

INSPECTION REPORT

Longleaze Primary School

Wootton Bassett

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126262

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Glenton

Lead inspector: Mr Rob Crompton

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th February 2005

Inspection number: 272961

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	245
School address:	Byron Avenue Wootton Bassett Swindon Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN4 8BA
Telephone number:	01793 849251
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P White
Date of previous inspection:	5th July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves a suburban community in the north of Wootton Bassett. Eleven pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and three have English as an additional language. When they enter the school, children's attainment is below average, particularly in language and communication. The school has an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. It hosts a local authority Specialist Learning Centre for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The role of the centre is currently under review and recently more pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties have been admitted. Five of the Centre's 12 places are currently filled. Ten pupils have statements of special educational need and a further 40 have special educational needs. Fewer than ten per cent of children claim free school meals, which is lower than average. However, the area served by the school has broadly average social and economic characteristics¹. The school gained the Investors in People standard in 2004 and a Schools' Achievement award in 2002.

¹ There are some elements of deprivation according to the County Council's indices.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
7230	Rob Crompton	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Physical education
13874	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector	
22967	Muriel Griffiths	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design
16971	Roger Hardaker	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Geography History
23412	Alvin Jeffs	Team inspector	Special educational needs, including the Specialist learning Centre Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This **very good** school provides a high quality of education for all its pupils. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Under the dynamic leadership of the headteacher, the highly committed staff successfully encourage pupils to do their best. Very effective provision for personal development contributes to pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour. Governors support the school well. It provides **very good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good teaching means pupils reach above average standards
- Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the very good provision in the Specialist Learning Centre and across the school
- Although achievement in mathematics is improving through the school, attainment in year 6 in not as good as in English
- Subject managers play a key role in promoting high standards
- The rich curriculum, together with an excellent range of additional activities, have a positive impact on pupils' academic and personal development
- Good links between home and school enable parents to work in partnership with teachers

Very good improvement has been made since the last inspection. Standards have improved, especially in writing where there has been particularly good progress. Assessment systems are now very good. Pupils in the specialist centre are fully integrated into the school. The good quality of teaching and learning has been improved further. Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is now much better. Over recent years, the rise in the school's performance has been above the national trend.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall achievement is **good**. When they enter the school, children's attainment is below average, particularly in language and communication. They progress well in reception but by the start of year 1 only half meet expected levels in personal development, language and mathematics and overall standards are below those expected. Good progress continues in years 1 and 2, so that, by the end of year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics, ICT and religious education are broadly average. Pupils do particularly well in science and reach above average standards.

Pupils in years 3 to 6 build successfully on this secure start. They achieve well, attaining above average standards in English, ICT, art and design and history. Standards in science are better than the table below indicates and are also above average. Pupils are making good progress in the subject because of improvements in provision. They meet the expected standards in music and religious education. Pupils reach average standards in mathematics and results have steadily improved but attainment is not as good as that in English. Due to timetable arrangements, it was not possible to judge overall standards in design and technology, geography or physical education.

Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. The small number of pupils with English as an additional language achieve well.

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

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.

Pupils have **very good** personal qualities, resulting from the very effective provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They respond enthusiastically to all the school offers them. They have very positive attitudes and behave very well. The level of care shown by pupils to those with special educational needs is a credit to the school's success in promoting understanding and tolerance. Attendance levels are above average and pupils are punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **very good**. Teaching is **highly effective**. It is good in reception, year 1 and year 2 and very good in the older classes. Pupils rise to the high level of challenge and teachers motivate them to do their best. Teachers' depth of knowledge across the curriculum enables them to plan interesting lessons. With the support of very well trained and highly effective teaching assistants, they meet the needs of all abilities by setting work at the right level or providing extra help. Teaching for pupils in the Specialist Learning Centre is of the same quality and enables them to study all aspects of the curriculum and, for the most part, to learn alongside their classmates. The very good curriculum, together with an excellent range of enrichment activities are major factors in pupils' learning and achievement. There is a good partnership with parents and pupils are cared for well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good** overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported by senior staff. Subjects are very well led and managed and there is an underlying determination to provide a high quality education where pupils can thrive. The special needs coordinator plays a pivotal role in supporting the school's aim to be as inclusive as possible. Governance is good. Governors support the school well and all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The vast majority of parents are very satisfied with the school. A few parents expressed concern about bullying or harassment but there was no evidence of this during the inspection. The school's records show that the very few cases reported to the headteacher over recent years have been dealt with appropriately. Some parents felt they were not well enough informed about how their children were doing. The inspection found that good arrangements are made to keep parents up to date with their child's progress and that the school is very willing to respond to their enquiries. Pupils are highly enthusiastic and make a very good contribution to school life. They like the fact that teachers listen to their ideas and the friendly atmosphere.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school needs to do to improve is to continue its drive to bring attainment in mathematics in line with that in English.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve **well** and reach good standards in a range of subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The rise in standards over recent years has been above the national trend
- Whatever their starting point, pupils make good progress

Commentary

1. Performance in the national tests in year 2 and year 6 fluctuates from year to year due to the variation in the number of pupils with special educational needs in these year groups. Although some of these pupils do not take the tests, the majority does. Pupils with special educational needs do well and often very well, but rarely reach average standards. Their results are included in the tables which makes the school's performance look weaker than it is. That said, there are some anomalies in the results which are not entirely due to the pupil profile. Results in year 2 tests in reading and writing have been above average but below average in mathematics. Similarly, pupils in year 6 do not do as well in mathematics as they do in English. Standards seen during the inspection reflect recent test results. The school has been quick to identify the relative under-achievement in mathematics and has tackled the issue well. Pupils are now achieving well in lessons and are on course to reach higher standards than in previous years. However, it is unlikely that the current year 6 will achieve average standards in mathematics, as their rate of progress has only accelerated this year. Attainment overall however, is good, with year 6 pupils reaching above average standards in English, science, ICT, religious education, art and design and history.
2. This positive picture is all the more impressive given the diverse backgrounds of the pupils. It is a credit to the school that every effort is made to gear learning to match the needs of pupils. This is seen in the reception class where pupils build well on their below average starting points. Although about half reach the expected levels in communication, language and literacy, personal, mathematical, creative and physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, overall standards are below those expected by the start of year 1.
3. The school's commitment to inclusion is most obvious in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. They achieve well in respect of the targets identified in statements and individual education plans. They develop good work habits, independence and confidence. Progress for all such pupils, including those pupils attached to the Specialist Learning Centre who have the severest learning difficulties, is good across the curriculum. Pupils with gifts or talents are particularly well supported and they too progress well. The few pupils with English as an additional language are quickly integrated and it does not take long for them to be progressing well in English and other subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (15.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.8 (15.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.7 (16.4)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (26.9)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.6 (25.8)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.8 (28.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good** overall, and so is the provision for their personal development. Attendance and punctuality are also **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very accepting of one another, whatever their needs
- The school nurtures the development of all its pupils as individuals
- Pupils with special educational needs are valued by staff and pupils alike and thrive as a result
- Attendance is well above that of other primary schools

Commentary

4. Attitudes and behaviour are very good in years 3 to 6, where pupils work and play together sensibly, co-operatively and productively. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and be independent have greatly improved since the last inspection and teachers trust them to get on with their work. In the lower end of the school, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, but the range of needs within the classes are often wide and some pupils find it hard to concentrate for long. Teachers manage their classes with calmness and patience, and deploy their teaching assistants sensitively to support those who need it most. Expectations for behaviour are high and relationships throughout the school are very good. This means that pupils can feel secure because they know what boundaries have been set and how they will be treated by staff.
5. The excellent range of clubs, events, responsibilities, visits and other activities offered to pupils gives them many opportunities every day to realise what they are good at and discover new sides to their personalities. This is especially helpful to pupils who lack confidence or have difficulties getting on with others. Pupils' individuality is constantly celebrated by the school, which makes the most of their different backgrounds and interests. This term, for example, the pupils are organising a global awareness week through their school council, drawing on the various nationalities and ethnic backgrounds represented within the school.
6. All pupils attached to the Specialist Learning Centre are full members of every class. Their contributions are valued and their progress is a matter of interest to all. As a result, they grow in confidence and self-esteem. The inspection team was impressed by the very inclusive atmosphere that existed throughout the school. Pupils with and without learning difficulties live and learn on a basis of total equality. Those pupils who have been placed with the Specialist Learning Centre develop good friendships and work and play with the same success and enthusiasm as all other pupils.
7. The school has been very successful in convincing families of the benefits of regular attendance. A weekly attendance award for the best class, certificates for individual pupils and reminders in the school newsletter all mean that not missing school is a priority for pupils and parents alike. As a result, pupils enjoy continuity in their learning, and this has a positive impact on their progress.

8. The number of exclusions in the following table is that of a few pupils with severe emotional and behavioural problems who have had to be temporarily excluded. It is not a reflection of general behaviour in the school.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	226	4	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **very good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are all **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have considerable expertise in providing challenging work for pupils of all abilities
- Pupils’ learning is reinforced using a wide range of effective strategies
- Teaching assistants provide support for pupils, especially those with special educational needs, that is very good indeed

Commentary

9. Good teaching in the reception class helps children to grow in confidence and independence. Adults successfully establish the ground rules for behaviour so that children, whatever their previous experiences, quickly learn to listen and not call out. In years 1 and 2, lessons are good and sometimes very good. Teachers are very positive and are adept at encouraging all pupils to try hard. They make learning fun, without losing sight of the specific objectives for each lesson. Similarly, pupils respond very well to the practical activities in years 3 to 6 where the teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. A major strength is the skill with which teachers provide work at different levels; perhaps by demanding less written work, giving some pupils extra time to complete tasks or providing more adult support. In year 6, the two classes are organised by ability in mathematics and this is very effective in supporting the less able and in helping the more confident pupils to progress at a quicker pace. Achievement in mathematics is improving as a result of this strategy.

10. Teachers provide high quality feedback during lessons. They use questions very well to draw out pupils’ existing knowledge and understanding and help them move forward. Frequently they ask, ‘Who thinks they understand?’ and move on accordingly in response to pupils’ thumbs up/down/half way signals. Interactive white boards² are used very well. Pupils delight in showing all the class how they have worked something out and are quick to spot the deliberate mistakes that teachers make to see how well they have grasped a new idea or technique. Teachers often set up a ‘hot seat’ where pupils fire questions at volunteers. This is done in good humour and is an effective way of finding out the extent of pupils’ learning. Teachers record the information gleaned in these ways and through more formal testing to track pupils’ progress in lessons and

² These project the computer image onto a large ‘touch screen’ and allow the teacher and children to write or move objects around the screen with their fingers rather than use the keyboard.

over time. They use this knowledge extremely well to refine subsequent work so that pupils move forward rather than mark time.

11. Teaching assistants work very well to support different groups. They occasionally focus on more able pupils so that the teacher can focus on the other pupils. More often than not, however, teaching assistants work with pupils with special educational needs. This support is characterised by very good teamwork and close attention to pupils' levels of attainment and individual targets. They work in close conjunction with the coordinator for special educational needs (SENCO). Class teachers take an active role in identifying targets for pupils with special educational needs and monitor them well. All of these pupils are full and equal members of the class to which they belong. Similarly, teachers go out of their way to ensure that those pupils new to the country and who are learning English as an additional language, have good support. Much very good work is done by teachers and teaching assistants alike in supporting and challenging pupils with a wide range of needs. The SENCO provides a very good teaching role model and all staff have a good range of skills to support inclusion.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (6%)	18 (54%)	13 (40%)	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.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **very good** and opportunities for enrichment are **excellent**. Accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities outside lessons are outstanding
- Links across the curriculum are very strong
- Pupils' individual needs are very well met
- Good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) supports children well

Commentary

12. The school gives its pupils a wealth of memorable experiences above and beyond the classroom. More than twenty clubs are available each week, offering something for everyone in the arts, music, sport and a lot more besides, and enabling pupils to discover their talents and develop their confidence. In addition, the school puts a great deal of effort into organising special events to enhance areas of the curriculum, such as the recent Greek days or the arts week. This makes learning fun and exciting for the pupils.

13. The school's lively approach to learning is underlined by the way staff plan the curriculum. Subjects are taught together and through one another – for example history and English – and themes run through and inspire different subjects, such as music and art. The content of the curriculum is particularly strong in the important subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT. All the required areas are very competently planned and covered in a way that is interesting and relevant to the pupils. Good accommodation and resources and highly skilled support staff help teachers to do this.

14. Pupils have a very wide spectrum of different needs and the staff are very aware of this, doing their best to cater for all through what they offer. The special gifts and talents of every individual are carefully recorded, celebrated and offered an outlet, in and out of lessons. By the same token, pupils who have specific difficulties are given carefully targeted support in lessons and invited to join clubs outside lessons, to improve their self-esteem and behaviour. This is another reason why the school's programme of extra-curricular activities is so exceptional.
15. Recently, the Specialist Learning Centre has been asked to work with pupils manifesting a range of behavioural as well as learning difficulties. This is a challenge and demands more time and greater flexibility than needed with other pupils. However, the school has adapted good, therapeutic programmes of work for these pupils and is clearly able to support a few such pupils within the totally inclusive environment that provides such good benefits.
16. Good personal, social and health education (PSHE) helps support and unite pupils of all abilities. Pupils get a good chance to talk about their concerns and listen to others in circle time³, while PSHE lessons cover all the topics necessary to prepare pupils for growing up and moving on.

Care, guidance and support

The attention given to pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. Support, advice and guidance based on monitoring are also **good**. Involvement of pupils is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school council gives pupils a voice at the highest level
- Staff focus on meeting pupils' needs and keeping them safe
- Pupils with special educational needs receive personal care and support of the highest quality

Commentary

17. Since the last inspection, the school has put a lot of thought into giving pupils more responsibility and consequently has developed a school council from all year groups which operates at a sophisticated level. The council works with senior management and governors on the school change team, responsible for school improvement. Members of the council establish working parties for charity fundraising, such as the current tsunami appeal, and are major players in the Healthy Schools' project. The council was the driving force behind the recent anti-bullying campaign and awarded certificates based on their own criteria. Class councils feed ideas into the school council, so that all pupils have a chance to make their views known.
18. The school organises its daily routines and procedures to provide a settled environment for everyone. Good induction means that reception pupils quickly feel at home, with extra touches such as their 'graduation' from pre-school making the move feel special. Throughout the school day, staff are consistently calm and patient, and this means that less structured sessions such as break and lunchtime run smoothly. In addition, the school provides a good variety of playground games and offers a very wide range of clubs to help pupils who find it hard to deal with a lot of free time. Arrangements for child protection are very thorough and take new guidelines fully into account. Policies for restraint are well known and effectively administered where necessary. Pupils' pastoral concerns are closely monitored through the school's daybook and incident book so that nothing escapes notice. Very good assessment means that pupils' academic progress is also effectively charted.
19. All pupils with special educational needs have very good individual plans, linked well to their educational and social needs. The review of targets is regular and detailed, the school working

³ During Circle Time, pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

closely with health and other support services. A wide range of advice is taken and acted upon on a regular basis. The inspection team was particularly impressed by the way in which individual targets were taken into account when teachers planned lessons. Those pupils with statements relating to complex learning and behaviour difficulties have programmes which are sensitive to needs, reviewed every two weeks, but flexible enough to allow their modification on a daily basis.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community are all **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works hard to inform and involve parents
- Links with other schools and the community add to pupils' education

Commentary

20. Parents appreciate the school's welcoming attitude and find it easy to approach staff to discuss their children. The school encourages parents to take an active part in school life and their children's learning, and gives them good advice on how to do this, through topic letters, the website and workshops. Newsletters are very positive and inviting for parents, particularly as they make a point of celebrating pupils' successes in and out of school. Reports to parents on their children's progress give a good indication of how well the pupils are doing for their age, although they sometimes use language which is not very clear to people who work outside education. The governors' annual report to parents now contains all the information required by law.
21. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly informed of meetings and reviews. The school makes every effort to let parents know when there is a change in their child's needs and staff are always available for discussion. There are very good working links with the local authority support services, speech and language therapy services and local teaching assistants.
22. The school works closely alongside its neighbouring pre-school to ensure a smooth transition for its new reception pupils, and makes the most of the facilities offered by the local secondary school to supplement its own resources. Recently this has included extra tuition for pupils with particular gifts or talents. The school plays a full part in the life of the town, entering competitions, attending events such as the Christmas Dickensian evening, and involving local people in school activities. In this way it helps pupils to understand what it means to be an active member of a community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the headteacher and key staff is **very good**. Management of the school is **very good**. Governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a very strong sense of purpose which influences and motivates all staff
- Key personnel strive for continuous improvement and the creation of a very effective climate for learning in which all pupils succeed
- The leadership and management of special educational needs are of very high quality
- The governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses which enables them to play an effective role in shaping the direction of the school
- Financial management is strong and it makes a significant contribution to the success the school has in achieving its aim to be as inclusive as possible

Commentary

23. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school, which she communicates well to others. She enjoys the full confidence of teachers, other staff and governors. She succeeds very well in her endeavours to ensure that all pupils fully enjoy the benefits the school offers. Under her leadership there has been very good improvement since the last inspection. There is a determination by all to succeed. A very strong sense of teamwork and commitment has been developed and morale within the school is high.
24. The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher very well and her teaching provides a very good model for the rest of the staff. She has taken over the leadership of mathematics and this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements. The coordinators of English, science and ICT lead, manage and teach their subjects very well, providing highly effective support for their colleagues. Since 2002, standards have steadily risen year on year in all these subjects. The head of the Specialist Learning Centre is also the school SENCO and this works very well. She coordinates the provision for all of these pupils, managing the teaching assistants, overseeing the setting of individual targets and providing advice for all staff. The special needs governor provides an effective link between the governing body and the coordinator so that governors receive appropriately detailed information. Funds identified for these pupils are used appropriately and the school adds to the budget as appropriate, allowing a good level of teaching and support throughout the school. Teaching assistants value highly the guidance and support they receive from the coordinator. Governors and senior staff have a very clear vision for the centre. This has meant that staff work in an atmosphere where decisions are taken in an informed and coherent way.
25. Performance management is very good. Teachers and support staff have good records of attendance on professional courses and procedures for the induction of teachers, especially newly qualified teachers, are very good. The impact of these is seen in the very good quality of teaching observed in classrooms and the very effective support pupils receive from teaching assistants. This level of support is a contributing factor in the good achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language
26. The governing body is well organised and has clear lines of responsibility. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Good links with subject managers mean that they are well informed about curriculum provision. Financial planning and management are very good. The governors and the headteacher have a very good grasp of finances and funding issues. Governors consider support in classrooms to be one of the priorities in spending. This support is making a significant contribution to the very good quality of teaching and learning. It also makes a significant contribution to the way all pupils are included and able to benefit from the learning activities the school provides. All spending is effectively monitored and controlled. New classrooms are to be built shortly and governors have earmarked a substantial part of the carry forward for this project.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004⁴

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	798,829
Total expenditure	737,303
Expenditure per pupil	2,936

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	70,013
Balance carried forward to the next financial year	61,526

⁴ These figures include the funding for the Specialist Learning Centre

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

27. The majority of children enter school with levels of attainment that are below average for their age. Teaching is good and as a result, most children achieve well, including those with special educational needs. However, despite this good progress, only half are on course to reach or exceed the expected levels by the end of the reception year and standards are below those expected by the beginning of year 1. As children's individual progress is carefully monitored, the teacher has a good view of their learning and plans well to help them move forward. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning and all staff support an ethos where children feel safe and secure. The provision is well managed and the good provision has been sustained since the last inspection. Adults manage children well and the good ratio of adults to children ensures that the needs of all are well met. The curriculum, resources and accommodation are good and provide a good range of learning opportunities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between children and adults are very good
- Children develop positive attitudes to learning
- The children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and behave well
- The daily routines offer security and lead children towards increasing independence

Commentary

28. Most children are on course to reach or exceed the goals expected in this area by the start of year 1. All staff work hard at promoting very good relationships with children and, as a result, all children are happy, relaxed, and benefit fully from the wide range of activities provided. When necessary, teachers and support staff correct the children firmly but gently. Consequently, children quickly learn the correct way to behave. The high expectations of the staff and the opportunities given to the children through the very good teaching enable them to make very good progress. Adult instructions are clear and consistent, and very good attention is given to the importance of listening and behaving well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop their literacy skills well because of the good teaching
- Good progress is made in speaking and listening, using books and developing early writing skills

Commentary

29. Staff recognise that many children enter reception with low level speaking and listening skills. Owing to a clear focus on developing literacy, many overcome these initial difficulties. By the time they leave reception, half the children should meet the expected goals and some children will exceed them. Language skills are consistently promoted throughout the school day. Children

enjoy listening to stories and eagerly spot rhyming words. They have good opportunities to write and some make very good progress. For example, higher attaining children wrote sentences about the houses that they had designed and knew that a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good quality teaching emphasises the correct use of mathematical vocabulary
- Adults question children very well and use a wide variety of activities to support learning

Commentary

30. Adults promote mathematical skills well, always trying to draw out and encourage children's understanding, using appropriate questions. Children were enjoying learning the words 'more' and 'less' as they looked at the amount of porridge they had put in the bowls for the three bears. They knew that baby bear's bowl held less than daddy bear's and the careful questioning by the teacher helped them to begin to apply what they had learned to numbers. More confident children were able to see that 2 is less than 4. A good range of activities gave children practical experiences of 'more' and 'less'. Overall standards by the end of reception are below average, however. Most children make good progress but only half are on course to reach expected levels by the end of reception.

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

31. It was not possible to judge overall provision in these areas but some good work was seen. A wide range of activities, such as cutting and pasting and printing, gives children opportunities to use different materials. Good planning and teaching successfully gives children valuable experience of finding out about and appreciating the world around them, such as when they plant a bean seed and watch its growth. Children confidently use computers and know how to log on and to control the mouse.

32. There is a wide range of opportunities for physical development both outdoors and indoors. The provision for outdoor play has improved. Children enjoy a good variety of activities in the dedicated area which has a soft tarmac surface. During the inspection, children were going to visit the local church and practised crossing the 'road' with someone pretending to be the road crossing patrol and others riding cars in the outdoor play area. Some children were beginning to have good awareness of using the space available. Indoor opportunities provide many activities for cutting, moulding and building to improve children's skills in handling different classroom tools and materials. They thought carefully about how they could improve the model houses they had made.

33. Children enjoyed creative activities related to the stories of 'The Three Bears' and 'The Three Little Pigs' during the inspection. They carefully designed houses and printed bricks using a sponge. They had previously made collage pictures of the little pigs' houses. Children enjoyed acting out the story of Goldilocks in the role play area.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and have good speaking, listening, reading and writing skills
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make good progress
- Very good teaching excites pupils and makes them eager to learn
- Very good leadership and management have led to very good improvement

Commentary

34. Standards in all areas in year 6 are above average. A significant number of pupils enter school with literacy skills that are slightly below expected levels. They achieve well in years 1 and 2 so that, by the end of year 2, they reach average levels.
35. Throughout the school pupils are given very good opportunities to practise and develop speaking and listening skills. Teachers' probing and challenging questions encourage pupils to respond in sentences with ever increasing complexity. By year 6 pupils confidently ask questions of visitors and engage in mature conversations. Older pupils are given opportunities to talk in more formal contexts and they adapt their vocabulary to suit the situation. Pupils in years 1 and 2 receive a good grounding in learning letter sounds and quickly learn to use these skills both to read words and to spell words. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to read widely. Most take books home and reap considerable benefit from the very good school-home partnership to help develop reading skills. By year 6 most read fluently and use their skills in a wide range of contexts, both in reading for pleasure and in seeking out facts.
36. Writing skills develop well and by year 6 pupils are writing both factually and imaginatively, producing work of good quality. This is usually well presented and written in neat handwriting. Pupils write in a variety of forms often writing extended stories or accounts. Across the school, good use is made of computers to give pupils the experience of drafting and redrafting their writing and to give them opportunities to edit and improve it.
37. Teaching is very good and is especially strong in year 6. Lessons are lively, exciting and interesting. As a result, pupils are generally very well motivated to learn. For example, teachers often encourage them to talk aloud in pairs so that they might broaden their thinking and further develop their ideas in conversation. Drama and role-play are used effectively. In these contexts, the good speaking skills of the older pupils often make a significant contribution to their learning. Most lessons are very well planned with a range of tasks so that pupils of differing attainment levels are very purposefully engaged. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to learning. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in classrooms, as do pupils for whom English is not their first language. Largely as a result of this well directed support, these pupils achieve as well as the others. Teachers use resources very well in their endeavour to promote learning and through the use of visual prompts some pupils find new ideas easier to grasp.
38. The knowledgeable and enthusiastic coordinator supports his colleagues very well. He monitors the provision closely and has detailed knowledge of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. As a result of his ability to identify weaknesses and take action, improvement since the last inspection has been very good. Library stock has increased, teaching has improved and a very good assessment system has been established. Over the past three years standards have steadily risen, especially in writing.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

39. Pupils use their literacy skills very well in a range of subjects. During the inspection, they made notes of observations and wrote up findings in science. In geography, year 5 pupils used their speaking, listening and writing skills very well to prepare submissions to a mock enquiry into the need for a local by-pass. Year 6 pupils drafted out questions to ask a visitor about his experience as an evacuee during World War 2. They then confidently asked these questions and eagerly listened to his responses. In religious education a class of year 4 and 5 pupils used their good speaking and listening skills whilst discussing and exchanging ideas on a set of complex issues in quite an adult fashion. The many opportunities given to pupils to use their literacy and language skills across most areas of the curriculum significantly contribute to the very good English curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is generally good although standards are below average overall
- Leadership and management are very good and effective strategies are now in place to improve standards
- The very good assessment procedures and the current tracking of pupils' learning are helping to raise standards

Commentary

40. Current standards in year 6 are below those expected nationally. There are signs of improvement, but strategies for improvement introduced by the new subject leader have not yet had a significant impact at the higher end of the school. Some children as yet do not have quick recall of their times tables, which means that they struggle to answer promptly during mental maths and lower attaining children find it difficult to apply what they know to problem solving. Although well supported by the teacher, some children in a year 5 lesson found the idea of a right angle very difficult to understand. Year 2 pupils are set to achieve at least average standards and, following a decline in attainment over recent years, achievement is improving throughout the school.

41. The school has made a considerable effort to increase the pupils' rate of progress. The subject leader has worked effectively alongside teachers in order to improve their teaching skills. Teachers have received training and new assessment strategies have been introduced. These are used very effectively to monitor achievement and highlight pupils who are not making enough progress. Teachers use this information well to ensure pupils work at tasks that help them move forward.

42. As a result of the recent training and input by the subject leader, the quality of teaching and learning is good overall with a number of very good lessons observed during the inspection. Teaching and learning have improved considerably since the last inspection. Planning has improved and there is renewed emphasis on mental mathematics and problem solving. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning, explanations are clear and work is well matched to the pupils' ability and ensures that they are challenged. Pupils are regularly given the opportunity to investigate numbers or apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in new and challenging ways, which help to improve their understanding of the subject. This good teaching means that standards are now beginning to improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

43. Mathematics is used well in other subjects. In science, older pupils measure accurately with thermometers. In history, pupils carrying out archaeological digs, used grid references to locate what they had found. Year 6 pupils learn to program robots to make them turn through various angles. Graphs are used frequently to collect and present information.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of the consistently challenging teaching
- Practical activities help pupils to develop skills in scientific investigation
- Very good leadership and management have improved provision and sustained good standards

Commentary

44. Although the results of national tests at year 2 and year 6 have been broadly average in recent years, standards are now above average and pupils are making good progress though the school. In each class, expectations are high. Careful planning means that pupils successfully build up their knowledge and understanding from year to year. Very good teaching is underpinned by teachers' confidence in the subject. They use questions well to draw out what pupils already know and to clear up misconceptions. Challenging tasks motivate pupils and sustain their interest. For example, pupils in year 2 learn about simple circuits and are also taught to draw accurate circuit diagrams using conventional symbols; skills which are not usually introduced until later. They gain a good understanding of light and shadows through practical experiments with torches and they learn the terms transparent, translucent and opaque. During a very effective lesson in the year 2/3 class, pupils' learning moved on apace as they investigated the heat insulation properties of different materials, some using computer sensors to log changes in temperature every second. Pupils of all abilities were fully absorbed; they accurately used conventional thermometers and recorded their results systematically.

45. This practical approach is a strong feature of the teaching and is a significant factor in pupils' learning. The above average standards achieved by year 6 owe much to the range of investigations that pupils tackle. Pupils in year 5 were investigating which habitat woodlice preferred. They made some very insightful comments and came up with interesting hypotheses about the creatures' body, legs and antennae. Year 6 pupils learned a lot from carefully dissecting flowers to explore the structure and function of their constituent parts. They did this systematically and showed a good level of understanding as they responded to the teacher's skilful questioning.

46. The subject coordinator has helped the school make good progress since the last inspection. Her influence can be seen in every classroom where scientific vocabulary is displayed for pupils' reference. The scientific dictionary she produced to support each topic is used by teachers and pupils alike. Staff training, including exemplar lessons by the local advisor, plus a revised programme of work and a comprehensive assessment system have all helped to develop science as a vibrant aspect of the curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are making very good progress and reaching good standards due to teachers' confidence in the subject
- Excellent leadership and management have driven up standards
- Very good resources enable all aspects of the curriculum to be taught to an appropriate depth
- ICT is used very well to support learning in other subjects

Commentary

47. Very good teaching means that pupils are rapidly learning new skills. The youngest pupils are able to log on to the computer using their password and to open programs. The older the pupils, the more sophisticated their skills. This means that their learning in ICT is not held back by lack of general computer skills. Teachers are very good at introducing new techniques and demonstrating how to use the computer for a wide range of purposes. For example, pupils' understanding of databases is built up very successfully as they move through the school. From making simple pictograms (graphs with pictures rather than columns) in year 1, they move on to creating their own databases in years 3 and 4, showing very good understanding as they interrogate the information - for example, to search for pupils with blonde hair, blue eyes, a hand span less than 20cms and who are less than 135cms tall. The school excels in teaching pupils about control technology. Pupils in year 6 had built their own model robots and were very confident when creating a program to control their movements. They devised a sequence of commands that programmed the robot's light or touch sensors to enable it to avoid obstacles, downloading these from the computer to robot via infra-red signals.
48. With the support of the headteacher, governors and the local education authority's ICT adviser, the coordinator has successfully guided a drive towards higher standards. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved and this has enabled the school to keep pace with the many developments in ICT over the past six years. A very good assessment system means that staff can keep track of pupils' progress and helps the coordinator to evaluate the impact of new initiatives.
49. Significant factors in pupils' learning are the high specification computers and the very good range of software. Careful thought has gone in to using these to best advantage to stimulate pupils' interest and to provide challenging and increasingly sophisticated activities. Digital cameras are used successfully in many subjects and to extend pupils' work in art and design. A powerful computer microscope enhances pupils' learning, for example by providing highly magnified images of petals and pollen during science lessons.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

50. There are many examples of ICT being used as an integral part of studies in other subjects. Graphing programs are used not only to record the results of surveys in history and geography but also aspects of personal, health and social education. Pupils create multimedia presentations, including their own accounts and pictures, and also edit text and images gleaned from the Internet. They use spreadsheets to record temperatures in different parts of the world. Increasingly, pupils use the interactive white board in lessons to show what they have learned. All in all, ICT is used as a powerful resource by both teachers and pupils.

HUMANITIES

51. Only one lesson was seen in geography and one in history so it is not possible to give an overall judgement about the quality of provision. However, evidence from these lessons, from teachers' planning and the work in pupils' books indicates that pupils have a full experience in both subjects.
52. In **geography**, there is some particularly good work in year 5 which focuses on the local environment and the need to be vigilant in an endeavour to preserve its positive characteristics. These pupils develop and use a number of geographical skills. For example, they research using books, the Internet and questionnaires to find out information. They use maps and they marshal facts in order to present a case either for or against change in the environment. These same pupils consider in some depth the implications for the local environment of planning decisions. Such opportunities make a good contribution to citizenship and social and moral development. Teachers make good use of fieldwork; for instance year 3 pupils study leisure facilities in the locality and year 5 pupils undertake a traffic survey as they gather evidence in an endeavour to determine whether or not a road by-pass is required in the locality.
53. The **history** curriculum is very good and by the end of year 6, pupils attain good standards. Much is done by teachers to make history exciting. For example, theme days are held in which pupils are encouraged to dress up in costumes relating to a given period and participate in a range of linked activities. Pupils are taken out on visits in order to make learning more relevant. For example, pupils visit a Victorian School to experience first hand some of the conditions in which their forebears studied. Visitors talk to pupils to bring more recent history to life. For example, a visitor with personal experience of evacuation during World War 2 enthralled pupils with his responses to their questions about his experiences. As a result of these very good learning opportunities, pupils respond with considerable enthusiasm towards learning history.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in the subject is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection
- The subject now contributes very well to the spiritual development of all pupils
- There are very good links with local churches but fewer opportunities to engage fully with those who have faiths other than Christianity
- The leadership and management of the subject is very good

Commentary

54. Achievement is at least good and often very good. Standards are in line with those expected by year 2 and year 6. In some instances pupils attain well above what is expected; a good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils talk in an informed way about Christianity, re-tell stories well, and discuss other faiths such as Judaism. They are aware of some of the festivals of different faiths and of different forms of worship.
55. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers provide very good opportunities for worthwhile discussion about stories and different faiths, as a whole class and in the form of 'talking partners'. This contributes significantly to both the maturity and reflection of pupils. Thus, in a very good year 4 and 5 lesson on the widow's mite, the teacher used very searching questions to elicit pupils' views. In addition, role play helped pupils to demonstrate both their understanding and to empathise with the widow. The maturity of the views expressed demonstrated very good achievement with regard to understanding want and need, developing a thoughtful approach to giving. In the process, pupils enhanced their speaking and listening skills.

56. The resources that the school has, both within the school and the local community, are used well to support learning. The school has strong links with the local churches, for example. Good use is made of the county loan service to supplement the effective resources purchased by the school. Where weaknesses occur, it is in the opportunities for pupils to have first hand experience of other faith traditions, for example by visiting different places of worship and meeting people with beliefs that are different from their own.
57. The headteacher coordinates the subject. She has developed a very good scheme of work and gained the full commitment of all staff to the imaginative and reflective teaching of religious education. The subject makes an important contribution to the spiritual, moral and social development of all pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

58. Due to timetable arrangements, it was not possible to fully evaluate provision in art and design or design and technology. Only one lesson was observed in art and design and none in design and technology. Evidence was gathered from pupils' previous and current work. No evidence was gathered about provision or standards in **physical education**, although plans indicate that all aspects of the curriculum are taught.
59. The colourful and exciting range of **art and design** work on display immediately attracts the attention of visitors to the school. Pupils experience a wide range of art activities such as collage, painting, observational drawing, printing and sculpture, and reach good standards. There are good links with other subjects. For example, after reading the book 'I am David', pupils in year 6 made papier maché masks, illustrating on one half of the mask how David felt fear, and on the other half, how he appreciated beauty. Pupils in a year 3/4 class enjoyed printing designs on their Greek costumes for a 'Greek Day'. Activities such as a creative arts day gave pupils opportunities to learn a number of interesting techniques including, staining glass, sculpting and using quills.
60. Models that pupils have made recently indicate that standards are at least in line with those expected in **design and technology**. For example, from building toy vehicles in years 3 and 4 using cardboard, dowelling and wooden wheels, they move on to constructing electronic robots from kits, following instructions from a computer program. Valuable links with science are made as pupils make good suggestions for their own menus following healthy food guidelines. Some good work was also evident in the designs that pupils had made using computer modelling software. This enabled them to create their own kitchen layouts by moving three dimensional images around the screen.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers structure lessons well to help pupils to develop musical skills
- Creativity is successfully encouraged through composition
- Music plays a significant part in pupils' personal development

Commentary

61. Successful leadership and management have led to good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is now good and is leading to good achievement through the school. Pupils are reaching at least the expected standards by year 2 and year 6. Singing, which lacked enthusiasm and quality at the time of the last inspection, is now a strength as pupils sing very expressively and tunefully and with great fervour. Teachers successfully motivate pupils to explore how music can be used to create moods. This was evident as pupils in the year 1/2 class interpreted the story of 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' using percussion instruments to good effect. They were thrilled as they listened to a recording of their composition and made

appropriate suggestions about how it might be improved. Good standards in composition were also seen in another very good lesson in year 5. Motivated by the teacher's infectious enthusiasm, pupils used a range of pitched and percussion instruments to compose pieces with pictures as the stimuli. Having listened to Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition, they were inspired to create imaginative pieces using their developing knowledge of pitch, rhythm and structure.

62. Pupils' enthusiastic accounts of the recent music week illustrate how well the subject contributes to their spiritual, social and cultural development. Active participation in making music inspired by the cultural traditions of Thailand, Japan, France and Africa provides very good opportunities for all these aspects of personal development. Many pupils are learning instruments. Performing in small groups and in the orchestra provides them and their audiences with very worthwhile experiences, as do the productions in which all pupils take part as the school year progresses.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

63. Provision in these areas of learning is good. Pupils are taught life skills in a number of ways which offer good support to their range of different needs. Lessons cover the basic principles effectively, including the required areas of sex and drugs education. Circle time sessions are well established, so that pupils understand the rules and feel secure about expressing their ideas and listening to those of others. Teachers are confident about teaching PSHE, and are ready to draw these areas into other subjects and extra-curricular activities. The visit of the 'Life Education' van is an unmissable event for the pupils, for example, and the chance for all of year 6 to take cycling proficiency tests has an immediate impact on their safety and well being. The coordinator is ever enthusiastic about moving the subject forward, and her involvement in the Healthy Schools' project is of great benefit to pupils and staff alike.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
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	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
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	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

