

INSPECTION REPORT

HAYNES LOWER SCHOOL

Haynes, Bedford

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109456

Headteacher: Mrs K G Davenport

Lead inspector: Mr L Lewin

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 4th November 2004

Inspection number: 271832

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	49
School address:	Foresters Close Haynes Bedford Bedfordshire
Postcode:	MK45 3PR
Telephone number:	01234 381225
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs V Oertel
Date of previous inspection:	March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Haynes Lower School is a smaller than average school. With slight variations, the number of pupils on roll has remained about the same over the last few years. Nearly all pupils are from white UK backgrounds, with a small number of pupils coming from other ethnic backgrounds. They mostly come from the immediate locality and surrounding villages, from a mixture of privately owned and community housing. At 5.4 per cent, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is low compared to the national average (17.5 per cent). At the time of the inspection there were no pupils in the school with statements of special educational needs. No pupils are eligible for free school meals (as compared to the national average of 17.9 per cent) and no pupils speak English as an additional language.

The rate at which pupils join or leave the school, other than at the usual times of starting or leaving school, is lower than in most other schools nationally. The attainment of children on entry to school varies each year, but is generally average.

The school has experienced turbulence in its staffing over recent years, but the headteacher has now established a stable staff team.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22330	Mr L Lewin	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
9652	Mr C Herbert	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
18709	Mrs N Bee	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage English History Geography Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school. Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching and good leadership and management. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- By the time they leave the school, pupils reach above average standards overall as a result of the good teaching they receive.
- The strong attention given to their spiritual, moral and social development means that pupils show very good attitudes and behaviour.
- The school provides a curriculum that offers a good range of opportunities for the pupils.
- Not enough use is made of assessment information to guide teachers' planning.
- The school has very good systems to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- Not enough emphasis is placed on developing pupils' multicultural awareness.

The school has improved at a good rate since its last inspection in March 1999. Points for development raised in the last inspection have been successfully addressed, including the implementation of a good quality school improvement plan. Areas of strength have mainly been sustained and standards attained by pupils continue to rise overall. In addition, curriculum planning has been extensively improved and information and communication technology (ICT) facilities have been upgraded.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004 ¹	2004 ¹
reading	A	A	A*	A*
writing	A*	A*	A	A
mathematics	B	A	A*	A*

Key: A - indicates pupils performing in the highest five per cent of schools nationally; 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.*

PS. Much caution is needed when interpreting the test results each year in a small school. The standards can vary considerably when only small numbers of pupils are being tested.

Achievement in the school is **good**. Children's attainment on entry to school is generally average, although this varies each year. The small group of children currently in the Foundation Stage show above average attainment and are on course to exceed the expected levels by the time they start Year 1. Year 2 pupils have achieved high standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the national tests each year. Pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to achieve high standards by the end of this academic year in reading, writing and mathematics, and also look set to achieve good standards in science and in ICT. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 also achieve well and attain above average standards in English, science and ICT. Standards in mathematics are average, and the school is rightly focusing on improving the quality of pupils' work in this area. Across the school, pupils attain good standards in music. In all other subjects, not enough evidence was collected to make judgements about standards.

¹ Data not yet validated.

The **good** provision made for pupils' personal development results in pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils' moral understanding is promoted particularly well, and provision for their spiritual, social and cultural development is good overall. However, they do not have enough opportunities to gain an understanding and appreciation of people from other cultural backgrounds. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**. Staff form strong relationships with pupils and are good at encouraging them to do their best. Teachers show confident subject knowledge. They plan work well to capture the interest of pupils, so that all individuals become enthusiastic and are keen to learn. Teaching assistants and voluntary helpers provide very good support for teachers and pupils. Higher attaining pupils are not always extended sufficiently in mathematics lessons in Years 3 and 4. Although teachers regularly assess how pupils are getting on, they do not make enough use of the information gained to help refine their plans for new lessons. Curriculum provision is good. Links with parents and the community are good, as are links with other schools. The school has very good systems for ensuring the care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher leads the staff well and has enabled the school to maintain a good pace of improvement. She has worked hard to establish a new staff team and is now aware of the need to delegate more of the subject responsibilities. The governors carry out their roles effectively and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They have a clear overview of the school and are fully informed about, and involved in, its overall management. The school's administrative staff work very efficiently to support the headteacher and staff in ensuring the smooth running of the school on a day-to-day basis.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents have a high regard for the school. The pre-inspection questionnaires completed by pupils, and discussions with them, show that they like their school and feel they are well supported by staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop fully, systems for using assessment information to guide teachers' planning.
- Create a full range of opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of other cultures.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, pupils achieve well and, generally, standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High standards are registered in the Year 2 national tests each year.
- Pupils do well in English, science, ICT and music by the end of Year 4.
- Pupils do not do as well in mathematics as in other subjects in Years 3 and 4.
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) occasionally struggle with the work they are given to do.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.8 (17.8)	16.0 (15.7)
writing	16.6 (18.5)	14.8 (14.6)
mathematics	19.8 (18.3)	16.4 (16.3)

There were 8 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. Pupils enter the school generally showing average attainment, although this fluctuates from year to year. The Foundation Stage Class currently has only six children attending part-time, with more due to join next term. These children show above average attainment and are on course to exceed the expected levels in all of the areas of learning. Achievement in the school's younger age group classes is good. National test results over the last few years show standards as being well above average in reading, writing and mathematics, and improving in line with the national trend. These standards are also reflected by the work currently produced by pupils in Year 2.

2. Much caution is needed when interpreting results in a small school, as standards can easily vary from year to year. Nonetheless, the school's assessment information shows pupils generally achieving well as they move through Years 3 and 4, with pupils achieving good standards in previous years. Pupils currently in these year groups do less well in mathematics than in English, achieving above average standards in English, and average standards in mathematics. This is because the national numeracy strategy was not fully implemented until the arrival of the current teachers in the school. The current Year 3 / 4 teacher has therefore had to work hard to fill gaps in pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding, and this has delayed their overall progress. Mathematics work in pupils' books and during a lesson observed showed that higher attaining pupils are not always extended by the work that they are given to do, and this is also suppressing pupils' overall achievement.

3. Across the school, pupils attain good standards in science and music, where they cover a wide range of experiences in their work. They reach average standards in religious education. In all other subjects, too little evidence was collected during the inspection to enable judgements to be made about standards.

4. Overall, pupils with SEN achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. They benefit in particular from the close support of teaching assistants. However, occasionally, the work set for pupils does not match their levels of attainment precisely enough, and, in a few of the sessions observed, they struggled with work that was too difficult. Nonetheless, staff know the pupils very well and ensure that individuals are fully supported through any difficulties they encounter.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to school and to their learning, and they are very well behaved. There has been an improvement in this aspect of school life since the last inspection. Pupils' attendance is very good and is well above the national average. Punctuality is also very good. The school has maintained these high standards since the last inspection. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about all aspects of school life.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is very good, and pupils have very good relationships with one another.
- The provision for pupils' moral development is very good, and provision for their spiritual development is good.
- The provision for multicultural development is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

5. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very positive attitudes to their learning. Consequently, their behaviour is very good in the classroom and they respond very well to the high quality of the teaching. For example, in a Year 1 / 2 science lesson, pupils listened and concentrated very well to a video showing differences and similarities in animals. Additionally, in a Year 3 / 4 literacy lesson, pupils worked independently and in a mature way on 'describing words'. This very good behaviour also extends into the playground and, at lunchtime, into the dining hall. There are no exclusions. Parental responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive in regard to pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Some parents expressed concern about bullying, but none was seen during the inspection, nor was any reported by pupils with whom inspectors spoke.

6. Relationships within the school community are very good, and all pupils respond very well to the guidance that adults give them. The impact of these very good relationships is that all pupils are fully included in all school activities. Pupils are very polite and well mannered towards visitors, and they often express their views confidently during class discussions.

7. The school promotes pupils' moral development very well. All pupils have a very clear idea of right and wrong, and they are encouraged to become mature and responsible members of the school community. Good opportunities are provided for social development, and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for a variety of activities around the school. For example, they set up the overhead projector and the music centre before assembly. Occasionally, too, they show initiative, for example by finding a chair for a visitor to assembly without being asked. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. For example, in assemblies, they are given opportunities to reflect quietly about such things as the care they receive from their parents and the care that they show to one another. Although pupils are provided with opportunities to understand and appreciate their own culture, for example through visits to London and to the seaside at Hunstanton, there are not enough opportunities for them to enhance their understanding of the multicultural world in which they live.

8. The school works very hard with parents to maintain the very good attendance level. Punctuality is also very good, and this allows a prompt and effective start to the school day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.3	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 is good. Good teaching, good curriculum provision, good pastoral care of the pupils and good links with the parents and the community provide strong enhancement for pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

As at the time of the last inspection, teaching and learning are good. However, although appropriate systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are in place, teachers do not yet make sufficient use of the information gained.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships teachers develop with pupils enhance learning.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to make work interesting for pupils.
- Very good support from teaching assistants strongly supports pupils' work and progress in lessons.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently extended by mathematics tasks in Years 3 and 4.
- Lessons run smoothly because of the high expectations that staff set for pupils' behaviour.
- Teachers do not use information from assessment to guide their planning sufficiently.
- Occasionally, work given to pupils with SEN is too difficult for them.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 13 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3	7	3	0	0	0

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

9. Teaching is good across the school. Teachers have a very good rapport with the pupils and relate very well to them. This ensures that there is a warm, friendly atmosphere in lessons in which pupils feel encouraged to do their best. The good personal knowledge that teachers have of all individuals in their classes means they are good at developing pupils' confidence and ensuring that all individuals are fully included in all activities. For example, in a very good mathematics lesson, the Year 1 / 2 teacher used her knowledge of the individuals in the class skilfully, providing sharply focused questions that ensured all were involved in a mental/oral session.

10. Teachers generally show good knowledge of the subjects. As a result, they give clear explanations that help pupils get on rapidly with tasks. Using their good subject knowledge, teachers also make sure that the work is made interesting for pupils wherever possible. This was particularly the case in the very good music lessons seen, which were planned and prepared very well so as to give pupils a very wide range of opportunities to practise their singing and instrumental work as well as to appraise contrasting pieces of well known music. Teamwork amongst staff is

good, and teachers plan well together to ensure that pupils build on their learning step by step as they move through the school. The good teamwork is also exemplified well in the Foundation Stage where the two job-share teachers work closely together to provide a rich range of experiences for the pupils.

11. Teaching assistants work very well in support of the teachers and pupils. They are fully briefed and have a clear understanding of what they have to do. As a consequence of this, they provide strong support for individuals and groups. In many of the lessons seen, the teaching assistants showed a very good instinct for knowing exactly when to support individuals fully and when to draw back and let them develop their skills independently. They provide strong support for pupils with SEN. In particular, they are very good at making sure individual pupils understand what is required of them during activities and at helping pupils stay focused on the tasks at hand.

12. Generally, teachers are good at ensuring that all groups of pupils are fully involved in activities. However, occasionally, during mathematics work in Years 3 and 4, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently extended by the work that they are given to do. Also, in both the Year 1 / 2 and Year 3 / 4 classes, work given to pupils with SEN is sometimes too difficult for them. This slows their progress and means that the teachers and teaching assistants need to spend much extra time helping individuals through the difficulties they encounter.

13. All the staff have high expectations regarding pupils' behaviour, and pupils respond very well. As a result, nearly all lessons run smoothly. In most of the sessions observed, very few comments were needed from the teachers to control or manage the pupils. High expectations also contribute well towards establishing a good atmosphere in lessons so that pupils learn to concentrate fully, without distraction from the others around them.

14. The headteacher has worked hard with the staff to implement robust systems for assessing and recording pupils' performances. She has also developed the means for analysing all of the resulting data from assessments. However, the school has not yet developed assessment to a point where the precise analysis of test results gives teachers the clear information they would need to refine their planning and to design clearly focused targets for all pupils.

The curriculum

The curriculum provision is good and ensures that pupils experience interesting and exciting learning opportunities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum planning is good.
- The curriculum is enriched well by visits made and visitors invited into school.
- The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.

15. The provision for the few children in the Foundation Stage is good. Interesting activities are planned that cover all aspects of the areas of learning. As a result, the youngest children in the school receive a good start to their school life. Resources are used well to support all activities. The outdoor area is relatively new and in the process of development, but it is used well to support learning in all areas.

16. The curriculum is well planned and caters effectively for the different age groups in the mixed-age classes. Clear, well organised plans are in place to show that skills and knowledge, in all subjects, are fully covered. There is an effective personal, social and health education programme which is followed by all classes. It gives pupils a broad understanding and supports their personal development well.

17. Visits, and visitors invited into school, greatly enhance pupils' learning. Many areas of the curriculum are enriched by well planned visits to places of interest in the local community. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are currently looking forward to a visit to West Stow which will reinforce and develop their knowledge of life in Anglo-Saxon Times. In addition, the pupils have good opportunities to listen to a range of visiting music specialists.

18. There is a wide range of after-school activities that include football, music lessons and opportunities to learn French. The parents spoke positively about the wide range of extra-curricular activities at the parents' meeting, and discussions with pupils showed that they, too, are very enthusiastic about these activities.

19. Generally, staff are good at ensuring that all groups of pupils are fully included in all activities. The provision for pupils with SEN is satisfactory overall. Staff know the pupils very well and give them much good guidance and encouragement. However, occasionally, the work planned for these pupils does not match their needs precisely enough, and they then need much extra support to guide them through the tasks. Teaching assistants work very well in supporting individuals who have been identified as having SEN.

20. There is a sufficient number of teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The school's administrative staff are very efficient and work very hard to enable the school day to run smoothly. The accommodation is satisfactory, and all space is used effectively. Outside accommodation is good, allowing the pupils access to a large field and playground. Resources are satisfactory to support all areas of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a very good level of care for the physical and emotional needs of its pupils, and there has been an improvement in this aspect of school life since the last inspection. The school provides satisfactory support, advice and guidance for its pupils. Arrangements for seeking and acting on pupils' views are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very high level of care for its pupils.
- Very effective procedures are in place for health, safety and child protection.
- Not enough use is made of assessment information to guide pupils' future development.

Commentary

21. Haynes Lower School looks after its pupils very well and this level of care is underpinned by the very good relationships in school and the very good knowledge that all staff have of the pupils.

22. The school takes its responsibility for health and safety and child protection very seriously. Appropriate records are maintained for risk assessments, fire drills and accidents, and the procedures for child protection are very effective. The governing body is fully involved in these aspects of school life and it has appointed individual governors who have specific responsibility for health and safety and child protection.

23. The pastoral support and guidance for pupils are good. Staff know individuals well and, in this way, cater sensitively for their needs. The support and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their work are satisfactory overall. However, staff do not always make enough use of assessment information to help them design specific support strategies and guidance for individuals.

24. The pre-inspection questionnaires that they completed show that most pupils are confident to approach adults in the school if they have a concern, and they also feel that their views are fully taken into consideration where appropriate. Pupils spoken to in Year 3 described adults in school as very helpful and said that 'teachers care for us if we have a problem'.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

As at the time of the last inspection, the school has good links with the parents and the community. Good links have been established with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents show good support for school activities.
- Most parents have very positive views about the school.
- The school listens carefully to, and acts upon, the concerns of parents where appropriate.

Commentary

25. Those parents who responded to the questionnaire or who attended the pre-inspection meeting expressed positive views about the school and have a high regard for the work of the staff.

26. Parents provide good support for school activities. Celebration assemblies and parents' evenings are always well attended. There is a very active and hard-working Parent Teacher Association, which raises approximately £2,500 each year through events such as the Christmas and summer fairs, Pancake Day and the annual fireworks display. Support from parents and the village community means that the latter event attracts a large number of people.

27. The school canvasses parents' views and acts upon their suggestions where appropriate. For example, the quality of information provided for parents has recently been upgraded in response to suggestions they made in a questionnaire sent to them. Good quality newsletters are now published on a regular monthly basis, and at the start of each term these contain useful guidance for parents about the topics that their children will be studying. In addition, annual written reports on pupils' progress have recently been redesigned and give a clear indication of what pupils have studied and what they can do. Appropriate targets for improvement are also included. The fact that the school has reacted to parental requests to improve the quality of information is a positive step towards improving the partnership.

28. Community links continue to be good. The school is very proud of its village heritage and pupils take part in such activities as the local remembrance ceremony, Harvest Festival and the village bazaar. Additionally, it ensures that pupils are given opportunities to visit interesting places such as the Houses of Parliament, Madame Tussaud's and the Planetarium in London, and the beach at Hunstanton. The school also welcomes a number of visitors such as library representatives, a speaker who brings in World War II artefacts to show the pupils, and a 6th Form drama group. All these initiatives have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

29. The school benefits from the good links that exist with other schools in the local cluster group. For example, pupils in Year 4 are able to make the move into the next stage of their education without any concerns.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads the school well. Governors carry out their roles effectively and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's effective leadership has helped the school move forward at a good pace.
- Staff work together as a strong team.
- The very efficient work of the administrative staff helps the school to run smoothly.

Commentary

30. During her three years in post, the headteacher has enabled the school to move forward at a good pace despite the challenges of turbulence in the staffing during her initial period at the school. She has enabled good upgrades to be made to the accommodation, with the result that the best use can be made of available facilities. She has led the staff effectively in auditing and reviewing many areas of the school's provision and, in particular, she has worked hard with the staff to update and improve the systems for lesson planning. She has implemented robust systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and although the school recognises that there remains much to be done in developing the use of assessment information, the basic tools to move forward with this work are now securely in place.

31. The headteacher has established an atmosphere in which staff work together as an effective and highly committed team. All staff members work very conscientiously to carry out their roles and to manage their subject responsibilities effectively together. The headteacher currently carries a very heavy workload and recognises the need to delegate more of the subject responsibilities to other members of staff now that they have had a chance to become established in the school.

32. Governors support the staff well. They are fully informed about, and involved in, the work of the school, and they have a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. Along with the headteacher and administrative staff, they manage the school's finances efficiently and ensure that the best possible use is made of all available funding.

33. The school is very fortunate to have two very effective administrative staff who carry out their roles in relation to managing the school's financial accounts and day-to-day administrative tasks very efficiently. By doing so, they help the school to run smoothly and ensure that the headteacher and all staff can remain fully focused on improving standards and the quality of education.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	219,367.00	Balance from previous year	16,008.00
Total expenditure	205,528.00	Balance carried forward to the next	29,847.00
Expenditure per pupil	5,138.00		

34. The school has a considerable budget carry forward figure. However, discussions with the governors and headteacher indicate that the extra funds are clearly earmarked for projects to improve the building further and to enhance the school's staffing arrangements. Although the school has a high level of expenditure per pupil, the good quality of education, good leadership and management and good achievement of the pupils means that it offers good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The attainment of the current cohort of six Reception children is above average. However, the profile of attainment is not yet complete because more children are due to start school next term. Induction procedures are satisfactory, and parents are pleased with how quickly their children settle into school. The children achieve well because exciting and well planned activities develop effective learning in all areas. The teachers are supported well by a voluntary parent helper who works in the classrooms for some lessons. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and enable the adults to collect information on the children and use this when they plan lessons. The information then feeds into individual profiles which track how well each child is doing. Learning resources are satisfactory and are used well to support all areas. The recently developed outdoor area is used to good effect to support learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and helps children to achieve very well.
- The children develop very good relationships with one another and with the adults who work with them.
- The children's attitudes to learning, and their behaviour, are very good.

Commentary

36. Most children are on course to exceed the expected levels by the end of their time in Reception. This is because all adults have very high expectations in regard to the way children should get on with one another and should respond appropriately to adults. As a result, the children's behaviour is very good. They choose activities sensibly and maturely, and work happily on activities that have been selected for them. Both teachers develop very good relationships with the children and plan interesting activities that suit their individual needs. These factors have a positive impact on the children's attitudes to learning, which are very good. The children work well together and begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently. They are enthusiastic and inquisitive, and confidently ask questions to find out more. Personal independence is very well promoted in all activities. For example, the children quickly put on their boots and coats before going into the outdoor area because the adults expect them to. If they need help, they confidently ask for it. Achievement is very good.

COMMUNICATION, LITERACY AND LANGUAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers develop speaking and listening skills and vocabulary very well in all activities.
- Teaching is good.
- Adults support the children well, enabling all to achieve well.
- The children respond very positively to lessons.

Commentary

37. Most children are on course to exceed the expected levels by the beginning of Year 1. Teaching is good. There are well-planned opportunities for children to develop the correct way to form letters. Children's previous work clearly shows that the children have many opportunities to develop writing skills. A strength in the teaching is that vocabulary is developed well during all activities. For example, children's previous work shows that they were given the challenging task of writing words to describe spiders. All children attempted this activity and came up with words such as 'frightening' and 'fat'. Creative development and mathematical development were linked well to this activity as the children made spiders with eight legs. Reading books are regularly sent home, and parents support learning well in this area. Reading skills are developed effectively, with the result that children pick up books with confidence and enthusiasm. Most children are beginning to recognise at least a few familiar words in the simple texts they are given. A third of the small group of Reception children accurately read the texts they are given, with good expression and great enjoyment. Children's previous work shows that, as well as identifying the first and final letter of words, higher attaining children are beginning to look carefully at middle blends such as 'ai' and 'ee' in words. The children have many daily opportunities to develop speaking skills. Both teachers value what they say, and as a result, the children confidently speak out in class discussions. The teachers have very high expectations regarding listening carefully and, as a result, the children all listen very attentively.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are well planned and promote the vocabulary associated with this area well.
- Teaching is good.
- The children respond very positively to lessons.

Commentary

38. Most children are on course to exceed the expected levels by the end of Reception. The children confidently attempt to count up to ten. Activities are exciting and challenging, and the children are given good opportunities to see how larger numbers are used in everyday life. For example, the children received good quality support from the teacher and the voluntary parent helper, which enabled them to accurately measure ingredients to make 'firework biscuits'. They were very interested, and they concentrated very well as they were shown '100 grams' on the scales. Knowledge of basic shapes was promoted well when the teacher asked the children what shape the butter was. Half of the group confidently said that it was a 'cuboid'. Questioning by the teacher was good and extended vocabulary well. As a result, one child described the butter as 'slippery' when she tried to pick it up. Later during this lesson, a higher attaining child said that the round ball of dough was a 'sphere'. Most children showed a good understanding of vocabulary such as 'first, second and third' as they tried to remember the ingredients they used. Learning was good. Previous work clearly shows that the children begin to develop a good idea of two-dimensional shapes, and planning shows that they are beginning to recognise three-dimensional shapes. The children achieve well, in particular because they work amicably together, concentrate well and listen attentively to instructions from adults. Teaching is consistently good.

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

39. There is too little evidence to make judgements in relation to children's knowledge and understanding of the world, their physical development and their creative development. However, activities to support these areas are well planned, and the children regularly use the ICT suite to develop basic computer skills. All children have good opportunities to use tools such as glue sticks and scissors. They regularly roll and mould, using soft materials such as sparkly, pink dough. One lesson was seen which was planned to develop the children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** and which was also linked to their creative development. Personal and social skills were promoted very well throughout the lesson. After listening to the story of Guy Fawkes, the children went outside and built their own bonfire. Teaching was good because the lesson was well prepared and well resourced. As a result, the children worked very well together as they built the bonfire, then danced with streamers which represented flames as they sang songs. The children responded very positively and showed great enthusiasm and enjoyment. Learning was good because the children were interested in what they were doing and concentrated well. Children's previous work shows that they have good opportunities to paint, an activity which promotes the area of **creative development**. During the week of the inspection the children used potatoes to print and made effective firework pictures by 'splattering' paint on black paper. The children enthusiastically explained what they had done.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing at the end of Year 2, and above average in Year 4.
- Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils work hard and show positive attitudes to the subject.

Commentary

40. The 2004 National tests show well above average standards for writing and high standards for reading by the end of Year 2. The number of pupils who reached the higher level three was high. This picture is confirmed by the performance of pupils currently in Year 2, who are achieving well and look set to reach similar standards by the end of the academic year. Information from the school's assessment information and the evidence of work in pupils' books shows that they achieve well as they move through the school, and by the end of Year 4, standards continue to be above average. The strong performance of pupils in this subject has been maintained since the previous inspection.

41. Teaching is good, and pupils' previous work reflects this judgement. Lessons are well planned, with resources such as dictionaries and white boards being used effectively to support learning. In addition, teaching assistants in both classes consistently offer good quality support to the pupils, and this plays an important part in helping individuals achieve well. All adults develop good relationships with the pupils and give them good opportunities to develop speaking skills as well as skills in reading and writing. As a result, most pupils throughout the school speak confidently because they know that the adults value what they say and listen attentively when they are expected to. Teachers motivate pupils well. This results, for example, in most pupils reading

with enthusiasm and enjoyment and attempting written activities with positive attitudes. Pupils are encouraged to take reading books and library books home. Reading diaries in Years 1 and 2 indicate that parents also play an active part in helping their children learn to read.

42. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place. However, information gained from the assessment of the pupils is not used effectively enough when teachers plan future lessons. This means that, occasionally, work is not matched precisely enough to the needs of all the pupils.

43. Previous work shows that marking does not always give pupils sufficient guidance to improve. Pupils with SEN achieve satisfactorily, but, occasionally, work set for them is not matched well enough to the levels at which they are currently working, and they need much extra support to help them through these situations. For example, on one occasion, a Year 1 pupil struggled to read the worksheet provided.

44. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has a clear idea of the standards reached throughout the school. Planning is regularly monitored, as is the quality of teaching. Pupils' learning is enhanced by visits to the theatre and by theatrical groups visiting the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

45. There are good opportunities for pupils to use language and literacy skills in other subjects. Good examples of this were seen in previous geography and history work. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 have good opportunities to write about life in Anglo-Saxon times. In a science lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils were given good opportunities to develop their speaking skills as they identified similarities and differences between animals and plants.

MATHEMATICS

The overall provision for mathematics across the school is **satisfactory**. While standards achieved by Year 2 remain at a similar level to those found at the time of the last inspection, standards achieved by Year 4 are not quite as good as at that time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 2 pupils attain consistently high standards in national tests.
- Overall, teaching in mathematics is good.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and try hard in mathematics lessons.
- Occasionally, higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 are not sufficiently extended by the work they are given to do.
- Occasionally the work is too difficult for pupils with SEN.
- Not enough use is made of assessment information to guide teachers' planning.

Commentary

46. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. They reach well above average standards in the national tests each year, and these standards are also reflected by the work carried out in the lessons observed and by the work seen in pupils' books. Prior to the current staff taking over at the school in recent years, the National Numeracy Strategy had not been fully implemented. As a result, there are gaps in pupils' learning in Years 3 and 4, which the class teacher is working hard to fill. Currently, these pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach average standards. The school recognises, rightly, the need to boost these pupils' performance further so that they achieve as well in mathematics as in other subjects such as English and science.

47. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work and from lesson observations shows that teaching is good overall. Teachers' clear explanations ensure that all pupils know exactly what to do in lessons, so that there is no delay in moving ahead with the tasks provided. Pupils in the Year 1 / 2 class work at a vigorous pace and, in one lesson seen, the teacher showed a very skilful approach to questioning pupils so that individuals of all attainment levels were fully extended and challenged during the mental/oral part of their lesson. Lessons are well planned in this class, giving pupils good opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding in a variety of different ways, including practical activities. Similarly, work planned for pupils in the Year 3 / 4 class also gives pupils a good range of mathematical experiences and good chances to articulate their mathematical understanding, which many of them do confidently. However, the work in pupils' books and in the lesson seen in this class indicates that some of the activities provided do not extend the higher attaining pupils sufficiently. In both classes, the work provided is occasionally too hard for the small number of pupils with SEN. Fortunately the 'swift footed' support of the teaching assistants and class teachers helps to keep these pupils on track, albeit not progressing at the rate they would achieve were the work more closely matched to their needs.

48. The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and plans are well advanced to maintain a tight focus on improving standards overall, and, in particular, the standards of pupils' work by the end of Year 4. Detailed assessment information is gathered to show pupils' progress as they move through the school, but insufficient use is made of this information to guide planning and targets to help individuals improve their work. Teachers are acutely aware of the fact that targeting improvements in this area is a key element in helping to drive standards up further in Years 3 and 4.

Mathematics across the curriculum

49. Good use is made of pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, in science, pupils have opportunities to record statistical information, while older pupils are well acquainted with using computers in ICT to generate different sorts of graphs to help them analyse the results of surveys they have carried out.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**. Standards are broadly similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reach above average standards by Year 2 and Year 4.
- Good teaching helps pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils show good attitudes in lessons.
- Assessment information is not used in sufficient depth to help teachers tailor work precisely to pupils' needs.

Commentary

50. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and show a good level of knowledge and understanding in the work they do. Discussion with pupils shows that they have good recall of the work they have covered in recent times, and they talk confidently about how to build electrical circuits, about the main components in a circuit, and about how a switch can be used. Pupils also achieve well in Years 3 and 4, and Year 4 pupils show good understanding in a wide range of the aspects of science they have covered. For example, they have gained an in-depth knowledge of food groups and have recorded, in detail, the differences between the diets of wild animals and pets. They have also gained a good knowledge of animal life cycles by investigating the life of a snail.

51. Teaching is good overall, and discussions with pupils show that they both enjoy science lessons and feel they learn a lot. Teachers make the work interesting and, as a result, pupils show positive attitudes and work with enthusiasm. Teachers also prepare their lessons well, while their good subject knowledge is evident in the clarity of their explanations. Good attention is given to providing work that matches the needs of pupils of different attainment levels. For example, in a Year 3 / 4 lesson, after providing good quality practical opportunities for pupils to learn how to use thermometers and record temperature changes, the teacher then provided pupils with worksheets at different levels so that they could record their results with different levels of precision and detail.

52. The subject is well managed overall. The co-ordinator maintains close dialogue with her colleagues and has a clear view of the quality of work across the school. Whilst teachers regularly assess how well pupils are doing, they do not make enough use of the information gained to guide future planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good** and has improved since the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve good standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 4.
- Good improvements have been made to the school's ICT facilities.

Commentary

53. Pupils achieve well and most acquire good knowledge and understanding about how to use ICT by the end of Years 2 and 4. In discussion, Year 2 pupils speak confidently about how they save and print their work. They know how to program a floor robot, and they have a good knowledge of using programs to produce simple graphs and attractive pictures. Year 4 pupils use ICT confidently in a wide range of situations. They know how to cut and paste information from the Internet, are well acquainted with using ICT to assist them with data-handling projects, and have a good knowledge of how to present their work in different and interesting ways using word-processing facilities. For example, these pupils have produced very attractive information booklets, which have involved much combining of text and graphics as well as the presentation of articles in a newspaper-style format.

54. No overall judgement of teaching is made as only one lesson involving Year 3 pupils was observed. In this lesson, the teacher showed good subject knowledge and explained all tasks clearly so that individuals had a good understanding of what to do. She gave the pupils an activity which involved creating repeating patterns, a project which caught their imaginations. The pupils therefore worked enthusiastically, and all were challenged at an appropriate level. Higher attaining pupils, for example, moved quickly through the task and on to an extension activity.

55. Since the last inspection, the school has upgraded its ICT facilities to a good standard. The computer suite is now well organised, and a portable interactive whiteboard is shared between the classes. Although teachers maintain a clear view of how well pupils are progressing, not enough use is made of assessment information to guide the planning of future lessons.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

56. Some good use is already made of ICT in other subjects, and the school rightly identifies the need to extend this practice further. Currently, good work is carried out to enhance work in English and mathematics, and pupils use ICT facilities well to search for information. The work seen in Year 3 where pupils used ICT to create repeating patterns contributed well to other, ongoing work, involving the design of decorative patterns for a Christmas cake base.

HUMANITIES

57. Geography and history were not particular areas of focus during this inspection, and too little evidence was collected to make overall judgements about provision. No lessons were observed. Pupils' previous work indicates that **history** and **geography** activities are well planned. Work is generally satisfactorily presented, but evidence shows that, occasionally, the need to present work neatly has not been promoted effectively enough. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 revealed that, while higher attaining pupils are able to speak confidently about 'The Great Fire of London' and 'Samuel Pepys', lower attaining and average pupils remember little of what they have studied. Similarly, in relation to geographical studies, the higher attaining pupils speak confidently about countries in the United Kingdom and further afield, but other pupils are not quite so sure about the locations of some of the larger countries around the world. In Year 4, most pupils speak very enthusiastically about their current history topic, for example, about life in Anglo-Saxon times. They demonstrate a keen interest in the subject, and also speak enthusiastically about previous work, which included learning about Winston Churchill and Adolf Hitler during the Second World War. These pupils have a satisfactory idea of countries in the United Kingdom, but are slightly muddled about those in Europe. However, they speak with excitement about their imminent visit to West Stow, an Anglo-Saxon village where they will have good opportunities to reinforce their skills and knowledge in both history and geography.

58. Well planned educational visits enrich history and geography. For example, older pupils have visited Duxford Imperial War Museum, an experience which will have brought their Second World War topic to life, whereas younger pupils visited a sea-life centre.

Religious education

59. No lessons were seen during the inspection and there is therefore too little evidence to make an overall judgement about provision in religious education.

60. The management of the subject is satisfactory. There is clear guidance to help teachers plan their lessons, and the longer-term planning for **religious education** is satisfactorily linked to the locally Agreed Syllabus. Although pupils' previous work is generally neatly presented, too often the same worksheet is given to all pupils and tasks do not cater sufficiently for pupils of different attainment levels.

61. Discussions with pupils, and the work seen, indicate that, overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach the expected levels in Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory understanding of Christianity. They speak enthusiastically about singing songs about Jesus and about visiting a local church, and they know the correct names for the features and artefacts they saw, both inside and outside the church. They talk confidently about recent celebrations such as the Harvest Festival, and they recall, accurately, the story of Rama and Sita. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 know about 'Food and Fasting' in different religious contexts – they talk confidently about different festivals and about the food people eat on these occasions. Pupils interviewed also spoke of 'Rosh Hashanah' – the Jewish New Year – but none could explain what this is, although it had been covered in previous work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. No lessons were observed in art and design, design and technology and physical education, and there was not enough evidence collected to enable judgements about standards or provision to be made in these areas.

63. In **art and design** and **design and technology**, some well made pieces of work are displayed around the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have designed and made some attractive model buildings with imaginative and futuristic designs. They have used a range of materials and papier maché techniques carefully to complete the work. The project has also been extended into attractive collage work and printing. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have made interesting designs for

chairs and have evaluated a wide range of existing designs to help them make their own. They have used a good range of different media to present their designs, for example sketching chairs in chalk and charcoal. In addition, pupils have constructed model Anglo-Saxon homes. These are well made, using card and glued, wooden frames. Overall, the work seen indicates that pupils have a good range of experiences in art and design and design and technology as they progress through the school, and that the projects they carry out are linked in well with other subjects such as geography and history.

64. Planning shows that pupils are involved in a suitable programme of lessons to develop their **physical education** skills. Lessons are run on a regular basis in this area across the school and staff have recently upgraded the emphasis that is placed on provision in this subject to ensure that enough time is devoted to teaching the skills pupils require. Work in physical education is enhanced by the provision of various extra-curricular sports activities at different times of the year.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching helps pupils achieve very well.
- Pupils have a wide range of experiences in their music lessons.

Commentary

65. Pupils achieve very well and reach good levels of attainment in music across the school. The headteacher takes the music lessons for both the Year 1 / 2 and the Year 3 / 4 classes. This ensures continuity in pupils' learning as they develop the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding. It also means that the subject is well managed, the headteacher having a clear overview of standards throughout the school. She has a knowledgeable and enthusiastic approach, and this is transmitted to the pupils in lessons so that they work with full attention and good motivation. Lessons are well prepared. Both of the lessons seen were conducted in the school hall, with all equipment carefully laid out to ensure quick access for pupils to instruments as required. The teacher's accomplished singing, and her skills as both a guitarist and a pianist, ensure that musical ideas are modelled and performed well. As a result, pupils sing well, develop a keen sense of rhythm, and understand the musical concepts presented to them. The lessons seen were very good and offered pupils a wide range of musical experiences. These included opportunities to play instruments and to sing, and also to listen to, then compare and contrast, different types of music.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE)

66. No PSHE lessons were seen and there is not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about provision. The school places a strong emphasis on this area, and discussions with pupils show that they have gained a wide-ranging appreciation of social and health issues through the work they have carried out. There are clear signs that the school's approach to this area makes a strong contribution to achieving the very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils across the school. PSHE lessons are regularly planned and good links are made to other curriculum areas. For example, after discussing 'relationships' in Years 3 and 4, pupils found photographs of someone special to them. They then carefully painted sensitive pictures to illustrate this special relationship. In addition, there are clear links with science when the pupils learn about healthy eating. Planning shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about feelings and different emotions in religious education and this also links well with the PSHE programme.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).