal complaints procedure which meets requirements and is expressed in simple terms. No formal complaint has been made since 2002.
31. Links with other schools and the community are very good and enrich the curriculum and learning opportunities. Contacts with local schools provide very strong curricular links which benefit teaching and learning opportunities in areas of the curriculum such as drama, music, modern foreign languages and sport through access to training and resources. Very good links with the local community help pupils to develop an understanding of the needs of others through their work to support local national and international charities. The local area is used very well as a resource to support learning through visits. The school also contributes to the community through participation in local events.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good** and the support of other staff with leadership and management responsibility is **good**. Management and governance are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and guidance for the staff.
- Her very good management of staff deployment and staff development has had a positive impact on standards.
- The headteacher is very effectively supported by a dynamic senior management team, with a strong focus on raising standards.
- Governors have a good knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are effectively involved in shaping its direction.
- The leadership and management of the school are united in a total commitment to inclusion.
- The role of some non-core³ subject leaders needs to be developed further in order to provide a greater rigour and consistency.

Commentary

³ Non-core subjects are those other than English, mathematics, science.

32. The headteacher has a strong vision for the future of the school, which is shared by staff and governors. She sets a clear agenda for school improvement in terms of delivery of the curriculum and high expectations of children's learning. She has developed a very efficient and clear structure for leadership and management. She receives strong support from the deputy headteacher and the senior management team, who take responsibility for implementing curriculum quality issues. They, in turn, are well supported by the team leaders and subject leaders who meet regularly with other teachers in the school. The headteacher, together with the senior management team, has worked hard to change the leadership and management of the school to an open culture where communication is fluid and productive. Visits to centres of excellence and the use of good practice to inspire have brought about a changed philosophy, which has had a positive impact on standards.
33. Subject leaders in English, mathematics, science and ICT are given good opportunities to develop their subject, monitor standards and plan for improvement. Other subject leaders also have the opportunity to undertake monitoring in order to maintain and improve standards of learning. This aspect of their role is not sufficiently developed to give rise to efficient implementation of policy. The headteacher has been instrumental in developing good relationships and there is a supportive culture amongst staff which helps the less confident overcome any difficulty. Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. Procedures are fully in line with those expected and there are very good links with parents. Very good quality monitoring of pupils' achievements leads to very appropriate target setting and ensures that effective action is taken where necessary. Through clear equal opportunities and racial equality policies the school sets high value on giving all children equality of treatment and opportunity. Consequently, the support for pupils with English as an additional language is well managed and effective in supporting their achievement.
34. The school's development plan gives clear guidance for school improvement and is effectively linked to self-evaluation and staff performance management. It is clearly indicative of a shared view of well thought out strategies for the improvement of standards and pupil achievement. The school has developed good management systems. It reviews its performance and sets clear statements of targets for pupils' achievement. A tracking system for pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is beginning to be used to indicate where pupils have areas for improvement. This provides a very valuable monitoring document to indicate the focus for future intervention strategies.
35. Good financial management helps the school to achieve its priorities. Each new year brings an added financial threat to the valuable work undertaken in the Hearing Impaired Unit and the school is prudent in providing a small carry forward that will ensure that the unit is adequately funded. The school resources are managed well, using both public and private funds to ensure that staffing, learning resources and premises are used to improve educational provision.
36. The governing body influences the work of the school through its challenging yet supportive approach. The governors work well as a group and are effectively organised within committees. They are active in the development and work of the school and take their responsibility very seriously, taking advantage of training to increase their own knowledge and understanding of their role. The school recognises

the professional expertise of governors in the fields of finance and management and uses this to good effect as governors play a significantly strategic role in leading school development. Governors are involved in monitoring, keeping in close touch with the school. There is a clear focus on raising standards and improving provision. The governing body improves its own performance through an increasing involvement with and knowledge of the school at all levels.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,052,436	Balance from previous year	85,726
Total expenditure	989,352	Balance carried forward	63,084
Expenditure per pupil	2,678		

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Provision for pupils with hearing impairment is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in almost all aspects of their learning because of the high quality support and teaching that they receive.
- Teaching is very good and all staff in the department are skilled at enabling pupils to achieve success.
- Just occasionally, pupils do not learn as well as they could during whole class teaching sessions in the main school.
- Inclusion is a major strength of the provision, ensuring that pupils are fully included in the life of the school.
- Leadership is very good and often innovative, ensuring that pupils receive a high quality education.

Commentary

37. Pupils with hearing impairment achieve very well in most aspects of learning, due to very good provision. There are currently 11 pupils in the department, which can cater for up to 15. The needs of these pupils are met very well. Much of the work of the department is to support pupils in a fully inclusive setting alongside other pupils of the same age. Staff provide very good technical and personal support. Many of the pupils have additional special educational needs and these are very well provided for.
38. Achievement is always very high during short withdrawal sessions where pupils work with department staff. This is due to the very good range of multi-sensory approaches and resources that are a key feature of teaching and learning. During the vast majority of inclusive settings, pupils also achieve very well. This is due to the skilled support they receive from teachers of the deaf and also to the very good skills of the teaching assistants and the whole-school approach to multi-sensory learning. For example, in mathematics in Year 3, the very good visual approaches to learning about the properties of shapes ensured that pupils quickly grasped the key features so that they were able to explain them by the end of the lesson. Because pupils were able to work with a variety of shapes in a practical way, they learned to recognise them and describe their properties accurately.
39. Achievement is fostered by thorough preparation. This achieves the very good teaching that is a key feature of the provision. Pupils benefit because they are very well prepared for forthcoming lessons. In humanities, for example, teachers of the deaf ensure that their pupils are fully prepared by exploring any potential difficulties with them prior to the lesson. Vocabulary is explained and pictures are used to ensure that learning during the actual lesson will be successful.
40. Just occasionally, there is too little emphasis on encouraging pupils with hearing impairment to answer questions in class or to take part fully in tasks with other pupils. This was particularly noticeable when pupils with hearing impairment worked with pupils who had other special educational needs. Because their needs, as learners, are very different, sometimes the hearing impaired pupils did not have sufficient attention or sufficient time to complete tasks. At these times, learning dipped and inclusion was impinging upon their needs.
41. Inclusion is a major strength of the provision, enabling pupils to have equal access to all the opportunities on offer at the school and to learn alongside their peers. The very good support provided almost always ensures that learning is very good. This was exemplified in a physical education lesson in Year 2 in which pupils worked in pairs to devise a sequence of dance movements. The hearing impaired pupils performed very well with their partners and achieved high standards of movement as well as personal skills. Their successes were linked to very clear explanations and effective demonstrations by the teacher. They took a full and active part in the lesson.
42. Leadership and management of the Hearing Impaired Unit are very good, and often innovative. The very clear commitment to inclusion ensures that pupils feel secure in their learning, enjoy school life and have as many opportunities as all other pupils. Very good procedures for improving staff skills and developing a whole-school approach to inclusion have led to a highly skilled workforce and school community,

which is able to communicate appropriately with pupils from the unit. Mainstream pupils, as well as staff, are learning signs. They are proud of this achievement and use signing freely. An assembly in which almost all the school pupils used signing to sing their song provided a very spiritual moment to the school day.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

43. Children entering the Foundation Stage have a wide range of attainment and attainment on entry is below that nationally expected for children of this age. Children start school in the term in which they are five and this means that the youngest children start school in January and therefore attend for less than two full terms before entering Year 1. The quality of teaching and learning is good and as a result children achieve well. However, as a result of low attainment on entry and the fact that a significant proportion of the children have only spent one full term in the reception class, most children do not attain the nationally expected early learning goals in any of the six areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.
44. The teachers' command of the Foundation Stage curriculum is good. They have high expectations of the children and good deployment of well-trained teaching assistants extends and supports learning in an effective way. The curriculum is good and effective cross-curricular work helps children to make secure links in different areas of learning. Well-organised planning provides meaningful activities and effective assessment, monitoring and tracking of children's activities ensure that all children benefit from their experiences in the secure, welcoming atmosphere of the class. There is a good degree of independent learning helping children to become more confident and begin to have some understanding of their own learning.
45. The accommodation is good. The classrooms benefit from a small but well-planned outdoor area, providing a rich learning environment which enhances the indoor provision. Children with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they receive from an early stage. Induction procedures are good. They form a sound basis for strong relationships with parents. The staff work very well together as a team. Their sensitive intervention helps all children to succeed. The leadership and management of the co-ordinator are good. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children achieve well.
- Adults provide good role models of caring and considerate behaviour.
- Children are given choices to help them learn to play and become more independent.
- Staff have good knowledge of the children's needs and give this area of learning high priority in all teaching plans.

Commentary

46. Children enter the reception class with attainment below the national average in this area of learning. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children's achievement is good but, because of low attainment on entry and the fact that a third of the children have less than two full terms in school by the time they enter Year 1, less than half of the children have reached the early learning goals in this area of learning. Staff are very skilful at planning stimulating experiences to capture the children's interest. These help the children develop concentration skills so that they sustain attention and remain on task for increasingly longer periods of time. Children separate from their parents and carers easily.
47. After the self-registration takes place, children quickly become totally engrossed in the well-planned activities. They work with an increasing degree of independence and are beginning to have some knowledge and understanding of their learning. Staff work hard to reinforce good learning attitudes. Effective questioning skills encourage children to make links to prior learning and to work things out for themselves within a well-structured framework for learning. Children learn social skills well. They tidy up after activities and are hygienic as they wash their hands after using the toilet. Children are happy in school and join in activities willingly and co-operatively. They wait patiently to take their turn and take responsibility for tidying up, dressing and undressing themselves. A minority of boys still find it difficult to share but the majority of children work and play collaboratively, benefiting from a wide variety of activities planned to develop increasing co-operation. As a result children become more involved and confident and are beginning to taking responsibility for their own learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-structured activities consolidate learning.
- Staff effectively model the use of language as a tool for thinking.

Commentary

48. Teaching is good and the children achieve well. When children enter the reception class they listen to favourite stories and songs. As a result of good teaching and consistent consolidation of learning they begin to join in. Re-telling a story acted out in the morning provides a well-structured activity which helps children to begin to sequence a story and consolidate learning. 'Chinese Whispers' provides an enjoyable way of improving listening skills, whilst there are many effective opportunities for children to increase hand-eye coordination 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 and 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 time they enter Year 1 only a third of the children have reached the early learning goals in this area of learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-planned, interesting practical activities effectively support learning.

Commentary

49. Children's learning is made both exciting and enjoyable. Teaching is good and the children achieve well. Staff frequently use the outside area to play games with individuals or small groups to develop the use of mathematical terms in real situations. Well-planned activities consolidate learning in different ways to ensure that learning is secure. Good cross-curricular links reinforce learning as children share a non-fiction book about language linked to position. Practical sessions outside give children good opportunities to make choices when using language such as *before* and *after*, *over* and *under*. Children are beginning to recognise number to ten but not necessarily in order. Good questioning by the teacher extends children's learning well. Activities are very well planned to meet the learning needs and styles of all children. By the time they enter Year 1 less than half of the children have reached the early learning goals in this area of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children enjoy a wide range of interesting activities that give them an increasing number of experiences of their own world.
- Staff use questioning very effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.
- Children have good access to tools and resources.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. At the beginning of the year, most are working at levels below those expected for their age. Imaginatively planned activities support learning well, stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. Through skilful use of questioning and sensitive interaction by the teacher, children are encouraged to use their speaking and listening skills as they plan and use a large construction kit to build an obstacle course. Small toys from around the world extend early experiences beyond the home and school, giving children the opportunity to make sense of a widening community. Children are confident in their use of computer programs. They use the mouse effectively to click and drag and are competent in their use of the keyboard. By the time they enter Year 1 less than half of the children have reached the early learning goals in this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning in the outside classroom is effectively planned to give children a good variety of stimulating activities.

Commentary

51. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well but, because of the short time many spend in reception, less than half of the children have reached the early learning goals in this area of learning. Children show increasing levels of physical control in their movements. They are beginning to move with confidence and respond well to the challenges from the teacher. Good cross-curricular links with mathematics give children an opportunity to make choices about which sort of movement they will choose to complete an obstacle course. Effective direct teaching helps them to make good progress in their skills so that they move with an increasing degree of control, moving on the apparatus with safety. Children develop their manipulative skills well by handling dough, scissors and brushes and handle small construction equipment with dexterity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- 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

52. Teaching is good and a well-planned curriculum, together with experience of 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 the sound of different instruments. The children sing simple songs from memory and are beginning to match movements to the words. The teachers' commitment and enthusiasm creates a positive working atmosphere and as a result higher achieving children have the confidence to combine new skills such as cutting, sticking and painting to make a musical instrument. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well. By the time they enter Year 1, less than half of the children have reached the early learning goals in this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good mechanisms are in place to track pupils' progress.
- Assessment information is used effectively to target support.
- Very effective provision for extra support enables pupils to achieve above average standards.
- Marking of pupils' work in some classes gives pupils insufficient information about how they can improve.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

53. Pupils achieve well and attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils enter Year 1 with below average standards in language and literacy, achieve well and standards are average by the end of Year 2. They continue to achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and standards are currently above average. Those pupils with lower levels of attainment benefit from very effective programmes of extra support that help them to raise their levels of attainment. This is due to the good assessment that enables their needs to be identified as early as possible, along with the very good support they received that is targeted to address those needs. It is acknowledged that these strategies raise attainment even further and last year the results of the National Curriculum tests showed a significant improvement over the previous year and were very high in comparison with all schools and well above average when compared with similar schools. This is also an improvement on attainment judged at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were well above average. In contrast, the results of tests in Year 2 were below average in both reading and writing. The school has addressed identified weaknesses, some in the marking of pupils' work and teacher expectations, and there has been an early recovery in attainment, which is now average.
54. All pupils achieve well. Those with special educational needs make good progress in reaching the target set for them in their individual education plans. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well in mastering basic English language skills and thereafter in their general learning. Those with hearing impairments achieve very well through the specialist support they receive, ensuring their full involvement in lessons.
55. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and enables pupils to achieve well. In the best lessons, teachers' good subject knowledge helps them to create a good learning ethos in which pupils are keen to succeed. In these lessons, teaching proceeds at a lively pace and pupils enjoy their work because it is imaginative. Pupils respond well to the teachers' high expectations and, as a result, achieve well. There are good mechanisms in place to track pupils' progress and to assess the levels pupils have reached. This information is used very effectively to target support, in the form of additional intensive small group work for those pupils who need it. Teachers also identify those pupils who need extra support and vary the activities for individual pupils within class. The quality and use of assessment information to inform planning are, however, inconsistent. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but they do not always take the opportunity to indicate what steps each pupil needs to take to improve their writing.

56. Leadership and management of the subject are good and have helped the school to achieve the good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The subject leader is keen to improve standards and has implemented several improvement strategies. She has a good overview of the subject and acknowledges its strengths and areas for development. Her work is primarily focused on raising standards, has a clear sense of direction and has structures in place for managing evaluations and feedback to staff. She works closely with other members of staff to ensure that all pupils get the right support. She is systematic in her approach to the monitoring of teaching and learning. She regularly analyses pupils' work, observes lessons and examines teachers' plans, providing a very secure picture of provision and standards. Improvement since the previous inspection is good, with the high standards in English being maintained and improved upon last year.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. There are limited links made between language and literacy and other subjects. Several examples were seen where teachers made good use of ICT to support pupils' work but teachers' plans do not indicate how work undertaken in other subjects could provide the context for work in literacy lessons. However, standards in literacy in other subjects are good and pupils generally use and apply literacy skills well.

French

Provision in French is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All groups of pupils achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and motivate pupils' enthusiasm to learn.
- The curriculum has a good emphasis on oral aspects of language and effectively supports the development of appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in the early years of learning French.
- Resources are good and are used well in helping pupils enjoy learning French.

Commentary

58. The school has continued to include French in its curriculum since the last inspection. Although French is the main language taught, the school has also provided pupils with the opportunity to sample Spanish and German, thus raising the profile of modern languages in the curriculum. In French, pupils in Years 3 to 6 follow a nationally recognised programme of study for their age. Pupils achieve well and attain standards above those nationally expected by Year 6. They effectively build up their speaking and listening skills in particular because there is a strong emphasis on this aspect of language development. Pupils are attentive, confident and very willing to use the language for themselves. Standards are therefore good. By Year 6, pupils have developed a good range of vocabulary including numbers and names of parts of the body and a good variety of sentence forms, including greetings and questions, together with appropriate responses. Pupils are confident and most speak without hesitation. They have good opportunities to practise pronunciation of French and are developing good French accents. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with hearing impairment, make very good progress, even though there is a very oral approach to learning. This is through the understanding of their teachers and through the very good support they receive from well experienced and knowledgeable teaching assistants. Those pupils with

English as an additional language quickly pick up the new vocabulary and make good progress.

59. Teaching and learning are good because the teachers mostly make sure that explanations are clear and that questions are tailored to suit pupils' capability. This means that everyone takes part. Earlier work is reinforced briskly at the start of each lesson and this effectively consolidates vocabulary and builds up flexibility and fluency in understanding. French is the normal language of the classroom, from simple instructions to words of praise and encouragement, which helps maintain a highly constructive atmosphere and makes full use of time. English is used sparingly and only when necessary to ensure understanding of more complex explanations and to illustrate aspects of the French way of life. This helps pupils see the language in its proper context. Teachers make good use of the good quality resources available, such as the CDs with catchy songs for pupils to sing along to at a challenging pace, thus effectively developing pupils' understanding and ability to speak confidently.
60. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Since the previous inspection, the profile of French has improved and teachers are now more committed to teaching the language and it is now more structured. French lessons follow on from mathematics, which is taught in ability groups. This enables teachers to match pace and method to pupils' needs and all groups therefore progress well. In view of this and higher standards, improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Higher expectations have resulted in improving standards.
- Consistently good teaching has a positive effect on the achievement of pupils and their learning.
- Good assessment is used effectively to plan for learning.
- Information from the analysis of tests is used effectively in future planning.
- Marking does not always consistently foster improvement.

Commentary

61. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards below national expectations. Results in the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 2 show standards in mathematics to be above the national average for all schools and in line for similar schools. At the end of Year 6 standards were in line with the national average and below similar schools. Results for 2004 indicate that the position is not as good at the end of Year 2 and that there has been an improvement at the end of Year 6 to bring standards above the average. The school has identified weaknesses in provision in Year 2 and a change in staffing has resulted in improved standards. In lessons seen, standards are now above those expected nationally in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' achievement throughout Years 1 to 2 is now very good. Achievement is good throughout Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to good support. Those with pupils with English as an additional language achieve well.

62. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are grouped by ability within their class. In Years 3 through to Year 6 they are set by ability using the school's effective analysis of data. This, together with a more effective deployment of staff, higher expectations and a focus on areas that analysis of data has shown to be weak, has helped to raise standards. There is a stark contrast between pupils' work in some year groups from the previous year, where expectations were low and work was rarely marked, and the present high expectations and resulting high standards. The quality of teaching and learning is now consistently good and this leads to good achievement for all pupils.
63. Most teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics and now have high expectations of their pupils. Where teaching is very good, the pace is brisk and ICT is used to very good effect, in particular when presenting a visual approach to a lower achieving group. Overall there is a good coverage of the curriculum for mathematics and homework consolidates learning well. Marking is not always consistent but, where it is good, it directs pupils well towards improvement. Some work remains unchecked and at times does not indicate how pupils might improve. Analysis of data shows a definite link between effective intervention strategies⁴ and improvement in standards. It has also shown that pupils need more practice in problem solving. This is now being effectively addressed by a whole school focus on problem solving. Pupils are challenged and learning is well structured to enable them to build securely on previous knowledge and understanding. Relationships are good and pupils enjoy mathematics. Teaching assistants are well deployed and support pupils well.
64. The leadership and management of the subject are good. Although new to her post the subject leader has a clear understanding of the strengths in the subject and areas for further development. She has good subject knowledge and skills and she leads by example, giving effective support where it is needed in order to raise standards. She has had the opportunity to monitor some teaching through lesson observation, analysing the quality of pupils' work and talking to the teachers about their concerns. The school has good systems for assessing pupils' progress and teachers use it well to plan further work and to identify those pupils who will need extra help. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Teachers plan good use of mathematics across the curriculum and link work well with ICT, science and geography. Pupils measure accurately in design and technology work and in science, for example, and use and apply their numeracy skills well in a good range of other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is above average in Year 2 and well above the national average by Year 6.
- Teaching is good. It is lively, interesting and challenging and good attention is given to practical work and investigations so pupils achieve well.

⁴ Extra small group support for identified pupils, generally in English and mathematics.

- Pupils enjoy practical activities.
- The quality of marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. In some classes it gives pupils too little information on how they might improve.
- Assessment data is used effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses, but the recording of pupils' achievement is cumbersome.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

66. Standards have improved very well since the previous inspection and now exceed nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2 and are well above average by Year 6. In 2004, almost all pupils attained the expected level for their age and a high proportion exceeded it. Outcomes of tests show that since 2000 results have alternated between average and above average. The subject leaders have carefully analysed assessment information and found that questions related to experimental and investigative science were not answered well. The school has addressed this issue and this year standards have recovered well.
67. Across the school, boys and girls of all abilities achieve well as a result of the good teaching and the good curriculum. Recent improvements mean that pupils regularly learn to plan and carry out scientific investigations, to explain what they are doing and to draw conclusions from their findings. As a result standards in this aspect of science are now very good. This shows the good level of achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Those with limited hearing are very well supported in class and are fully included in all activities, making very good progress in lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well through the good support they receive in class. There is greater emphasis on ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to research information to extend their knowledge and understanding effectively.
68. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject. Questioning is good and this encourages pupils to think. Teachers introduce, emphasise and explain key scientific vocabulary well and encourage pupils to use it, also benefiting pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, discussing their ideas and working out for themselves how to perform investigations and how to test their hypotheses afterwards. This was seen, for example, in a lesson on fluorescent materials in Year 2 and in a Years 5 and 6 class on separating mixtures of substances. Group tasks are used well to encourage pupils to learn from each other, which makes a good contribution to their personal development. Teachers make sure that pupils have the necessary skills to conduct experiments and, in preparation for further work, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were taught how to use a thermometer accurately. The introduction of basic skills of this nature supports good learning when they are used in practical situations. The staff plan interesting and challenging work that encourages good learning, attitudes and standards.
69. Staff keep a good overview of pupils' progress throughout lessons and over time. They make good links between science work and pupils' work in other subjects, especially art and design, mathematics and ICT. However, the quality of marking varies from class to class. Samples of work from last year indicate there were

weaknesses in teaching. Marking was inaccurate, expectations of what pupils could do were too low because much of the work was poorly presented and there is no indication that this was followed up, indicating a willingness to accept less than the pupils were capable of. The school recognised this and, as a result of actions taken, current work books show a great improvement in standards and the quality of work.

70. The co-ordinators lead and manage the subject well. Through regular monitoring they have a good idea of where there are strengths and weaknesses in provision. They have taken steps to address these, including improved emphasis on the school's approach to experimental and investigative science, and improvement is evident. Assessment data is used effectively to identify areas for improvement and to track pupils' achievement purposefully. However, methods to record individual pupils' attainment are cumbersome and the subject leaders are looking at more efficient ways of keeping track of pupils' progress. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Because of good teaching, all pupils, regardless of their ability, achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Year 6.
- There is good use of ICT in other subjects.
- Leadership and management are good and the subject leader effectively promotes ICT throughout the school.
- The resources for the subject are good and are used effectively by both teachers and support staff.

Commentary

71. The achievement of all pupils throughout the school is good and standards by the end of Year 2 are average and above average by Year 6. The achievement of all pupils is good. Pupils are encouraged to work independently and at a quick pace. This enables all pupils to achieve well. Those with hearing impairment are very effectively supported in class by teachers of the deaf and teaching assistants. Consequently they make very good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well. Those pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively in lessons and they achieve well.
72. As pupils progress through the school, teachers ensure that a secure skills base is established for all pupils. The curriculum is well designed so that knowledge and understanding are developed in a progressive way. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 already have good routine skills in manipulating computers. They use a mouse and the keyboard efficiently to locate the cursor, delete text and insert edited text when editing on screen. Pupils in Year 1 logged in using user names and passwords and, once they had accessed the appropriate program, they selected pictures, cut and pasted them into their work and added text. This work was at a level expected of older pupils and provided a very secure foundation for further work in later years.

73. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 and in Years 5 and 6 began preparing multimedia presentations linked with their work in other subjects. Years 3 and 4 pupils started to prepare a booklet based on their work in science on 'minibeasts' in a style suitable for use by Year 2 children. The teacher's high expectations of the pupils resulted in pupils producing work in this lesson that was well above that expected for pupils of this age. They were very aware of who they were preparing this work for and selected appropriate pictures from the computer and combined them with decorative text, competently resizing and repositioning until they were satisfied that this was the best they could produce. These skills are developed well and by Years 5 and 6 their multimedia presentations include graphics downloaded from the Internet or from the computer's library. They blend sound and pictures, effectively linked by text. Pupils make their own choices and prepare a good range of presentations, enhanced by automatic links between pages which they insert themselves. Pupils evaluate their own work to good effect and critically edit their presentations. They use ICT to organise, improve and present information for specific purposes and audiences in various forms and styles. All pupils work confidently at levels beyond those that are reasonably expected for their age.
74. High standards result from good teaching and some very good teaching was seen during the inspection. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and give them the opportunity to make choices and develop their own style of presentation. Pupils respond to high expectations with high levels of confidence and seek improvement in their work. Tasks are challenging and interesting and promote positive attitudes and very good behaviour. Lessons are well planned to ensure that explanations are clear and brief and give pupils confidence, yet leave a good period of time in which pupils can practise and develop their skills.
75. The good leadership given by the curriculum leader has been particularly effective in raising the confidence of teachers and pupils alike. A well skilled and knowledgeable teacher, he has managed development well. He has ensured that all teachers have had training in using the high quality resources, including the computer suite and interactive whiteboards. There is technical support available to ensure that equipment is maintained well. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. The school has improved provision for all pupils and the good standards reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. ICT is used as an effective tool to support learning across the curriculum. Pupils use their skills well to produce good quality presentation of their work and to carry out research in mathematics, English, science, art and design and humanities. Pupils use word processing skills to consolidate editing skills and improve their knowledge and understanding of punctuation. Mathematics programs reinforce number skills well.

HUMANITIES

77. Insufficient evidence was available to support overall judgements on provision in history and geography. One lesson was seen in history and one in geography. Discussions took place with staff and pupils and work in pupils' books was also examined. History and geography are taught as separate subjects using nationally

agreed schemes of work. Opportunities are taken to develop good links with other subjects such as art, design and technology, science and English. Both subjects are co-ordinated by staff who are well informed and who have a good overview of their subject.

78. In **history**, the pupils' work sampled and the lesson seen indicates that standards are in line with national expectations for pupils of this age. Pupils in Year 2 studied the Great Fire of London and were able to identify the main cause. Pupils in Year 6 studied the Victorians and have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the times and some of the major events that took place. In the lesson seen, the teacher used resources well to develop pupils' enquiry skills by using photographs to help them understand what Victorian life was like.
79. In **geography**, the Year 2 pupils develop their knowledge of the local environment through field trips. Pupils in Year 6 are studying mountain environments, building a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of how that type of environment impacts upon the lives of people who live there. Pupils have good referencing skills and, in the lesson seen, pupils made good use of atlases to find and identify the world's main mountain ranges.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show a good level of respect for others' beliefs, based on their satisfactory understanding of several world religions in addition to their own.
- Good links are made to pupils' personal, social and health education.
- Good opportunities are taken to develop links with other subjects.

Commentary

80. To support religious education lesson observations, pupils' work was analysed, discussions were held with pupils and staff, and teachers' planning was examined. Standards seen are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus across the school and teachers' planning shows that statutory requirements are met. All groups of pupils make satisfactory progress.
81. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and it effectively supports pupils' positive attitudes to the subject and a suitable range of other religions. Pupils are developing a healthy respect for the beliefs, traditions and lifestyles of people who follow faiths other than Christianity. Good links are made between this subject and pupils' personal, social and health education. For example, pupils in Year 2 have developed their study of stories from the Old Testament to include work on 'Friends'. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have considered 'Caring in the Community' and 'Choices' as part of their religious education study. Planning is good in ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils. Analysis of pupils' work and teachers' plans indicates that all pupils in the same year group do the same work even though they are in different classes. This ensures that all pupils have similar learning experiences and helps all pupils to make equal progress. Good links are made to other subjects. Several examples of work on display

showed good links to art, English and music. This enriches pupils' experiences and helps to develop their spiritual and cultural knowledge and understanding.

82. Leadership and management of religious education are satisfactory. The subject leader regularly reviews and updates the policy documents and ensures staff are kept well informed about any changes to the local syllabus. She assesses pupils' work and monitors the attainment annually. The improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. Art and design and design and technology were sampled during the inspection. Music and physical education are reported in full.
84. The evidence available shows that planning for the teaching for **art and design** through the school is satisfactory and takes appropriate account of national guidance. The curriculum is planned to help pupils develop their skills systematically as they move from one year to the next. Work on display throughout the school indicates that pupils are provided with a varied range of art and design experiences. There are many examples of a good range of media used, including clay, paint, sketching, fabric paints and collage.
85. One lesson in **design and technology** was observed and therefore no overall judgement on provision can be made. Discussions took place with staff and pupils and work in pupils' books and photographic evidence was also examined. The work sampled from pupils indicates that standards are in line with national expectations for pupils of this age. The analysis of pupils' work also confirms that skills are taught progressively and the principles of design, making and evaluation are covered effectively. In the lesson seen, very good teaching helped pupils to modify and improve their designs of bags made from newspapers. Digital cameras are used regularly to record the pupils' finished products. The subject is being led and managed well by the co-ordinator.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music teaching is good and benefits from the expertise of a music specialist.
- There is good curriculum enrichment, which further develops pupils' experience, knowledge and understanding in music.
- Music makes a significant contribution to the spiritual life of the school.
- The leadership and management of music are good.
- The school's good resources are used effectively to give pupils valuable practical experience.

Commentary

86. Music sessions are mainly taught by class teachers, with the music specialist supporting through the teaching of singing to infant and junior groups. This means

that pupils have access to good teacher knowledge, providing them with accurate teaching, and with high expectation of their skills. Consequently, pupils achieve well throughout the school and standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and are good, particularly in singing, by Year 6. All pupils make good progress and those with hearing impairment make very good progress.

87. At the time of the previous inspection one of the headteacher's aims was to raise the profile of music in the school. This has been achieved successfully. Music is now given a high profile in the school. Some lessons take place in the music room, which is very well equipped with a wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. These are used effectively to give pupils good opportunities to develop good instrument playing skills. This has a direct impact on pupils' good achievement. There are good planned opportunities for curriculum enrichment, which provide further good opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. These range from live performances and workshop sessions, which are held for pupils throughout the school, to individual music tuition. Singing in whole key stage singing sessions was sensitive, tuneful and pupils were committed to performing at a high level. The atmosphere in the hall was often reflective and music clearly makes a significant contribution to the spiritual life of the school.
88. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and is skills based, enabling all children to have a good grounding in the core musical skills of singing, listening, performing and composing. The teacher's good subject knowledge and teaching skills result in significant gains in pupils' knowledge and understanding of music and also enable them to teach accurately. By the end of Year 6, most pupils sing complex compositions and, when six classes of pupils sang a three-part tune together, each group kept accurately to their own part and they all finished exactly at the same moment, showing very good timing. Teachers maintain a good pace in lessons to ensure all pupils remain on task. Younger pupils respond well to musical challenges to extend their listening and rhythmic skills and they show their appreciation of rhythm through their movements in time to the music.
89. The leadership and management of music are good. The curriculum is well planned and there are good opportunities for curriculum enrichment to support the good provision in music. There are good plans for further development of music and to maintain the high profile of music in the school. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of teaching are good and motivate pupils well.
- A good range of clubs and sports opportunities enriches pupils' experiences.
- There is no consistency of assessment to monitor pupils' development and progress.
- The size of the school hall limits what can be achieved.

Commentary

90. Pupils enter Year 1 with below average physical skills. However, as a result of good teaching pupils achieve well and by the end of Year 2 the majority of pupils have reached standards that are in line with national expectations. This good achievement

is maintained through Year 3 to the end of Year 6 where pupils' standard of attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to good support.

91. All aspects of the subject are regularly taught. Swimming is well provided for by weekly sessions for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Across the range of physical activities, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils achieve well as a result of well-planned lessons, good direct teaching and the opportunity to practise new skills and to experiment and explore. Good cross-curricular links are made and pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, create dance sequences by experimenting with their own ideas of what it is like to be a tree growing in a rain forest, building on what they have learned in geography. Pupils enjoy developing their skills and acting as a model for improvement in front of the class.
92. Parents feel that there is now a better focus on physical education, with adequate time allocated on the class timetables. A good range of clubs provides extra-curricular enrichment in swimming, athletics, netball and football. However, the size of the school hall limits what can be achieved, particularly in Years 5 and 6. At present, there is no consistency of assessment to monitor pupils' development and progress, but there are plans to introduce assessment procedures soon. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

93. This area of the curriculum was sampled.
94. Provision PSHE and citizenship is included within the timetable and is planned using a set scheme of work. Education for sex and relationships is provided for pupils within PSHE. Provision in this area of the curriculum is enriched well through the school's effective links with external support agencies. Monitoring of the programme is ongoing and the school has changed the parts of the programme which were identified as in need of updating, for example in Years 5 and 6. Consequently, older pupils are taught using a more recent scheme which links in to a programme of citizenship. Pupils' personal development is monitored very well and there are good structures in place to take account of all pupils' needs.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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