

INSPECTION REPORT

**BAKEWELL CHURCH OF ENGLAND INFANT
SCHOOL**

Bakewell

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112797

Headteacher: Mrs Dorothy Bathgate

Lead inspector: Fiona Robinson

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th July 2004

Inspection number: 255408

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	83
School address:	Bath Street Bakewell Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE45 1BX
Telephone number:	01629 812322
Fax number:	N/A
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Turner
Date of previous inspection:	25 th June 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Bakewell C of E Infant School is a small infant school located in the town of Bakewell in Derbyshire. There are 83 pupils on roll: 39 boys and 44 girls. Of these, 32 children are in the Reception class: 17 boys and 15 girls. Pupils come from a wide range of social, economic and academic backgrounds; most are white British and there are no pupils at an early stage of English acquisition. The levels of knowledge and understanding of children when they join the school are broadly average this year. The proportion of pupils with identified special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. In 2003, the school won the Investor in People Award, the School Achievement Award and the Derbyshire ABC Certificate of Commitment.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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11041	Marvyn Moore	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school with excellent features that provides a very good standard of education. Standards are very high in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. The headteacher provides excellent leadership that motivates everyone to give of their best. This has enabled the school to make improvements at a very good pace and helps pupils to achieve very good standards. High expectations and a shared vision are providing a firm steer to the school's work and very good teaching ensures that all pupils succeed. The school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are very high.
- Standards are well above average in art and design, history and geography. They well exceed the expectations of the local education authority (LEA) Agreed Syllabus in religious education.
- The headteacher provides outstanding, dynamic leadership.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- The very good curriculum is broad, balanced, rich and relevant.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is very good.
- There are excellent links with parents.
- There is no direct access to the outdoor play area for the under fives.
- The school has no hall, which places limitations on delivering the physical education aspect of the curriculum.

The school has made very good improvements since the previous inspection. Key issues have been tackled very well. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science have improved significantly due to the school's very effective strategies and some very good teaching. The school improvement plan is a very effective tool for guiding advancement. The strategies to raise standards in all areas have resulted from rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher, supported by key staff and governors. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher has also resulted in a rich, stimulating learning environment. The school is very well placed to improve still further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	C	A	A*	A
writing	C	A	A*	A*
mathematics	C	A*	A*	A*

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Pupils' achievement is very good. They enter school with broadly average standards, although this can vary year-on-year. Attainment on entry was below average for the current Year 2. By the end of the Reception Year, standards are very good, with many children exceeding the Early Learning Goals¹. They make very good progress over time in the infant phase. At the time of the

¹ The identified targets children are expected to have achieved by the end of their Reception Year.

inspection, standards were very high in reading, writing, mathematics and science. They are well above average in art and design, history and geography and well exceed the expectations of the LEA Agreed Syllabus in religious education. They are above expectations in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils are well placed to meet or exceed their current targets in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests, Year 2 pupils achieved very high standards (in the top five per cent of schools nationally) in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared to similar schools they achieved very high standards in writing and mathematics (in the top five per cent) and high standards in reading. Pupils with SEN are achieving very well in relation to their prior targets and they achieve very well over time.

The development of pupils' personal qualities is excellent. This leads to the excellent behaviour, attitudes and relationships which pupils display. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. Attendance is well promoted and is broadly in line with the national average. Punctuality is very good. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good overall. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage² and Years 1 and 2. Learning is very effective because of very good teaching. Pupils show the utmost respect for their teachers and are very keen to do their best. Examples of excellent teaching were seen in the Foundation Stage and in history and geography. No teaching was seen that was less than very good. The use of assessment is very good, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The curriculum is enriched very well by musical experiences and a wide variety of trips and visits. Partnerships with parents are excellent and this greatly enhances pupils' education. Links with the community and other schools are very good and valuable opportunities occur to celebrate pupils' achievement. The school has no hall, which can place restrictions on physical education, although it makes the best possible use of the nearby community hall. Provision for the physical development of children in the Reception class is slightly restricted by the lack of continuous access to an outdoor play area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides excellent, energetic leadership and a very clear vision and focus to the school's work. Teamwork is very effective and support staff are used excellently to support the curriculum. The governance of the school is very good. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school. They are very supportive of the school's work and have a very strategic overview. They conscientiously fulfil all of their statutory duties. There is a very good awareness of the impact of the teaching and learning on standards.

² The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the Reception Year.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have excellent views of the school. They are very happy with the leadership of the school, the expectations of staff and the quality of the teaching. All of their views were positive. Pupils also have excellent views of the school. They like their school, respect their teachers and consider learning to be fun.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Provide direct access to the outdoor area for the under fives.
- Explore ways in which the accommodation can be extended or enhanced to include a hall.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is very good for both girls and boys. Children enter the school with broadly average standards, although this can vary year-on-year. The achievement of Reception-aged children and of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is very good. Standards are well above average overall by the end of Year 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children receive a very good start to their education.
- Very high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are the result of very good teaching. Standards are well above average in most other subjects.
- The achievement of pupils with SEN is very good.

Commentary

1. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection when they were above average in reading, mathematics and geography. They were in line with expectations in all other subjects. At the time of this inspection, standards were very high in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. They were well above average in most other subjects, except for ICT where they were above expectations for pupils of this age. Trends over time are well above average in writing, mathematics and science. They are about average in reading. All pupils, including the higher-attaining pupils and those with SEN, achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment, due to the very good teaching of a very well planned curriculum, which is adapted very effectively to ensure that all pupils make progress in their learning.

2. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests, Year 2 pupils achieved very high standards (in the top five per cent) in reading, writing, mathematics and science compared to all schools (see table below). In comparison to similar schools they achieved very high standards in writing, mathematics and science (in the top five per cent). They achieved high standards in reading. There has been very good improvement in English, mathematics and science over time.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.3 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	18.4 (16.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	19.0 (19.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. At the time of the inspection children were achieving very well in the Reception Year and in the Reception/Year 1 class. There is every indication that, by the end of the Reception Year, standards are very good, with many children exceeding the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning.

4. In Year 1 and 2, achievement is very good because of the very good provision made for the pupils' development. All pupils, including the higher-attaining pupils and those with SEN, achieve very well because work is matched very effectively to their ability and they are supported very well in their learning. Standards are very high in reading, writing, mathematics and science. They are above expectations in ICT and well above expectations in art and design, history and geography. In

religious education, they will exceed the expectations of the LEA Agreed Syllabus. Progress is charted very carefully and used very well to change lesson plans so that individual needs are met.

5. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills exceptionally well in other areas of the curriculum and ICT skills are applied well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning and achieve exceptionally well in their personal development. Attendance is good overall. Behaviour is excellent and there is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils' relationships with others are excellent.
- Pupils display excellent confidence and self-esteem.
- There is an extremely positive atmosphere of mutual respect throughout the school that promotes a very high degree of self-worth and excellent behaviour in all pupils.

Commentary

6. The school is extremely successful in promoting pupils' interest in learning. Pupils in all year groups enjoy sharing in the activities provided and show the greatest interest and enthusiasm at every opportunity. Relationships with teachers and other adults are excellent and most pupils are keen to take responsibility and show personal initiative. The feelings, values and beliefs of others are respected by all and pupils work extremely hard to achieve the high expectations that the school has of them.

7. Behaviour in the school is outstanding and pupils interact extremely well with each other. Because of the high expectations that teachers have of pupils' behaviour and the very effective use of praise to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem, pupils respond extremely well. As a result, pupils learn with confidence and achieve very well. There have been no exclusions for many years.

8. The school deals extremely effectively with any form of harassment. Pupils and parents interviewed during the inspection week were totally sure there is no trace of racial harassment or bullying. Persistent bullying is non-existent and every pupil offering an opinion was certain that the school was an excellent place in which to learn, work and play.

9. Relationships between pupils are excellent and they co-operate very well in lessons, discussing their work and carrying out their practical work sensibly. In a Reception topic-work lesson, the children worked extremely well together to discuss the structure of insects. They behaved extremely well and displayed exceptional maturity when they were taken out of the school to complete fieldwork.

10. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the few established school rules and an extremely well developed knowledge of what is right and wrong. They show a very healthy respect for the opinions and feelings of others. The exceptionally calm and caring ethos of the school ensures pupils' spiritual awareness, self-knowledge and self-worth are developed very well. Spirituality is promoted by regular assemblies, lessons in personal, health and social education (PSHE) and times of collective worship, all of which provide very effective, high-quality occasions for celebration and sharing. The school prepares the pupils well for life in a multi-cultural society. The provision for their cultural development is good, with valuable opportunities for visits to interesting places such as the Buxton Opera House, local museums in Nottingham, the Sea Life Centre in Hull, the Lea Green Outdoor Centre at Matlock and the Magma Museum at Rotherham. In addition, the talents of specialist visitors to the school promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness very well.

11. Attendance in the reporting year 2002/3 was 94.3 per cent and broadly in line with the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence was above average, due to a small number of pupils taking holidays during term time. Attendance rates have been maintained at similar levels in 2003/4. The school promotes good attendance effectively, for example, pupils are rewarded for good attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.9
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 very good. Teaching and learning are very effective and the curriculum is very good. Pupils are very well cared for and the partnership with parents is excellent. The accommodation is unsatisfactory as there is no school hall.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The quality of assessment is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Lessons are planned very well and pupils are very well motivated to succeed.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have very high expectations of behaviour and pupils are involved very well in their own learning.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is very good and they are excellent role models.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught very well.

Commentary

12. The headteacher and key staff monitor the quality of teaching, planning and learning on a regular basis. They have worked very hard to raise the quality of teaching, planning and learning to be very good or better throughout the school. This is a very good improvement on the last inspection, when 16 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory in the infant phase. Most of the staff are new to the school since the last inspection and work together very well under the excellent leadership of the headteacher.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4	14	0	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 b brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13. Teaching in Reception is very good and two of the lessons observed were excellent. The teachers and learning support staff have an excellent and confident understanding of the needs of young children. Staff generate very good relationships and a very good quality of learning. The children make very good progress. Very effective challenge is provided for average and higher-attaining children who learn quickly. There is also very good support for slower learners and those with SEN. The highest achievers in the Reception/Year 1 class also achieve very well due to the

high expectations of teachers and support staff. All children respond very well and learn very effectively.

14. Teachers and support staff take great care to ensure that curriculum requirements are covered. In a very good English lesson, the teacher was rigorous in her questioning to ensure that all pupils had a fully comprehensive knowledge of the story of the *'Three Billy Goats Gruff'*. In the plenary session pupils were very excited as they were allowed to ask the 'Troll' questions. One pupil asked *'What did you think when you saw the first Billy Goat?'* There was also very good use of questioning at the end of the session, to evaluate pupils' understanding of the content of the story.

15. Staff are very confident in teaching the literacy and numeracy strategies. Speaking and listening skills are developed very well through the use of skilful questioning and reading is very well taught throughout the school. Standards are very high by the end of Year 2 in both reading and writing. Writing skills are taught very well and there has been a big effort to raise standards from being broadly average at the time of the previous inspection. Writing, recording and presentation of pupils' work have improved considerably. Appropriate challenge is provided for higher-achieving pupils throughout the school. Work is matched very well to pupils' ability and those with SEN are supported very well in their learning. Very good use is made of homework. In the teaching of literacy and numeracy, there is very good development of target-setting. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills are used appropriately in most areas of the curriculum and there was clear evidence of ICT being planned into most lessons. For example, it is used well in science to record the results of investigative work.

16. Teaching assistants provide valuable high quality support to pupils' learning and work hard to help pupils to achieve very well. Teachers make very good use of questions to check out progress and to extend learning.

17. Where teaching was excellent, the quality of planning was outstanding and the teachers and support staff were excellent role models. Four examples of outstanding teaching were seen. Two of these were in the Foundation Stage Reception class, and the others were in a Reception/Year 1 history lesson and a Year 1/Year 2 geography lesson. The following is an example of one of the two outstanding Foundation Stage lessons in the mathematical area of learning.

Examples of outstanding practice

An excellent Reception class lesson which consolidated children's group work on 'Symmetry' in the mathematical area of learning.

The lesson had been excellently planned. The children's attention was captured by the teacher from the outset by her giving a very clear explanation of symmetry and symmetrical patterns. She made excellent use of resources and challenged the children very well through her questioning. She also gave an excellent explanation of the activities involved. As a result, the children were involved very well in their learning and they made excellent progress in creating and recognising symmetrical patterns. There was excellent development of their computer skills, and they co-operated very well in pairs to create imaginative patterns on a butterfly's wings. They also demonstrated very competent independent computer skills. The highlight of the lesson was in the plenary session at the end of the lesson. All of the children went outside and created a huge life-size pair of symmetrically-patterned butterfly wings. They co-operated very well and squealed with delight as they splashed and splashed paint on each wing until it matched. One child commented *'It's symmetrical on each side of the line of symmetry.'* The lesson was inspiring because of the excellent role models set by the teacher and support staff, the high quality symmetrical patterns which resulted and the outstanding attitudes and behaviour displayed by all children.

An excellent history lesson for a Reception/Year 1 class based on the story of 'The Great Fire of London'.

This was a very well planned lesson with excellent use being made of human resources from the outset. For example, the learning support assistant acted the part of the narrator, an inhabitant of this part of London at this time. The pupils listened spellbound as the story of The Great Fire of London unfolded. It was told in a dramatic way with the teacher and support staff acting out the feelings of the people anxious to escape the fire. The pupils enjoyed the point where the water from the leather buckets was thrown over the shed, which had become a burning house located near Pudding Lane. There were squeals of delight as they clapped and banged tambourines as they blew up the Houses of Parliament and party poppers flew wildly through the air. High quality dialogue resulted as they walked the route the flames took as they spread across London. Very good quality models of houses and ships were created and painted during group work time. A dynamic, brightly-coloured collage of the fire spreading across the London skyline was used most effectively in the final part of the lesson in which the teacher and support staff made excellent use of questions to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of The Great Fire of London. The lesson was inspiring because pupils had been invited to step back in time and had used drama and art and design to show their excellent understanding of the way in which the fire had spread and been thwarted.

An excellent geography lesson for a Year 1 and Year 2 class entitled 'Edinburgh City Tour'.

The pupils' attention was captured by the teacher and the support staff from the outset. Staff became the 'Tour Guides' for the afternoon and whisked the children off on a simulated journey of excitement and adventure to the ancient city of Edinburgh. The pupils enjoyed their visit to the Art Gallery and were enthralled at 'The Edinburgh Music Experience'. These venues were presented in an exemplary fashion in a nearby community hall and along the adjoining pathway beside the school. An Edinburgh fiddler entertained pupils as the mysteries of this noble city unfolded. Skilful use of questioning helped to consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding of where this city is located and what secrets it holds. Excellent provision was made for creative and humanities education due to very imaginative planning and excellent teamwork, resulting in making learning fun for all. The star was 'Greyfriars Bobby' the faithful dog who made an appearance 'en-route'. By the end of the lesson, the pupils had gained a very good understanding of facts and traditional stories based on Edinburgh. *'That was excellent!'* commented a pupil at the end of the tour. Attitudes and behaviour had been exemplary throughout this session.

18. Lessons are very well planned and, at every stage, pupils have sufficient time to complete their tasks. The quality of assessment is very good in English, mathematics, science and most areas of the curriculum. Teachers mark pupils' work very conscientiously and provide pupils with evaluative comments to guide them to improve their work.

The curriculum

The breadth of curricular opportunities provided by the school is very good and the range of opportunities provided for enrichment of the curriculum is also very good. Resources are very good. The overall quality of the accommodation is unsatisfactory as there is no school hall.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The provision for pupils with SEN is very good.
- The provision for equality of opportunity and inclusion for all pupils is excellent.
- The 'blocked' curriculum devised for the 'foundation' subjects is excellent.
- The support for teachers and encouragement for pupils provided by the school's highly-skilled teaching assistants are excellent.
- The school does not have a suitably-sized hall for lunch times or physical education activities and, at the time of inspection, there was no direct access to the outdoor area from the Reception class.

Commentary

19. The curriculum provides a very broad, well-balanced and coherent curriculum, which builds very well and securely on pupils' previous learning, and prepares them very well for the next stages

of their education. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including provision for religious education and collective worship, and provides very effective PSHE. There is an excellent level of equality of opportunity for all pupils and the school is very inclusive in all its policies and practices. There are consistent whole-school approaches to teaching and applying literacy and mathematics across the curriculum. There is ample evidence of the school's willingness to adopt new strategies and to seek and accept guidance on reformulating the curriculum in order to make improvements. This is most evident in the 'blocking' of 'foundation' subjects (that is, subjects other than English, mathematics or science) which results in very imaginatively planned and resourced whole-afternoon cross-curricular activities such as the Year 2 Visit to Edinburgh and the Year 1 afternoon of activities linked to The Great Fire of London observed during the inspection. In addition, every child learns the recorder, every child receives swimming tuition and pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 receive French lessons.

20. Pupils with SEN receive excellent support from teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, their needs are met very well and they make very good progress towards their individual targets.

21. The school provides pupils with a good range of interesting, relevant and well-attended extra-curricular activities. Sporting and cultural visits linked to the curriculum are well organised to extend pupils' experiences. There is a very good range of visitors who work in the school during the year and provide very good enrichment in the creative arts and dance.

22. There is a very good match of young and enthusiastic teachers to the curriculum and a very good match of well-qualified and hard-working support staff, who provide excellent support for all pupils, especially those with SEN. The school accommodation has been improved significantly internally and is now a very bright, pleasant working environment. However, it presents a number of inherent difficulties, most notably the lack of direct access to the outdoor facilities from the Reception class and the lack of a sufficiently-sized hall for physical education activities. However, despite these deficiencies, the school accommodation is used very well and the building, whilst not ideal, does not directly impede any curriculum activities. Resources for the majority of curriculum areas are very good and resources for ICT, particularly, have improved significantly since the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

The school has very good arrangements in place to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides very good support and guidance and has very good arrangements to seek pupils' views and act upon them.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The extent to which each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with adults is excellent.
- Arrangements to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are very good.
- Induction arrangements for pupils are very good.

Commentary

23. The school offers a very good standard of care for all its pupils. Pupils share a very caring environment where everyone feels valued and is treated with care and respect; as a result, pupils of all ages learn with confidence.

24. Procedures for child protection are very good. The headteacher who is the child protection officer is well aware of her role and has received recent training, which has been shared with all other members of staff. The school carries out regular health and safety audits and has good procedures for monitoring and assessing risks. Several staff are trained in first aid and accidents are well recorded.

25. The school supports all pupils very well, including those with SEN. Their work and progress is meticulously tracked and teachers together with teaching assistants work well together to offer a high level of support. As a result, this group of pupils makes very good progress.

26. Pupils with special skills and talents are additionally identified and are given a high level of encouragement and support as required. They prosper very well and achieve very well at school.

27. The school has very good arrangements for the involvement of pupils and values their views, for example in the on-going development of the outdoor environment. Staff interact very well with pupils both at break and play time; during the inspection week many staff, including the headteacher, were observed joining in games and activities with the pupils at break.

28. Parents of prospective pupils are given a presentation by the headteacher and pupils attend in small groups for one afternoon and two full morning sessions prior to starting in September. Parents are encouraged to bring their children for a number of taster mornings and a welcome pack is given to children in the term prior to admission. When children start school there is a staggered induction for three days where they attend for half days only. Because of the very sensitive and well-structured induction arrangements, pupils make an excellent start to their school life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has excellent links with parents and very good links with the community and other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school has excellent arrangements to provide parents with information about the school and about pupils' standards and progress.
- Procedures to ensure satisfaction and to deal with any concerns or complaints are excellent.
- The school has very good arrangements to involve parents through seeking, valuing and acting upon their views.
- The school has very good mechanisms for the transfer of pupils.

Commentary

29. Parents have an extremely high opinion of the school. This is demonstrated by the very positive response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, the complimentary comments about the staff, the well-attended pre-inspection meeting with parents and the views of the parents which were obtained during the inspection week. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire thought that: they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on, they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems, they feel that staff treat their children fairly, and they consider the school is well led and managed. The inspection team entirely agrees with the positive comments made.

30. The school makes excellent provision for parents to learn about the school and about pupils' standards and progress. The school brochure is an extremely well-produced document giving full information, in a very easy-to-read style, about the school's exceptionally caring ethos and all the facilities provided. The headteacher provides regular newsletters giving up-to-date information about school events. The annual reports of pupils' progress are of a very high standard and provide good information on a subject-by-subject basis on pupils' progress and achievements as well as setting targets for improvement. The annual governors' report to parents provides good factual information about the school's future plans and fully complies with legislation.

31. The school arranges four parent evenings a year where parents can discuss their children's work, behaviour and progress with staff. In addition, a number of curriculum evenings are arranged each year where parents are given information on the programme of statutory testing (SATs) as well as courses about mathematics and English. Parents interviewed during the inspection week stated that the headteacher and staff are very approachable and can see them at any time if they have concerns. Records show that the school is extremely pro-active in approaching parents to discuss pupils' progress. The school is very proud of its 'open door' policy.

32. Although formal surveys of parents' views are not carried out, the headteacher makes herself available to meet parents every day in the playground and they feel free to give their views on a variety of issues if necessary. Parents interviewed during the inspection week said that the school actively sought their views and valued their opinions.

33. The school has been extremely successful in encouraging parents to help. They help in a variety of ways such as assisting pupils to read in the Partnership Reading Scheme³, helping accompany pupils on school visits, assisting at school functions, supervising at lunch and play times or helping with special events. All parents are members of the Parent Teachers Association, which arranges many social events during the year and raises large sums for school funds. Their efforts are much appreciated by the school.

34. The school has very good arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the next stage of their education. Year 2 children go on three visits to the receiving Junior School and Year 3 teachers at the Junior School teach alongside Infant staff giving literacy lessons on a regular basis. Parents are invited to information evenings at the school, where teachers from the receiving school explain the wide range of opportunities they provide for pupils. As a result of the very good transfer arrangements, pupils settle very quickly into Junior School life.

35. Pupils visit local shops on a regular basis as part of the food technology curriculum and local businesses sponsor book events in school. The school uses the local Medway Centre and pupils from the school visit the local hospital and library. Excellent links have been established with the Peak Park Ranger Service who come into school to help with geography projects and the flower garden. Pupils raise money for local charities and Barnardos and operate the Christmas Child Appeal. The lay leader from the local church and local vicar come in to school on a regular basis to take assembly and the school has strong links with the parochial church council whose members come in to school on a regular basis to support school events.

36. The school is part of the Lady Manners Cluster Group of schools, which includes eight primary schools and the local comprehensive school. Meetings are held once per term by teachers to discuss professional matters; and literacy and numeracy co-ordinators meet twice per year to discuss matters of interest. Pupils from the comprehensive school help in school with art work and headteachers from both infant and junior schools often interchange to take assemblies. This impacts very well on pupils' learning especially in the Infant School.

³ Partnership Reading Scheme involves parents assisting pupils to read both at home and at school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is very good. Governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The school is given excellent leadership by the headteacher.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Teamwork is very good and everybody is doing their best for the pupils' education.
- The management of the school is very effective.
- Standards, achievement, teaching and learning are monitored very well.

Commentary

37. The headteacher provides excellent, dynamic and supportive leadership that motivates everyone to give of their best. This enables the school to make improvements at a very good pace. Very good teaching ensures that pupils achieve very well, while shared vision and high expectations are providing a firm steer to the school's work.

38. The headteacher leads the school with the full support and confidence of the governors. She has a very clear sense of purpose and, in close partnership with staff, the drive given to raising pupils' achievement underpins this work. She works very hard for the good of the pupils and her excellent leadership has led to the successful development of a very good staff team. Together they are fully committed to making very good provision for the all-round development of pupils. Key staff are very effective in their roles. An excellent, purposeful ethos has been created. Staff lead and manage their areas with enthusiasm and commitment, and are very effective in their roles. Monitoring of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is rigorously carried out by the headteacher and key staff. The outcomes are very closely linked with target-setting for pupils, which is in turn linked to very good arrangements for the professional development of staff. The school is very inclusive and very effective policies ensure that the needs of all pupils are being met.

39. The leadership of provision for SEN is very good. Realistic targets are set that are based on secure evidence. These targets are shared with pupils and parents and reviewed on a regular basis. Individual needs are very clearly identified and resources are very well targeted. Pupils are given very good support in their learning by all staff. The system supports pupils very well and has secured a significant improvement in these pupils' achievement.

40. The management of the school is very good and has improved very well since the last inspection. Governors are fully involved in planning and prioritising issues in the school improvement plan. They have a very good understanding of the work of the school and act as critical friends. They are very supportive of the school and are fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors frequently visit the school to see at first hand what is going on and they receive regular reports by the headteacher. This area of strategic planning is very much improved since the last inspection.

41. Staff make a very positive contribution to pupils' attainment, learning and development. Inspired by the headteacher they have a firm and shared commitment to succeed. Teaching assistants provide very good support for all pupils and make a valuable contribution to the very good team spirit amongst the staff.

42. The school has very good procedures and very effective systems for financial planning. Finance has been used very effectively to resource the work of the school appropriately and thoughtfully. The secretary provides very effective administrative and financial support. She makes a significant contribution to the life and work of the school. Finance has been used very effectively to resource planned major expenditure. Plans clearly indicate that the current balance is identified to

fund further enrichment of the outside area, and to enable the under fives to have continuous access to this area. Governors have a very effective financial oversight of the finances and budget. All decisions about spending are very carefully linked to the school improvement plan. The use of resources is managed very well and best value principles are central to the decisions made. The school provides very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	247,163.00
Total expenditure	236,822.00
Expenditure per pupil	3,700.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	27,196.00
Balance carried forward to the next	9,985.00

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 very good and there has been very good improvement since the last inspection in curriculum planning, teaching and resources. The children enter the Reception class in the September and January of the year in which they are five. Most children remain in the Reception class and this year a small number of higher-achieving Reception-aged children are also being taught in a mixed Reception Year/Year 1 class. The provision is also very good for these higher-achieving Reception children in this mixed-age class. Most children have attended some form of pre-school provision; however some children have had very little or no pre-school experience. This year, attainment on entry is broadly average, although this can vary year-on-year. The curriculum is very good and planned to provide a wide range of very interesting and relevant activities, which are very well matched to children's needs. All children, including those with SEN, achieve very well because the teaching is very good. Staff work very well as a team and children's progress is monitored very well. All adults set excellent role models for the children and manage them very well. There is a good ratio of adults to children, ensuring that the needs of all are very well met. The co-ordinator is providing very good, clear, educational direction for the work of her team. The accommodation is purposeful, bright and stimulating indoors; however, there is no direct access to the outdoor area. Despite this the staff are making the best possible use of the areas available.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children's achievement is very good and they develop very good levels of personal independence.
- Teaching is very good and the expectations of staff are high.
- Behaviour is very good at all times.
- Relationships are excellent with both adults and peers.

Commentary

43. As a result of the very good teaching, all children, including those with SEN, make very good progress and achieve very well in their social development. All children are on course to well exceed the Early Learning Goals. The teachers and support staff provide excellent role models for the children and have very high expectations of behaviour. There is a lot of emphasis placed on developing the whole child. Staff have established very secure routines so that children feel safe and confident. As a result, they are very co-operative, confident and friendly. The very careful structure of the sessions provides children with many valuable opportunities to make choices, to play alone or with others, and to learn to share and co-operate. They are developing very good independent skills, such as when they manage their own clothes. The children thoroughly enjoy playing games, for example with the parachute and, as a result, co-operate very well, take turns and work very effectively as a team. Staff use every opportunity to praise the children's independence. As a result, they have a very good sense of right and wrong.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement is very good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through a very good, stimulating and interesting curriculum.
- The teachers and learning support assistants take every opportunity to develop children's language skills.
- Children enjoy handling books and make very good progress starting to read.

Commentary

44. The majority of children are on course to meet, and a significant majority to exceed, the expectations in this area of learning. All children, including those with SEN, are making very good progress as a result of the many opportunities they are given to talk and listen. Staff take every opportunity during all activities to develop the children's vocabulary through probing questioning. For example, children were encouraged to make up their own questions as they used role play to re-enact the *'Three Billy Goats Gruff'* story, such as *'Who is that crossing my bridge?'* and *'What did you think when you saw the first Billy Goat?'* Children enjoy books and listen very attentively when a story is read to them. For example, when the teacher read the story of *'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'* the children were hanging on to her every word and looked very carefully for the words beginning with 's' and 'c'. All children are on the early stages of the reading scheme. They can write their first name and a significant number can write simple sentences. They can recite the letters of the alphabet in order and are making very good progress with linking sounds to letters, and naming and sounding them. Most are able to match upper and lower case letters. Children make very good progress from copy writing to writing independently and sequencing and illustrating a story.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Achievement is very good because teaching and learning are focused on developing children's skills through a practical curriculum.
- Every opportunity is taken to promote children's mathematical development.

Commentary

45. Teaching and learning are very good and all children are very enthusiastic and confident. Every opportunity is taken to develop children's skills both formally and informally. As a result, children achieve very well and most are well exceeding the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year. The children readily recognise numerals 0 to 25 and confidently count up to 100. They are good at solving number problems and happily count in tens to 100. They understand early addition and subtraction and have learnt to sort two-dimensional shapes according to size and colour. Children's interest is sustained very well and practical activities prepare the way very well for future learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children achieve very well because of very good teaching.
- The quality of the curriculum is very good.
- Very good use is made of the environmental area, visits in the local area and visitors.

Commentary

46. Most children are working to a very good standard and are on target to well exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well. Staff work very hard to build up children's confidence in using the computer. As a result, they have excellent attitudes and display very good skills. They are gaining a very good knowledge of nature and wildlife and enjoy looking for animals and insects in the environmental area. In science, children learn the meaning of making a prediction and have a good understanding of what a fair test is. Children enjoy learning about other festivals and cultures such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year. The school makes very effective use of trips and visits to enrich the curriculum. For example, the children produced some very good work based on the seasons following a visit to the park. They have enjoyed a visit to the church and have built up local links such as visiting the local pizza shop and the Bakewell Pudding shop.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children are well co-ordinated and dance confidently.
- Teaching is very good and the expectations of staff are high.
- Children use small tools and equipment well.
- There is no continuous access to an outside play area and there is limited access to a nearby hall.

Commentary

47. Most children are on course to well exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well. They show a very good awareness of space, of themselves and of others. They experiment with different ways of moving like caterpillars. They are fully aware of their bodies and enjoy watching, copying and describing what others have done well in their caterpillar dance. They make very good progress in creating interesting shapes with their bodies at high and low levels. They especially enjoy stretching slowly into a butterfly shape. The children really enjoy their indoor dance and physical education lessons held in the nearby community hall. However, their access to this hall is limited to once or twice a week, as there is no school hall. In addition, there is no continuous access to an outside play area; however, the school makes the best possible use of the outdoor playground, field and wildlife and environmental area. Activities are very well planned and the teacher and support staff are excellent role models. Children use small tools and equipment well when building models and using clay.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Children achieve very well because they are taught very well and experience a wide range of creative activities.
- The imaginative play area is used very well to encourage children's creative response.

Commentary

48. Teaching is very good and, as a result, a significant number of children are on course to exceed or well exceed the Early Learning Goals. There are very good daily opportunities for children to develop creativity. They have access to a very good range of materials with many interesting opportunities to paint self-portraits, draw insects and make models. They enjoy dressing up for their role-play activities. In music, they are making very good progress in clapping and tapping rhythms. They are able to use their voices to make long and short sounds and are able to clap out a steady pulse on percussion instruments. They enjoy singing songs like '*Kum Ba Yah*' and have a very good sense of rhythm and pitch.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision in English is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards in English are very high by Year 2.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well because of the very good quality teaching and learning.
- Pupils with SEN make very good progress against their specific targets.
- The subject is excellently managed.
- English makes a very effective contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

Commentary

49. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests, Year 2 pupils achieved very high standards (in the top five per cent) in reading and writing in comparison with all schools. In comparison with similar schools, standards were in the top five per cent in writing and very high in reading. Standards in English have considerably improved since the time of the previous inspection when they were average. There has been excellent improvement because of the school's focus on raising standards. The very high standards reached are due to very good planning, very good teaching and very effective use being made of assessment. The analysis of pupils' work, together with lesson observations, confirms this picture. At the time of this inspection, standards were very high in English in Year 2. Pupils are very well placed to meet or exceed the targets set for them in the 2004 National Curriculum tests.

50. From a broadly average starting point, pupils, including those with SEN, achieve very well during their time at school to achieve very high standards. The inspection found that higher-attaining pupils achieve very well throughout the school. Pupils with SEN are very well supported by adults in lessons. In all year groups there is a wide span of ability. Every effort is made by staff to raise pupils' attainment by very carefully planned work and very good support and encouragement. The school has been very successful in the last two years at raising pupils' attainment, especially in motivating a significant number of boys to achieve the higher Level 3 in reading and writing.

51. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are very high in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils speak with confidence and express their views clearly and confidently. Younger pupils have an improving vocabulary due to very good teaching having a very good impact on their learning. There is very good provision for pupils who have speech and language difficulties. Staff work very hard to help pupils to extend their vocabulary by:

- * Encouraging pupils to discuss in pairs.
- * Using drama activities or interesting starts to lessons to help pupils to communicate very effectively. For example, Year 1 pupils eagerly interpreted the story of The Great Fire of London via drama, following an excellent dramatic introduction to the lesson by the teacher and support staff. Excellent use was made of the outdoor environment and very effective resources.

52. Pupils achieve very well in reading, with the very good development of their knowledge and enjoyment of books being developed very well alongside their reading skills. There is a very well-structured reading programme, with pupils working through a published scheme. Standards are currently very high by Year 2. There are excellent opportunities during the school day for pupils to engage in silent reading, in pairs and in groups. All pupils enjoy reading with parents and carers at home and this helps them to make very good progress. All pupils tackle new reading material with confidence. They are very clear about the strategies that they need to use to work out how to read words and sentences. Pupils clearly enjoy reading the books of the following authors: Dick King-Smith, J.K. Rowling, Roald Dahl, Enid Blyton, Jacqueline Smith and William Shakespeare. Book areas in classrooms are very well organised. Excellent use is made of the high quality bright, purposeful library area to stimulate pupils' interest in reading. Group and class teaching sessions are frequently taught in this area with excellent use being made of resources.

53. Reading skills are very well taught by teachers and high quality support staff, with the result that pupils read accurately and fluently. They read in a mature, expressive way and constantly benefit from the excellent role models set by all adults. A strength in the reading is the way in which the older pupils' very competent speaking skills enable them to understand harder words and explore books at a deeper level of meaning. The school provides regular, targeted support for any pupils experiencing difficulties with their reading and for pupils attaining average levels.

54. Attainment in writing is very high for seven year olds. The co-ordinator has inspired staff to work hard and successfully improve standards in writing. Pupils achieve very well because of very good teaching. Standards have risen because of:

- * Excellent in-service training led by the co-ordinator.
- * Planning which is of a very good quality.
- * Interesting writing tasks set for a range of audiences.
- * Celebration of pupils' writing in displays.
- * Valuable opportunities for extended writing.

55. The school is continuing to target writing for further improvement with high expectations of handwriting and spelling, and focused marking. This helps pupils to be very clear about what they have to do to improve. The following is an example of very good writing from a Year 1 pupil written on the theme of 'Len the Lion Rap'.

*'Len the lion is really cool,
He likes to play in a swimming pool.
Len the lion is a really nice guy,
He always wants to fly.'*

56. Teaching and learning are very good over time and consistently very good teaching was observed throughout the infant phase during the inspection. Pupils concentrate very well in lessons and work hard. The quality of the curriculum is very good and lessons are very well planned. There is an emphasis on helping pupils to develop their literacy skills through purposeful and enjoyable activities. This enables pupils to achieve very well. In Year 1 for example, pupils made very good progress in re-telling the main points of a story, due to the teacher making very effective use of the 'story bag' to stimulate pupils' interest. Very good motivating strategies also enabled Year 2 pupils to make very effective use of the reference book entitled 'The Snail' to glean information. Teachers and teaching assistants have a very good understanding of the subject and teach it very well.

57. The subject is excellently managed and the teaching, planning and learning are very well monitored. Very good use is made of assessment to formulate pupils' targets. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through well-chosen texts and bright, stimulating resources. Good use is made of ICT to support learning and pupils' independent learning skills are developed very well through research. There has been an excellent improvement in the teaching of reading and writing since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. This is a strength of the school. Pupils are provided with excellent opportunities to develop and apply their literacy skills across the curriculum, especially in mathematics, science, art and design, history, geography and religious education. Information and communication technology (ICT) is well used to help pupils make final presentations of their work, such as to present their stories and poems, to present the results of fair testing in science and to write accounts of topics studied in history and geography.

French

59. French is part of the school's regular curriculum, with pupils in Years 1 and 2 having one session each week led by a specialist teacher. Pupils respond very well to the brisk teaching. They have a good understanding of common vocabulary and speech patterns, and their pronunciation is good. The teacher has high expectations of what can be achieved and pupils rise to the challenges set for them with enthusiasm.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The standard of attainment by the end of Year 2 is very high.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well because of the very good teaching and learning.
- The leadership of the subject is very good.
- There is very good use of assessment to modify the curriculum, track individual pupils' progress and set individual targets.

Commentary

60. Pupils make very good progress as they move through the school. The current Year 2 cohort have made particularly good progress, progressing from below the national average on entry to the school in the Reception class, to overall standards which are very high. Lesson observations, in conjunction with a scrutiny of pupils' work undertaken during the current school year, demonstrate clearly that teaching in mathematics is very good overall. In the lessons observed, teachers demonstrated very good subject knowledge and very good classroom and behaviour management skills, allowing lessons to progress at a very good pace. Tasks were matched very well to pupils' ages, abilities and learning needs. As a result of very good planning, the very good pace maintained throughout most lessons and the very good support provided by teaching assistants, pupils maintain a very good focus on their work and achieve very highly. This was very well demonstrated in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were mentally adding coins to the value of 8p, 12p, 50p. The teacher began the lesson with a very well-paced mental/oral activity that provided a very good start to the lesson and motivated pupils very well. She made very good use of targeted and differentiated questioning so that all pupils of all abilities were suitably challenged and all were able to achieve success. Pupils, a significant proportion of whom are working within the Year 3 programme of study, demonstrated clearly that they can recognise and appreciate the value of all coins and are able to exchange coins for their equivalent. Most are able to calculate change from, for example, '50p if I spend 32p' or give change from £1 'if I buy a loaf for 63p'. Pupils with SEN are supported very well by very skilled and effective teaching assistants and, as a result, they make very good progress. More able pupils are well challenged.

61. The subject-co-ordinator provides very good leadership. School test results are analysed in detail and amendments to the curriculum are made in the light of what is revealed. For example, the main mathematics focus for the current year has been problem-solving. Additional resources and time have been allotted to this area of mathematics development, with every Friday's numeracy lesson focusing on this aspect, with significant improvement in results. Assessment in the subject is very good; in addition to the detailed analysis of test results and trends noted above, pupils are tracked individually as they move through the school and regular, individual mathematics targets are set. There has been very good improvement in the subject since the last inspection, especially in the quality of the teaching and learning, and the very good curriculum.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Excellent use is made of pupils' numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. In science, pupils measure and record simple data from their investigations and present the results in graphs. They practise their skills in measuring when they undertake practical tasks in art and design, science and design and technology. There is very clear evidence of the use of mathematical skills in ICT, history, geography and English. Pupils are encouraged to make calculations in history linked to when events happened within, for instance, the events surrounding The Great Fire of London.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are very high by the end of Year 2.
- The curriculum is planned very well and this enables pupils of all capabilities to achieve exceptionally well.
- Very good use is made of assessment to track pupils' progress.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very effective.

Commentary

63. Results of teacher assessment in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were very high (in the top five per cent) when comparing the number of pupils achieving the higher levels with all schools and similar schools. Inspection findings show that pupils' attainment in science is very high at the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve very highly. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were found to be in line with national expectations.

64. Standards have risen throughout the school. Assessment is a very important feature in the raising of standards. The co-ordinator monitors standards very effectively in order to find out areas of strengths and weaknesses within the curriculum. This analysis has resulted in a strong focus on the development of pupils' investigative skills. As a result, pupils gain very good enquiry skills and their knowledge is underpinned by an excellent understanding of scientific concepts acquired through observing and participating in challenging practical tasks. Pupils' work is well documented and teachers have a very good understanding of the standards to expect at each age. Consequently, the planning indicates that the progression and development of scientific skills are very well taught and almost all pupils, including those with SEN, achieve very highly. For example, from an early age, pupils are taught to think carefully and record reasons for the results seen in their experiments.

65. By Year 2, pupils have developed into young scientists and are confidently making a hypothesis based on their investigations. They draw sensible conclusions based on a very secure knowledge and understanding of the differences between liquids and solids and the effect of freezing liquids. Pupils with SEN are very well provided for because the tasks and activities meet their needs very well. The teaching assistants give them very good support and, as a result, these pupils achieve very well.

66. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers plan very interesting lessons with a very good range of practical activities, so that pupils can learn and develop scientific skills through first-hand experiences. Discussions with pupils show that they are very keen to learn because the way the teachers present the work is exciting and enjoyable. Teachers check thoroughly how well pupils are doing and provide a high level of challenge for more able pupils so that they can be encouraged to think more creatively. The pupils have benefited greatly from science trips and the practical experiences these visits provided them with.

67. The subject co-ordinator is providing very good clear educational direction for work in this subject. There is effective use made of ICT to support pupils in their learning, particularly when recording their scientific investigations. Particular attention is paid to developing pupils' understanding of scientific vocabulary. With very good systems in place to monitor and improve the provision, the school has a very good capacity to improve further. There has been very good improvement in monitoring progress since the previous inspection and the quality of the curriculum has improved considerably. The subject contributes very well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- There has been a significant improvement in the quality and quantity of resources for the subject.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) skills are used well across the curriculum.

Commentary

68. A number of small group activities were observed during the inspection and pupils were seen working independently at computers in most lessons. Based on observations, pupils achieve well overall. Standards are, as a result, above average at the end of Year 2. One of these observations, of an activity in a Year 1/Year 2 lesson, confirmed that, due to very good teaching in the computer suite, pupils quickly gain great confidence in the use of the equipment. In the lesson observed, pupils were totally independent of adult help, confidently using the classroom's interactive whiteboard to create a symmetrical pattern. Given a very good start in the Reception class, pupils are now moving through the school with increasing confidence and a very high level of skills in the subject.

69. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator (the headteacher) is committed to continued improvement and has overseen a significant improvement in staff's subject knowledge and confidence and in the quality and scope of resources for the subject. Funding provided from the government's National Grid for Learning scheme and from grants and fundraising has been used well to purchase new hardware and software and resources for the subject are now good. The school has a new website, designed by the school's caretaker, who also acts as a technician for a few hours per week. All staff have received training in the use of the new interactive whiteboards and the school's teaching assistants have undertaken local education authority training in the use of ICT. An ICT day has been organised for parents to see how pupils use ICT in the school.

70. There has been good improvement in provision since the last inspection. A new ICT suite has been created and fitted out with six computers and two interactive whiteboards, and this allows half-classes to work in the suite with a teacher or support staff. In addition, the school has eight laptop computers, four 'floor turtles' and a digital camera to record activities.

71. Where ICT is planned for across the curriculum, it is done well. The school is aware of the need to further develop the cross-curricular use of ICT and has already begun to do this.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills are used well to develop learning across the curriculum. Planned use of ICT within the school day and in many subjects reflects the strategy of teaching particular skills, which are then used in subsequent work. Regular use of ICT supports learning in mathematics, such as reinforcing number skills or drawing graphs. Good use of ICT in English is evident in tasks that include word-processing. The Internet is used well to gather relevant information and good use is made of ICT in art and design when pupils create their own pictures and experiment with different colours and paint techniques.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

Provision in the humanities subjects of geography and history is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The very imaginative 'blocking' of non-core subjects provides a very active, memorable range of learning experiences for the pupils.
- High standards are achieved in history and geography.

Commentary

73. Standards in both subjects are well above expectations and this is due to the very good curriculum, detailed planning and very skilled teaching. It was only possible to observe a limited number of lessons – one largely historic lesson, in Year 1, and one largely geographic lesson, in Year 2. Both these whole-afternoon, cross-curricular lessons, however, were excellent. The Year 1 afternoon was based around The Great Fire of London and featured activities such as 'Blowing up the Houses of Parliament', with the unannounced use of party-poppers producing squeals of delight from the pupils, and a walk around the route the flames took from Pudding Lane across London. Year 2 pupils went on a highly imaginative simulated Edinburgh City Tour, visiting on the way the Art Gallery, where they were greeted by a reception committee of tour guides, and the Edinburgh Music Experience, where they learnt about Scottish dialect words. They were also serenaded by a Scottish fiddler before learning two Scottish songs. Following this, they visited the grave of the little dog called Greyfriars Bobby, where they listened to his story and met 'Bobby' the caretaker's dog who represented him at this point. Then they went on to The Edinburgh Shortbread House where they excitedly tasted various Scottish delicacies. In both activities, learning was fun and, as a result, due to the excellent planning and resources, all pupils really enjoyed themselves and made excellent progress. Staff teamwork was excellent. All staff were fully involved in the two activities, many in costumes for the afternoon: teachers, support staff, students, the caretaker, the headteacher and a number of visitors, such as the young musicians playing for pennies thrown by the pupils outside the Edinburgh Music Experience.

74. The leadership of the two humanities subjects is very good. There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection in the quality of planning. There are whole-school schemes of work now in place for history and geography, based broadly on government-recommended schemes of work, organised on a two-year rolling programme. Resources for both subjects are very good and are used very imaginatively.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils achieve high standards by the end of Year 2.

Commentary

75. Although only one religious education lesson was observed, several whole-school assemblies were attended and pupils' books were scrutinised; these provided sufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards and provision.

76. The school follows the Derbyshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education supported by a government-recommended scheme of work. The Agreed Syllabus recommends that infant pupils study Christianity along with one other religion and the school teaches Judaism as its other religion. A scrutiny of pupils' work undertaken during the current school year indicates that pupils throughout the school undertake a good range of work designed to develop their knowledge and understanding in the main attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus.

77. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were discussing the concept of frustration and anger – dramatised very effectively by asking the pupils to try to eat cream crackers with a knife and fork and to play a board game wearing very thick gloves. By the end of the lesson, due to very good teaching and support, pupils had a very good understanding of the concept and how to cope with it. During the current school year, pupils in Year 2 have studied the concept of belonging to a group, looked at religious symbols and learned about the Jewish traditions of Shabbat and Passover.

78. Regular whole-school assemblies make a very significant and positive contribution to pupils' understanding of the Christian religion. During the inspection, the story of Moses crossing the Red Sea and the story of Lazarus were very effectively and dramatically told by the headteacher and skilfully linked to the week's assembly theme. Due to the excellent leadership of the headteacher, assemblies are warm, family occasions and contain an appropriate time for reflection, the enthusiastic singing of a hymn and a daily prayer. The school maintains a number of multi-cultural religious education links, with a church school in Rwanda and with a missionary couple in Palestine, for example. Co-ordination of the subject, by the headteacher, is very good. Resources are very good and are well utilised. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection in the quality of planning, teaching and learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

79. Only one lesson was seen in physical education and a topic lesson was seen which featured art and design. No lessons were seen in design and technology and music. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about overall provision; however, the evidence available indicates that it is very good in these areas. In addition to observing lessons and assemblies, inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work, talked to pupils about what they had learnt in art and design, design and technology and music, and looked at pupils' work.

80. It is clearly evident from teachers' planning, the prospectus and discussions with pupils that work planned in **art and design** is interesting and varied. The quality of planning has improved since the previous inspection, with a conscious effort to enrich cross-curricular work with art and design experiences wherever possible. This lively approach was observed in an excellent Reception/Year 1 history lesson on The Great Fire of London. Pupils concentrated excellently in their group activities and succeeded in producing very good quality models of Tudor houses and boats and a wonderful colourful collage of The Great Fire of London. They were inspired by acting out the story of how the fire started and spread rapidly. They took careful note of the teacher's and support staff's thoughts on the skills and techniques they needed to use. They maintained excellent attention as they completed their work. The pupils then collaborated very well within their group and the whole class to praise and evaluate each other's work. The teacher and learning assistants supported all pupils, including those with SEN, very well in their learning. Displays are bright and colourful around the school. For example, there was a very good quality display of the pupils' drawings and paintings in the style of Van Gogh in the Year 2 classroom. In discussion, Year 2 pupils spoke of their enjoyment of the subject and their pride in exhibiting very good quality drawings of animals and the countryside, insect models and collage work in a recent art exhibition. The subject makes a very effective contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

81. The curriculum is very good. It is broad, balanced and relevant. It is enriched by cross-curricular experiences and trips and visits. There is good use of ICT to support pupils' learning and pupils enjoy researching information about famous artists. They enjoy clay work, two-dimensional and three-dimensional work, collage and marbling. Standards are well above expectations for pupils by the end of Year 2. Evidence from a scrutiny of work shows that pupils, including those with SEN, achieve very well. The co-ordinator is providing very good, clear, educational direction for the subject. The school has developed very good systems for pupils to self-evaluate their work and there is a very good record kept of their progress. There has been very good improvement in the quality of the curriculum, planning and assessment since the last inspection.

82. **Design and technology** was not a major focus of the inspection. The curriculum for design and technology has developed very well, and very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Pupils' literacy skills are used very well as they evaluate their designs with thoughtful comments. Linked to a special Design and Technology day, Year 2 pupils, for instance, had designed and made axles for their vehicles. In discussion, Year 2 pupils expressed their enjoyment of this day. They especially valued discussing the effect of forces on movement after seeing how far their vehicles would travel. Teachers sensibly separate the design process from that of making. Suitable use is made of ICT where appropriate to assist in the design process. A particularly

successful activity was when pupils in Years 1 and 2 designed and made puppets. Pupils looked at different types of puppets before designing and making their own. The range of styles was impressive and included wooden spoon puppets and glove puppets. Pupils' excellent attitudes to the subject are demonstrated by the perseverance and attention to detail shown in these models.

83. In **music**, no lessons were observed; however, pupils were heard singing enthusiastically in assemblies. They sang '*God Loves Me*' tunefully, with full awareness of breathing, diction and dynamics. The standard of singing is very good throughout the school. The quality of the curriculum is very good overall and excellent use is made of the headteacher's strengths in teaching this area in assembly and in music lessons. Pupils gave an excellent performance of a rap-style version of '*We're Marching Out of Egypt*' in assembly to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of Moses crossing the Red Sea. The new music scheme enables teachers to be confident in teaching the subject, which is a very good improvement on the previous inspection.

84. Concerts and performance contribute very well to pupils' overall musical experience. All Year 2 pupils learn the recorder and enjoy performing for others. Standards are well above expectation by Year 2 and there are very good cross-curricular links. Pupils achieve very well in their singing and composition work due to the excellent efforts of the co-ordinator. She is providing very clear educational direction for the subject. There are very good assessment procedures in place and very good use is made of assessment to inform planning. Good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in composition work.

85. Only one **physical education** lesson was observed, a Year 2 outdoor games lesson. As a result, it is not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning, standards in the subject, or overall provision for physical education. However, from a scrutiny of planning and discussions with the subject co-ordinator, it is clear that all strands of the subject are regularly taught and that the school continues to put a great stress on the teaching of swimming and dancing. In the one lesson seen, the quality of teaching was very good and pupils demonstrated good ball skills and a good understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies.

86. Although the school does not have a school hall, good use is made of the adjacent community facility for two afternoons a week and all pupils visit the local swimming pool for lessons during one term of the year. This lack of a dedicated school hall means that the school does not have the advantage of fixed wall apparatus or large apparatus and time in the community hall is strictly limited. Outdoor resources, however, are well used and the range of small equipment is good. Leadership by the current co-ordinator, who runs an after-school football club, is very good. The co-ordinator, who took over the role during the current school year, has been on appropriate training, improved the teaching of dance in the school significantly and applied for a number of grants. Funds obtained from one successful bid were used to buy new resources appropriate for each age group.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. The arrangements for PSHE and citizenship, including drugs education, are very good. Pupils' citizenship skills are developed very well through 'circle'³ time, religious education, science and music. This contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work. Pupils learn about the significance of a healthy diet in science. They are learning how to develop a very healthy and safe lifestyle. They gain in confidence and interact excellently with others. The arrangements for drug and health education are very good.

88. The exceptionally caring school ethos supports pupils' personal development very well. Circle time in Reception/Year 1 provides valuable opportunities for pupils to share feelings, and to discuss a range of topics such as how you feel when you are angry or calm. These sessions are very effective in building the pupils' confidence and enable them to share their feelings with others. As pupils get older, they are given increasing responsibility, which prepares them very well for the next stage in their education.

³ During circle time, children sit in a circle and discuss personal feelings and thoughts.

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	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	1
Attendance	3
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	1
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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