

INSPECTION REPORT

COBHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cobham, Gravesend

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118257

Headteacher: Mr G Sperling

Lead inspector: Rosalind Johns
22745

Dates of inspection: 29th to 31st March 2004

Inspection number: 255845
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	212
School address:	The Street Cobham Gravesend Kent
Postcode:	DA12 3BN
Telephone number:	01474 814373
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Cobham Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Rev S Davie
Date of previous inspection:	8 th February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Cobham Primary School is situated in a village not far from Gravesend in Kent. There are 117 boys and 95 girls on roll with a marked gender imbalance in some classes. Sixteen children attend full time in the Foundation Stage and 14 part time. Pupils come from other local village communities as well as Cobham and from Gravesend, Strood and Meopham. The socio economics of the area are above average. Eighteen pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, most of whom have moderate learning difficulties. This is below average. Four pupils have statements of need which is broadly average. Only a few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and none speaks English as an additional language. Ten pupils joined the school last year and one left at other than the normal times of joining and leaving. This is below average. Pupils generally enter the school at above average levels of attainment. The school received the Schools Achievement Award and Healthy Schools Award in 2002 and Investor in People in 2003.

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15271	Brian Farley	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education, special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Good teaching and learning overall mean that all groups of pupils achieve well in Years 1 to 6 and that standards in the national tests are consistently high. The good leadership of the headteacher and key staff and the strong partnership with the governing body ensure that there is a real commitment to the school's success. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In Year 6, standards are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics.
- The school includes all pupils very well in its work so that pupils of different ages and abilities take learning seriously, behave well and want to succeed.
- The good leadership of the headteacher ensures that there are high aspirations for pupils' achievement but some management systems are not carried out rigorously enough.
- Consistently good teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 mean that pupils have high expectations of their own performance and are confident and independent learners.
- Most parents and pupils are very happy with the school so that there is a true partnership in learning which contributes to its effectiveness.
- School development planning is not precise or detailed enough to enable it to be effective in guiding change and improvement.
- Too many undemanding worksheets limit pupils' responses and recording skills.
- In most cases, marking does not show pupils how to improve their work.
- In the Reception class, pupils are not given enough opportunities to move freely between indoor and outdoor learning areas.

There has been a satisfactory improvement since the school was last inspected in 1999. The best improvements have been in raising standards in writing, curriculum planning and accommodation. Improvements in checking the quality of teaching and using assessment information have been satisfactory. The school's response to issues involving school development planning has been unsatisfactory. Standards in Year 6 are broadly the same as at the last inspection.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A*	A	A	B
Mathematics	A*	A*	C	E
Science	A*	A	A	B

Key: A - in the top five per cent of schools; 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.

Achievement is good overall. It is satisfactory in Reception and good in Years 1 to 6. Children are on course to reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception in all areas of learning judged by the inspection except in speaking and listening where they are above average and in physical development where they are below average. In Year 2, standards are well above average in reading and writing, above average in science and average in mathematics and all other subjects where judgements could be made. In Year 6, standards are well above average in English, science and art and design, above average in mathematics and geography and average in information and communication technology (ICT), history, physical education (PE) and religious education (RE). Not

enough evidence was gathered to make reliable judgements about music, design and technology (DT) and personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE).

Pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. By the top of the school, pupils' attitudes to work are very good. Their behaviour is good and they cooperate happily with each other and their teachers. Attendance is good and pupils are ready for a prompt start to lessons.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is satisfactory in Reception and good in Years 1 to 6. Teachers' calm and supportive management of pupils makes them feel confident and eager to try out new ideas. Lessons are usually well planned and teachers achieve a good balance between giving information and encouraging pupils to learn through practical activities and independent research. However, teachers' marking generally fails to challenge pupils to think more deeply about their work. Good resources and aspects of the school's accommodation give pupils many interesting opportunities to learn. Good levels of care help them to work hard in a happy, safe environment. Good links with parents, other schools and the community mean that the school can draw on outside resources and expertise to help pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. The good leadership of the headteacher and key staff means that all adults in the school work together as a team and the needs of pupils come first. The management of the school is satisfactory. There are some good systems in place for checking the school's performance but they are not always carried out rigorously enough. Governors work closely with the headteacher and staff and play an important role in shaping the direction of the school. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with the school. They feel that the needs of individual pupils are well catered for and that their children receive a well-rounded education. Pupils' views are also very positive. Many commented on how much they liked their friends and teachers but would like improvements to the accommodation.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of the school improvement plan to enable it to be a driving force behind the school's work.
- Give pupils more scope in developing writing and recording skills across the curriculum.
- Raise the quality of teachers' marking so that it gives clear guidance to pupils about how they can improve their work.
- Create more outdoor learning opportunities for children in the Reception year.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, achievement is good. This includes pupils with SEN, more able pupils, the gifted and talented and minority ethnic pupils. Achievement is satisfactory in the Reception class and standards are average overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and standards are well above average in reading and writing, above average in science and average in mathematics. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and, in Year 6, reach well above average standards in English and science and above average levels in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 are consistently high.
- Children in the Reception class reach lower standards in their physical development.
- Standards have improved in English in Year 2 and in science across the school since the last inspection.
- Standards in mathematics in Year 2 and Year 6 are lower than in English and science.
- Excessive use of worksheets restricts pupils' ability to reach higher levels in some subjects.
- Marking is not rigorous enough to show pupils how to improve their work.
- Pupils with SEN achieve well and make good progress overall.

Commentary

1. Generally, most children enter the Reception class with above average attainment for their age. This year, on entry to the Reception class, most children were at the expected level for their age. By the end of the Reception year, indications are that most children will meet the expected standards in four of the six areas of the recommended curriculum for children of this age. Not enough evidence was gathered to make a judgement about their creative development. Many are unlikely to achieve the expected standard in their physical development because there are not enough opportunities for them to use the outside learning environment. Children's satisfactory achievement is related to the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.3 (18.0)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	16.1 (15.7)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.5 (17.5)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In the end of Year 2 national tests and teachers' assessments in 2003, standards were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools based on the number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, standards were above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. The 2003 results reflect the consistently high standards the school reaches in these tests.

3. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, standards are well above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing, above average in science and average in mathematics, ICT, history, geography, art and design and RE. Not enough evidence was gathered to make valid judgements in music, DT, PSHCE and PE. Achievement is good in all aspects of English and in science as good teaching enables pupils to learn and consolidate a variety of new skills and

concepts quickly. It is satisfactory in all other subjects where it reflects the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.4 (29.3)	27 (27)
Mathematics	27.2 (30.1)	27 (26.7)
Science	30.8 (30.1)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Standards in the end of Year 6 national tests in 2003 were well above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools whose pupils obtained comparable results at the end of Year 2, standards were above average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. Standards show an upward trend similar to the national trend although standards in mathematics have declined steadily since 2001. The school did not meet its targets in English and mathematics at the average Level 4 in these tests but just exceeded them in the higher Level 5 in English.

5. The findings of the inspection are that standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, science and art and design, above average in mathematics and geography and average in ICT, history, PE and RE. There was not enough evidence gathered to make reliable judgements about music, DT and PSHCE. Achievement is very good in science and in art and design because of the quality of teaching and learning and subject leadership. It is good in English, mathematics, ICT and geography because of teachers' clearly expressed expectations of the quality and pace of pupils' work and of their commitment to their own learning. Achievement is satisfactory in other subjects where judgements could be made.

6. Standards in English in Year 2 have improved significantly since the previous inspection because of improvements in the quality of teaching, which was unsatisfactory last time, and because the school has addressed the key issue for action to improve pupils' writing skills well. Conversely, standards in mathematics in Year 2 are lower because the evidence gained during the inspection showed that teachers' expectations are not always high enough. In addition, the over use of worksheets, which provide a needed structure for some pupils, limits others' ability to develop their recording skills. In Year 6, standards in mathematics are lower than in English and science because some teachers rely too heavily on prescriptive worksheets and testing which narrows the breadth of the curriculum. Marking gives too few constructive comments about how pupils can improve their work. Analysis of assessment data is not precise enough to explain the differences over time in boys' and girls' results in the national tests and there are discrepancies in teacher assessment and national test results. Standards in science across the school have risen because of a stronger emphasis on pupils learning through observation and investigation. Higher standards in art and design and geography in Year 6 are the result of teachers' better subject expertise. There has been a general decline in standards in RE because of the excessive use of worksheets which lack challenge and limit response.

7. The progress of pupils with SEN is satisfactory in the Reception class and good in the rest of the school. This is linked with the quality of teaching and learning. Support from teaching assistants is carefully planned and used.

8. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed across the curriculum. ICT is being used well and has been given great impetus by the recently opened suite. The development of literacy skills is unsatisfactory because of the extensive use of worksheets noted above.

9. Discussions with pupils and their views in the questionnaire show that they feel that they are expected to work hard at all times and are doing as well as they can. Parents are also happy with the progress made by their children and consider that individual learning needs are well met. During the inspection, no differences were noted in the achievement of boys and girls although there is a big gender imbalance in some classes.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning, particularly at the top of the school, are very good. Their behaviour, attendance and punctuality are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show very good interest in learning, concentrate very well and are enthusiastic.
- Their behaviour is good in lessons, assemblies and around the school.
- Relationships between pupils and among pupils and adults are very good.
- Pupils are very willing to take responsibility. They are confident, highly articulate and very supportive of one another.
- Pupils show very good respect for one another's feelings and beliefs.
- The attendance rate is above the national average.
- Pupils have a good understanding of moral and social values and apply them well.
- Wider aspects of spiritual education are not specifically planned into the curriculum.

Commentary

10. At all stages, pupils enjoy school and all it has to offer. Children in the Reception class settle quickly into school routines and interact very well with older pupils. Pupils, especially older ones, have very good attitudes to learning and want to do well. They are very articulate and keen to enter into discussion. They listen carefully to the views of others, co-operate very well and are very trustworthy. All groups of pupils respond very well to teachers' good expectations of them and are confident, friendly and polite.

11. Behaviour is good throughout the school in lessons, assemblies and playtimes. This reflects the views of the parents who responded to the questionnaire. A significant proportion of pupils in their replies to the questionnaire felt that other pupils did not always behave well. However, this misgiving appears to apply to a very small number of older pupils. The school has developed good strategies to deal with unsatisfactory behaviour, including the self-evaluation form given to pupils after any incident. Pupils know the school rules well. They are well aware of how they should behave and fully understand the difference between right and wrong. No bullying or harassment was observed during the inspection and pupils knew what they should do if it should occur.

12. Pupils are very enterprising and respond very well to the many opportunities for taking responsibility, for example, through the School Council, the House system and through the new gamester roles on the playground. Relationships between pupils and adults and among the pupils themselves are very good. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson on analogue and digital clocks, the teacher's very good relationship with her class meant that pupils were keen to put forward ideas and explain their reasoning. Pupils take part in school activities very readily.

13. Attendance and punctuality are good. Staff monitor attendance effectively and are well supported by the educational welfare service. Unauthorised absence is very low. There have been no exclusions for many years.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data:	4.7
National data:	5.4

School data:	0.1
National data:	0.5

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

Exclusions

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	170	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

14. Pupils' moral and social development is good. This is a result of a strong emphasis by the headteacher upon appropriate moral and social values in the school. For example, he vigorously promotes the principle of trust as a foundation for the development of pupils' moral and social attitudes. These positive principles are reinforced in collective worship, RE and in PSHCE. Pupils have a very good understanding of the responsibilities of living in a community and have good opportunities to put this into practice. They are rewarded for their achievements not only for academic effort, but also for positive moral and social endeavours. In addition, they learn about the needs of others in the wider community when they support various charity appeals at different times of the year.

15. Pupils learn about different cultural traditions through subjects such as geography and RE. For example, they have used the Internet to visit a virtual Mosque to learn about aspects of Islam. They have some understanding of spiritual values through assemblies and collective worship. However, the wider and non-religious aspects of spirituality in subjects such as English, art and design, music and science are not a significant feature of the curriculum. This is because spirituality is not planned systematically into those subjects.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The strongest features are good teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6, the equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, aspects of the accommodation, resources, levels of care for pupils' welfare and links with parents, other schools and the community. Areas for improvement include some aspects of assessment and outside learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. It is satisfactory in the Reception class and good in the rest of the school. Provision for assessment is good. The use of assessment data is good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' sensitive and positive management of pupils makes them confident learners.
- Good subject knowledge means that new learning is introduced in a clear and structured way.
- Teachers' probing questions make pupils work things out for themselves.
- Too many worksheets mean that some subjects are not being taught at the right depth.
- The teacher in the Reception class provides a wide range of experiences, which interest the children.
- Pupils with SEN benefit from good teaching and close support.
- Assessment procedures are good.
- Marking does not help pupils to learn from mistakes or to develop ideas.
- Older pupils are not sufficiently aware of National Curriculum levels to enable them to assess their own work.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	3 (9%)	20 (57%)	12 (34%)	0 (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 brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

16. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in the school is good. As in the last inspection, teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Reception class. They are now good in Years 1 and 2 whereas there were wide variations previously. Teaching is consistently good in Years 3 to 6 and gathers momentum towards the top of the school. Teaching is very good in science in Years 3 to 6. It is good in English and science in Years 1 and 2 and in English, mathematics, ICT, geography and art and design in Years 3 to 6. In all other subjects and year groups where judgements could be made, it was satisfactory. Nearly all pupils in their questionnaires said that they found out new things in lessons and that teachers gave them help when they were stuck. Ninety-five per cent of parents felt that teaching was good and a similar number that teachers expected their children to work hard.

17. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in all areas of learning although not enough evidence was gathered for a judgement to be made in creative development. The Reception children respond well to the teacher's good, positive approach towards high standards of behaviour. There is effective teamwork with the teaching assistant which ensures that the activities engage the interest of the children. A satisfactory range of activities is provided, which enable the children to work and play independently and collaboratively. The indoor classroom is used well but the spacious, secure outside area for the children is not used enough. There are good procedures for monitoring the children's achievement on a day-to-day basis. However, use of these observations is only satisfactory, as lesson plans seen during the inspection showed that every child was undertaking the same work.

18. There is a very positive work ethos in the school which is founded upon teachers' careful management of pupils' behaviour. They value pupils' contributions and treat mistakes sensitively so that the atmosphere in the classroom is supportive and friendly. This means that pupils feel relaxed and ready to learn. In a Year 5 lesson about developing a healthy, safer lifestyle, the teacher's encouraging comments enabled pupils to acquire strategies to cope with situations where they felt pressurised by others. Good teaching is also based upon teachers' own subject expertise so that explanations and demonstrations are fluent and well-informed and presentations are lively and stylish. It also means that teachers have a vision of what pupils can achieve. In a Year 6 lesson on exploring two and three-dimensional media, the teacher's challenging questions prompted pupils to think creatively and to be bold and innovative in their designs for masks. Linked to this good subject knowledge are teachers' skilful questioning techniques which make pupils think for themselves and

encourage them to make best use of their previous learning. In a Year 2 numeracy lesson, the teacher's searching questions made pupils be very precise in explaining their thinking about odd and even numbers. Other common strengths in teaching are good team work with teaching assistants, thorough planning, lively interaction with pupils and, in some cases, giving pupils the freedom to choose and experiment and to develop their own learning.

19. There is generally a sense of urgency in teaching, which keeps pupils alert and interested, but some lessons develop a flagging pace because of overlong explanations or repetition so that a current of restlessness develops among pupils. Teachers also use too many worksheets which limit opportunities for developing pupils' writing skills. Some teachers also do not have sufficient strategies for extending pupils' speaking skills and allow the more talkative to take over discussions.

20. Across the school, teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to provide for the needs of pupils with SEN. These pupils are generally taught in class. However, they are withdrawn from lessons sometimes for more intensive support, particularly when there is a need for close focus on specific tasks. Resources for teaching are used well. The way in which teachers match work to pupils' needs has improved since the previous inspection.

21. Assessment procedures are good and thorough across the school. Data from these are used well to group pupils of different abilities, ensuring pupils are appropriately challenged. This is a good improvement from the previous inspection. Teachers use the information well to plan an appropriate level of work for pupils in Years 3 to 6 in English and science. Good tracking systems are in place and are checked each term to ensure that pupils are on line to achieve the standards of which they are capable. However, procedures are not being used well enough in mathematics to ensure the maintenance of high standards.

22. The standard of marking is unsatisfactory. It is inconsistent across the school and often too congratulatory without any helpful comments on how pupils can improve their work in order to reach higher standards. Achievable targets are set for every pupil and are regularly reviewed and updated. However, some are too general to be helpful and although pupils can say what they are good or not good at, there is little indication to show how pupils judge this. Although the teachers know the National Curriculum level at which pupils are working, most pupils are unaware of it. This means that pupils, especially older ones, do not know what they need to do in order to achieve a higher level.

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is satisfactory overall. Provision for pupils' learning outside of the school day and the development of their interests are satisfactory. The accommodation and resources of the school provide good support to meet the needs of the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning experiences for pupils are coherent, broad and carefully planned.
- The good ethos promotes learning opportunities of good quality.
- Curricular provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- Resources make a good contribution to curricular provision.
- Accommodation has improved, but some shortcomings remain.

Commentary

23. The school has established a satisfactory curriculum. It has improved since the previous inspection because there is now an overall curricular structure with clear and manageable planning that teachers use effectively.

24. Where pupils have individual education plans (IEPs), the targets set by teachers for them are clear and achievable. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. These plans have

suggested teaching strategies and criteria for success. Therefore, they are an effective tool in curricular provision. Teachers carefully record pupils' progress each term and this helps them establish new and appropriate learning objectives.

25. The headteacher successfully promotes and maintains an ethos that contributes well to pupils' development. The personal and social education of pupils is a strength of the school and every effort is made to ensure that there is full equality of access and opportunity for them. This is achieved by the good knowledge that teachers have of pupils and by careful analysis of a wide range of test data to ensure that pupils do the best that they can. The school has identified those with particular gifts and talents and is developing ways of meeting their specific needs. The generally good standards reached by almost all pupils equip them very well for the subsequent stages in their education.

26. The school provides pupils with a satisfactory range of activities that enhance their learning. For example, those in Year 6 and Year 4 have residential visits to extend their understanding of the world and engage in, among other things, adventurous and outdoor pursuits. A range of visitors adds to pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Year 4 learned about Tudor times and in Year 5 about the 1940's during history activity days. The school plans to extend its links with the local community so that greater breadth is introduced into pupils' learning. They can participate in a good range of extra-curricular activities of a sporting and recreational nature, for example, according to the term, netball, cricket, rounders, art, sewing and chess tournaments. Pupils have opportunities for instrumental music tuition.

27. ICT resources are good and include a computer suite and computers in all classrooms. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The accommodation has been improved significantly in recent times and there are plans to provide more suitable indoor PE facilities and better toilets. There have also been recent improvements to the storage and provision of the children's outdoor play equipment in the Reception class.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The induction arrangements for children in Reception are good.
- The school provides a good level of care for pupils with SEN.
- There are effective procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid.
- All adults know pupils well and provide very good levels of care.
- There are good systems for monitoring pupils' academic standards and progress.
- Arrangements for monitoring pupils' personal development are effective.
- The involvement of pupils in the school's work is good.

Commentary

28. The induction arrangements for children in the Reception class are good. Parents are invited to a meeting with the headteacher and the Reception class teacher to learn about the curriculum for their children. They are invited to bring their children into school to meet their new teacher before starting school in either September or January. Very good relationships are quickly built up with the children's parents, which help them to know how well their children will be looked after in school. The good induction procedures enable the children to settle easily into school.

29. Pupils with IEPs know their learning targets and this helps them to assess and review their own progress toward meeting them. Those who have statements of SEN contribute to the assessment of their progress at annual reviews.

30. The school has good health and safety procedures. Arrangements for the administration of first aid and for monitoring pupils' medical conditions are very good. Good numbers of staff have been trained in first aid. Emergency procedures are very thorough. Risk assessments are carried out regularly and a recent asbestos survey has been carried out by the local education authority. Additional assessments are carried out for trips and visits. Security is good. The deputy headteacher is the designated person for child protection and has been recently trained. Procedures are effective. Staff are very aware of child protection issues and there are good guidelines and training for both teaching and non-teaching staff. Links with local social services are good.

31. There is a strong bond of trust between pupils and all adults who work in the school. Nearly all pupils who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that there was at least one adult to whom they could turn for advice. Adults know the pupils very well and monitor their personal development very effectively through class files, the monitoring of celebration assemblies, logs of House points and reports. Academic monitoring is used well to inform pupils' reports. However, marking is not always used well to ensure that pupils really understand what have to do to improve.

32. Pupils' views are sought consistently through the School Council, 'circle time', assemblies and PHSCE. Pupils in their questionnaire felt confident that their views could be heard and acted upon, for example, the role of gamesters for Year 6 was suggested by the School Council to help supervisors on the playground.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents, the community and with other schools are good.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views of the school.
- The school provides parents with good information.
- Good links with the local pre-school and with other local schools provide many benefits for the pupils.
- The school has good links with its local community.
- Parents who have children with SEN are appropriately involved.

Commentary

33. In a good return to the questionnaire, parents and carers expressed very positive views on nearly all aspects of the work of the school. A significant proportion did not feel well informed about their children's progress. This concern was not borne out by the findings of the inspection. Information provided for parents is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Details about the work pupils are to cover are provided each term and home/school books are used well as a means of dialogue between school and home. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed of events and teachers are always available for informal consultation at the end of the day. The school prospectus and governors' Annual Report are clearly written and informative. Written annual reports are satisfactory: they provide National Curriculum levels for pupils in Years 2 to 6 and give diagnostic and thorough information on English, mathematics and science. However, for other subjects, they give too much information about what children have learned and not enough about their progress. They set targets and offer parents or pupils the opportunity to comment. The majority of parents are satisfied with homework, which includes helpful guidelines on how they can help their children. Termly meetings are used well for discussions on pupils' progress. Links with parents of children with SEN are good. Plans are in place for more regular seeking of parents' views through questionnaires after governors held a questionnaire last year on voluntary contributions.

34. Parents support the school very well through the Parents' and Teachers' Association, which has raised substantial sums towards new buildings in recent years and regularly raises considerable

amounts to buy equipment to support children's learning. Very good numbers of parents help in school on a regular basis and more on trips and visits.

35. The school provides an appropriate level of involvement for parents of pupils with SEN. There has been some improvement in this since the previous inspection. Parents are invited to comment on reviews of their child's progress and can be invited to contribute to the setting of new targets. Communication is usually by letter, but pupils' IEPs do not indicate clearly enough when, and with what results, communication takes place.

36. There are good links with parents of children in the Reception class. Good relationships with parents are quickly established through the good induction programme.

37. The school has good links with the many local secondary schools to which pupils transfer and endeavours to ensure that parents are well informed about the many options available for their children. Year 7 tutors from local grammar schools and the main comprehensive school visit to discuss children's progress and former pupils also visit to talk to Year 6 on an informal basis. Pupils from a local independent school use the school for work experience and their musicians regularly give concerts to pupils. Pupils have good links with other local primary schools through sports and music and headteachers, ICT co-ordinators and SENCOs from the local consortium of primary schools meet each term.

38. There are good links with the local community, including the church. The vicar regularly takes assemblies and children visit the church for services. Pupils sing to the elderly at Christmas and members of the community regularly support the school at Christmas and summer fairs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher and also of key staff is good. Management of the school is satisfactory. Governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff and governors work as a committed and coordinated team.
- Pupils are given full access and opportunity to what the school has to offer.
- The school has built up an objective picture of its own performance but information is not always being used sharply enough.
- Strategic planning does not provide a clear agenda for addressing weaknesses.
- The quality of teaching and learning is checked regularly but not always rigorously enough.
- Good leadership and management of school's provision for pupils with SEN.
- Governors are constructively critical while valuing the work of the headteacher and staff.
- Systems for checking the impact of expenditure on standards are not well developed.

Commentary

39. The thoughtful leadership of the headteacher combines a concern for the well being of pupils, a respect for the professionalism of staff and a quest for high standards in all aspects of the school's work. He has built up an enthusiastic and clear-sighted management team to move the school forward. The recent achievement of Investor in People has given the school a stronger identity and sense of purpose. It has resulted in a real team spirit among staff and governors which provides a definite momentum for change and continuous improvement. These high aspirations mean that there is a determination to maintain high academic standards as well as effective pastoral care. This ensures equality of opportunity and the best possible deal for pupils. There are no significant barriers to raising pupils' achievement at the school.

40. The school's commitment to continuous improvement is underpinned by its comprehensive analysis of the school's performance. Data are used to check trends, identify weaknesses and

monitor progress of groups such as pupils with SEN. This information leads to clear programme of actions being put in place to address any problems which have been highlighted, for example, progression in writing and data handling in mathematics. Thorough assessment systems help the school to build up an accurate profile of individual pupils and to target help where it is needed. However, the school does not always use skills in analysing and interpreting data sharply enough to keep a keen eye on how even high standards can be improved, for example, discrepancies in teacher assessment and results in mathematics. In some cases, pupils' targets are too vague to act as a real springboard to raising achievement. Although the school has built up a detailed and objective view of its work, its self-evaluation procedures lack precision.

41. There has been an unsatisfactory response to the key issue for action in the last inspection to make school development planning more effective. Governors are now actively involved in discussing priorities for the school improvement plan and monitor its progress towards its objectives more frequently. However, the current school improvement plan is projected for only one year which limits the impact of strategic planning. Priorities are not clear and criteria for judging success are not specific enough to measure progress made. There is not a sharp enough focus on standards; action plans are often not sufficiently detailed and some are routine. This means that it does not provide a clear agenda for addressing the school's weaknesses or act as an effective catalyst for improvement.

42. The school has satisfactorily addressed the other key issue for action relating to the role of subject leaders. Since the last inspection, the role of subject leader is better developed and is now well-defined. Some have good experience and expertise and make an important contribution to building up colleagues' confidence and expectations. However, financial constraints have meant that they have had limited opportunities recently to play a pivotal role in monitoring and developing their subjects in order to give high quality, creative input.

43. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning were also highlighted for improvement at the last inspection. The headteacher and key staff now check on the quality of teaching and learning systematically and regularly. Strengths are recognised and built on and problems addressed through professional dialogue and at staff meetings. However, some monitoring is not rigorous enough to lead to greater consistency in the good quality of teaching in the school and to refine existing practice. Best practice in the classroom is being used increasingly. The cycle of Performance Management, which includes support staff, is an integral part of the development of the whole school. There is a strong commitment to continuing professional development but financial constraints have recently restricted opportunities for staff. All these factors mean that although some good management procedures are in place, they are not always carried out rigorously or methodically enough to give a thorough and realistic evaluation of the work of the school.

44. The teacher and the teaching assistant form a sound team for the Reception class. The teacher in the Reception class ensures that the children feel safe and secure, which enables them to learn within a caring environment.

45. The provision for pupils with SEN is good. This is because the coordinator has a clear understanding of all procedures and implements them effectively. However, the use of ICT in administration is not developed enough, for example, in writing IEPs, which is time consuming for teachers. Teaching assistants are used effectively and are fully competent to support pupils. Sections in the school prospectus and the governors' Annual Report to parents are unclear in summarising the policy for SEN and indicating success in its implementation.

46. Governors help to shape the vision and direction of the school and are always seeking more efficient ways of supporting and challenging its work. They have ensured that all statutory requirements are met. Governors are active in the school, bring a good range of professional expertise to their role and attend appropriate training. They have a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and make an effective contribution to its strategic management through their network of committees and early involvement in development planning. They gain a further understanding of the school through analysis of assessment data, development days, reports from

the headteacher and subject leaders and school events. However, there is no structured programme of visits to the classroom to enable them to gain a firmer grasp of the school's performance.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	488512	Balance from previous year	22185
Total expenditure	464768	Balance carried forward to the next	23743
Expenditure per pupil	2203		

47. Careful financial planning and administration ensure that spending is focused on priorities in the school improvement plan and is regularly renewed during the year. The school has worked hard to overcome the projected financial deficit. Governors ensure that they obtain value for money when making purchases or undertaking building projects. They have made a conscious decision to retain and recruit experienced staff although this has involved greater expenditure. The school does not have appropriate systems in place to analyse the impact of all financial projects on their potential to improve pupils' learning and to make teaching more effective.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Reception class is **satisfactory**.

48. This is similar to the judgement in the previous inspection. At the time of this inspection, 30 children attended full time in the Reception class. There are good arrangements for introducing the children to school. This means that most are happy to leave their parents and quickly get used to school routines. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and children, including those with SEN, make satisfactory progress in all the areas of learning where judgements could be made. Although their attainment on entry is similar to that seen in most schools, many of the children in the present Reception class have good listening skills and a good vocabulary. Indications are that most children are likely to achieve the expected standard in four of the six areas of learning by the end of the Reception year. Standards are on course to be below average in physical development. There was not enough evidence gathered to make judgements on teaching and learning and standards in creative development.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with a secure, supportive environment in which to learn.
- Restrictions are placed on children's ability to choose for themselves.

49. The well-established routines and caring nature of the provision allow children to feel secure and to grow in confidence. During the school day, the children are given opportunities to choose activities for themselves. However, the teacher specifies which children can choose and those who are to work with an adult. This limits the children's capability to make independent choices. The limitations on access to the outside area also restrict the children's personal and social development. Children are given effective help to establish boundaries for acceptable behaviour through the good relationships, which are quickly forged between the children and adults in the class. They are helped to understand the importance of telling the truth through stories with a moral. Children behave well and positively respond when they are asked to stop their activities and to be ready to listen.

Communication, Language and Literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident speakers and active listeners.
- Unproductive use of worksheets.

50. Most children make satisfactory progress in developing their communication, language and literacy skills. Many children start school with good speaking and listening skills, but their reading and writing skills are at the expected level for their age. Many have a wide vocabulary and are able to express their ideas well. Adults within the class speak clearly and are good role models for the children. The teacher makes learning fun, such as by playing games to match rhyming words. In a guided reading session, a group of children attentively listened to the story and made a good attempt at finding the rhyming words, such as vet, pet and jet, as the teacher read to them. Most children are at the early stage of reading. They confidently handle books correctly and use the pictures to read the stories. Children's own mark making and emergent writing are accepted, which is good, as this

helps them to feel confident to write. They read their writing to an adult, who prints the sentence below the children's writing. This is good practice as it allows the children to see the correct spellings. However, often the children are asked to rewrite the words again. This is not always successful, as the size of the children's writing does not match the adult's. This also restricts the children's confidence to write freely and little is gained in their learning of correct letter formation or spellings. There is an overuse of worksheets for this and other areas of the curriculum, which are of little value as the children cannot read them and it devalues the children's own attempts at writing.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practical activities enable the children to make sound gains in their understanding of early mathematical skills.
- Adults question children well to support their learning.

51. The children are encouraged to count by playing games and singing number songs. They enjoy using their fingers to count along with the teacher, shaking one hand on multiples of five and both hands on each multiple of ten, as they count up to 50. Children develop their ideas well through practical experiences, such as handling a variety of three-dimensional shapes. Adults question the children well while they are engaged in these activities, always trying to draw out and encourage mathematical thinking. This was evident when the children were learning about three-dimensional shapes. They were quickly learning to describe the shapes using mathematical vocabulary, such as faces, edges, corners, cube, pyramid and cylinder. Although the children enjoy water play, there is not always sufficient intervention by adults to enable the children to gain well in their learning about quantity and measures. Some more able children show a good understanding of numbers up to ten and can record their answers of simple addition up to ten. However, this task is too demanding for many of the children, as they do not have a sufficient understanding of the quantity represented by the printed number.

Knowledge and Understanding of the world

Provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with a good range of experiences to explore and observe real life.

52. Good use is made of the school grounds for the children to explore and observe the natural changes in the seasons. They are growing cress and beans, which is helping them to learn the requirements for seeds to grow. They can explain in simple terms the life cycle of a butterfly and of a frog. The children wrapped four different materials around a small plastic bear to find out which was the best to protect the bear against water. They use a satisfactory range of commercial construction kits to explore and make models. The children enjoy using computers and some can use the mouse to click and drag shapes to make a pattern. They have used a computer program to draw a person, flowers and trees. Many know that Jesus had 12 disciples and that stories about Jesus can be found in the Bible.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- They are given many opportunities to improve their hand / eye coordination.
- Insufficient use is made of the outdoor area to extend physical development.

53. The children are provided with a satisfactory range of experiences to develop their hand control, such as cutting and sticking different materials. However, many have relatively poor pencil control. Overall, many children are unlikely to achieve the expected level in their physical development by the end of the Reception year. This is because children do not use the outside area sufficiently. Although the outside area is spacious, secure and is adjacent to the Reception class, it cannot be seen from the classroom. There are some large wheeled toys and other equipment for outdoor use, but the time allowed for the children to use these is too limited. In a lesson in the hall, the children enjoyed pretending to be a seed growing into a bean. However, their large movements are stilted and show a lack of confidence in free movement.

Creative development

54. No formal teaching and learning for creative development was seen during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. No musical activities were observed or any creative artwork during the inspection. At times, the children chose to play in the home corner. Although they played well together, there was no participation by adults to help to extend their imaginative play. Painting materials were not available during the inspection. Children used colouring pencils, when they were able to choose an activity, but without any contribution from adults to help them to improve the quality of their work.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils are developing a good feel for language.
- Pupils are careful listeners and confident and adventurous in speaking.
- Enjoyment of books is an integral part of school life.
- Pupils' creative writing is often inventive and thoughtful.
- Teaching is confident and well-informed so that pupils achieve well.
- Guided reading is still in early stages of development.
- Marking is not constructive or challenging enough.
- Literacy skills are not developed well in other subjects.

Commentary

55. Standards in all aspects of English are well above average in Year 2 and Year 6. The achievement of all groups of pupils is good. Standards in Year 2 are better than at the time of the last inspection especially in writing and high standards have been maintained in Year 6. The school has made a good response to the key issue for action to improve standards in writing in classes where it was a weakness. Improvement has, therefore, been good.

56. By the top of the school, most pupils are confident and competent users of language. In Year 2, many are clear and responsive communicators who enjoy using interesting words and sounds. They answer questions carefully and their contributions to discussion are lively and expressive. In Year 6, pupils explore ideas in a considered and balanced way and some have an extensive vocabulary that they use with understanding and maturity. Sometimes, teachers allow more articulate pupils to dominate discussions and do not adequately draw out those pupils who have a more limited range of language structures and words. Drama is not used enough across the school to improve pupils' performance skills and to build up the confidence of more reluctant pupils. Pupils of all ages are accurate and reflective listeners so that they respond readily to the ideas of others and show tolerance and respect in their thinking. In a whole school assembly on the theme of New Life, pupils were quiet and attentive as they listened to the story of Prahlad and Holika linked to the Hindu festival of Holi.

57. Throughout the school, pupils' obvious enthusiasm for books is a strength of their learning and many read with lively expression and great pleasure. They read with a degree of fluency, confidence and accuracy appropriate to their age. Year 2 pupils talk excitedly about books and are keen to justify their likes and dislikes. Most cope with unfamiliar words confidently using their knowledge of sounds and word building techniques. In Year 6, pupils read widely for pleasure and information and know how to bring the text alive by using their voices expressively to match the mood and character of the story. Some of them are also intelligent and reflective as they consider wider themes in their reading and how the story develops. Pupils are also good at researching information from books and other sources. The school is aware that guided reading is an area for development. In the classes seen during the inspection, those in the focus groups led by the teacher and teaching assistant received good support but there was too much silent reading and some pupils were distracted or passive. Reading record books are not being used appropriately as they do not sufficiently help the pupils to develop their skills in evaluating the books that they read.

58. In Year 2, pupils have a good awareness of the structure of a story and write in a variety of ways including settings, instructions, character profiles and flow charts. Many know how to improve simple sentences with descriptive words and connectives to develop a more exciting story line. More able pupils have a lively confidence in their use of language and are becoming adventurous with their choice of words. In Year 6, pupils write in an interesting and challenging range of styles and obviously enjoy exploring ideas and experimenting with language. They plan and draft work carefully. A few pupils do not sustain their ideas consistently enough and their output is small but many are developing a strong individual style and write with great depth of feeling and originality. The vigour and freshness of some of their writing were evident in their work on different emotions in haiku poems and on the power of Nature in *Personifications*. Work in grammar is good and most pupils have a good grasp of spelling and grammar rules. Some pupils in Year 2 have a neat joined up style but others have a limited control over the size and shape of letters. Older pupils generally have a fluent style of handwriting

59. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' confidence in teaching the subject is shown by their lively presentations and by the clear and systematic way in which they teach key skills. In a Year 6 lesson identifying features of a balanced argument, the teacher emphasised the importance of weighing up a range of opinions so that pupils presented their ideas in a thoughtful and logical way. Teachers' relaxed and natural control of pupils creates a supportive but purposeful atmosphere in the classroom. They also value pupils' contributions which makes them try even harder. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher's dramatic poetry reading built up an aura of mystery which captured pupils' imagination. As a result, they were able to identify the techniques used by the poet to create suspense and tension. Teachers are also good at asking questions which encourage pupils to think carefully about what they are saying and to make best use of previous learning. In a Year 2 lesson about flow charts, the teacher's probing questions gave pupils time to consider and rephrase their answers as they discussed how to produce a flow chart explaining a process like making bread. Other common strengths include a lively pace and effective use of timed targets. Although learning objectives are made clear, teachers do not always give expectations of the quality and quantity of work required so that pupils do not always know what they are aiming for. Marking

gives few indications about how pupils can improve their work and is insufficiently linked to their targets.

60. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has shown good initiative in bringing new ideas to her work. She has obtained a good overview of the subjects through classroom observations and looking at planning and pupils' books although this has been more limited recently because of financial constraints. Tracking procedures are good but, in some cases, targets are too vague and do not provide the precise focus for pupils to achieve higher levels.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. The development of language and literacy in other subjects is unsatisfactory. In art and design, Year 6 pupils discuss and write about their creation of masks and some year groups explore healthy life styles in PSHCE. However, in some subjects, for example, history and RE, there is excessive use of undemanding worksheets often requiring predictable and one-word answers. This sometimes includes low-level tasks like colouring in which waste valuable learning time. Although these worksheets may provide necessary structure and support for the less able, they lack challenge for most pupils. As a result, they restrict pupils' scope and imagination as writers, limit recording skills and narrow their awareness of the purposes of writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is above average and achievement is good in Year 6.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6.
- Teachers' expectations for pupils to produce work of good quality are too low in Years 1 and 2.
- Worksheets and testing are used too much in Years 1 to 6.
- Marking across the school gives insufficient guidance for pupils to improve their work.
- Leadership and management lack some rigour in the analysis of pupils' performance.

Commentary

62. In Year 2, the standards reached by pupils are average. In the national tests of 2003, standards were well above average, but average compared with similar schools. Standards reached by pupils in Year 6 are above average. In the tests of 2003, standards were average, but well below average compared with similar schools.

63. Analysis of pupils' work in Year 2 indicated that inaccurate work was not uncommon and that their understanding of mathematical rules and processes was not always secure. Achievement, which takes account of the capabilities of pupils, is satisfactory in Year 2 and good in Year 6. The achievement of pupils with SEN is generally good for their capabilities. In the three years 2001 to 2003, on average, boys achieved less well than girls, but in this inspection, no significant differences were noted.

64. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils made good progress in the Year 2 lesson seen, but there was very little emphasis to ensure that they produced work of good quality and accuracy. Analysis of previously completed work revealed that teachers' expectations are not high enough. For example, work often lacked care, accuracy and good layout to ensure the appropriate development of pupils' mathematical thinking. This was also noted at the last inspection. A good lesson in Year 6 resulted in good achievement by pupils. Teaching was sharply focused on the development of their skills and mathematical thinking. A good range of practical activities was reinforced by an emphasis upon the use of questioning and expecting pupils to explain their thinking. They were very well managed, knew exactly what to do in

the lesson and, therefore, concentrated very well. Tasks were well matched to the different capabilities of pupils, thus challenge was appropriate and the teacher and her assistant provided effective support during the lesson. A very good lesson in Year 4 on 'time' was characterised by pupils who were good listeners, eager to contribute to discussion and enjoyed the challenges presented. The teacher planned the lesson carefully, used resources effectively and made particularly good use of questioning. A frequent response to pupils who answered her questions was, 'How do you know that?' This strategy was very effective in the development of their understanding. The analysis of work in Year 6 showed that there was less emphasis on using and applying mathematics.

65. Leadership and management are satisfactory. However, there is insufficient rigour in the analysis of pupils' performance and the contributory reasons. For example, differences in attainment between boys and girls have not been fully explored and explained and there are discrepancies between teachers' assessment of pupils and the results of national testing. Although pupils' progress is tracked, targets set and testing regular, analysis of all assessment data has not been used with enough precision to plan a specific-to-school mathematics curriculum. The extensive and excessive use of worksheets and testing throughout the school has an adverse effect upon the subject because it limits curricular breadth and depth. In most classes, marking does not consistently provide enough information to show pupils how to improve their work. The subject leader has begun to check the quality of teaching and learning, but has insufficient release time to allow her to do this effectively and productively.

66. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The school now has a policy and subject development plan and the use of ICT has been improved.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. This is **satisfactory**. Pupils use mathematics in aspects of science such as measuring melting times of ice, distances travelled by toy cars on inclined ramps and the angle of light reflected from mirrors. Pupils record their findings in data handling with the use of information and communication technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are based on an experimental and investigative approach.
- Overall, pupils in Years 3 to 6 reach well above average attainment.
- Very good subject leadership gives strong direction to teaching and learning.
- Good assessment procedures which are also used well.
- Marking is inconsistent.

Commentary

68. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and very well in Years 3 to 6 due to a consistent approach to teaching in which practical investigations reinforce learning effectively. Pupils enjoy, and are interested in, their science work. Overall, pupils in Year 2 are reaching above average standards and those in Year 6 are attaining well above average levels. This is a good improvement from the last inspection as standards are higher in both year groups. Pupils acquire new skills quickly as teachers plan for new teaching to build upon previous learning.

69. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers provide pupils with a stimulating range of resources, which enables them to gain first-hand experience and arouses their curiosity. Teachers use scientific vocabulary well and give clear explanations of the terms, which extend pupils' learning very well. Analysis of work in Year 6 showed

that pupils were able to identify key factors to be considered when a fair test is part of an investigation. Opportunities to develop scientific enquiry were evident a good Year 5 lesson, when pupils experimented with torches and different sized objects to investigate factors that might affect the size and position of the shadow of an object. In a good Year 4 lesson, the teacher used an adult-sized skeleton well to help pupils to make close observations and comparisons of the size of different bones in the human body. They then conducted an experiment to compare the size of their bones with others in the class and with an adult. Pupils made predictions before working very well together in small groups. The teacher used open-ended questioning very well and provided very good support by quietly questioning different groups of pupils, such as 'Why do you think?' and 'What do you think affects the size of different people?'

70. Assessment procedures are good. This information is used well to ensure that tasks are appropriately challenging and matched to the needs of pupils. Pupils make good progress in their learning and develop their scientific skills well. However, marking is inconsistent. Although some marking has helpful comments, which show pupils how to improve their work, other marking is just congratulatory.

71. The science subject leader is enthusiastic, has very good subject knowledge and leads the subject very well. She has a clear vision of how to teach science and is a very good role model for other teachers. She provides very good support and inspires others to provide stimulating science lessons. The leader feels that the teachers are very receptive to new ideas. Through her very good leadership, she is helping them to provide a very good range of science work for pupils. ICT is used satisfactorily to extend pupils' experiences and knowledge of science, such as in pupils' work on day and night.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in Year 6.
- Teaching engages pupils' interest and provides good levels of challenge.
- Keyboard and typing skills are underdeveloped.
- Leadership and management are good.
- The use of ICT in other subjects is developing well.

Commentary

72. Standards reached by pupils in Year 2 are average, but analysis of their previously completed work indicates that it has been limited in range and depth. Pupils in Year 6 reach average standards. They have used the Internet, produced a multimedia presentation, made an attractive 'Keeping Healthy' booklet and used data handling for various subjects. Achievement in Year 2 is satisfactory overall and in Year 6, it is good. All pupils with SEN achieve well.

73. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Year 2. This judgement is based upon teaching seen, analysis of work and discussion with pupils. However, in the one lesson seen, there were some good features. The teacher used the interactive whiteboard to instruct pupils and they responded well. They enjoyed the challenge of gathering information and creating questions to construct a 'binary tree'. They worked very well together, but were hampered by their underdeveloped typing skills, thus they took too long to carry out the task. Teaching and learning are good in Year 6. In the lesson seen, pupils made good progress because the teacher provided clear instruction and an interesting challenge. This engaged their desire to learn and to apply their computer skills and knowledge. They worked with good concentration and cooperation to create a 'Power Point' presentation for their work on 'Keeping Healthy'. However, progress was limited during the lesson because of their underdeveloped typing skills. Pupils in Year 6 have appropriate knowledge of the

use of ICT. For example, they know how to use a search engine and have some understanding of the use of devices such as video recorders and mobile phones. Throughout the school, typing skills are insufficiently developed to allow pupils to use their time more efficiently and productively.

74. Leadership and management are good. This is because the coordinator has a clear plan to develop the subject and its use in the school. The curriculum is in a process of development. For example, a specific amount of time is now allocated each week to teaching literacy and numeracy with the use of ICT.

75. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Resources have been much improved with the establishment of the computer suite. New assessment procedures that allow pupils to gauge and record their own progress have recently been introduced.

The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

76. This is good and developing well. Dependent upon their age, pupils have created bar charts and logo designs in mathematics, word-processed accounts of life in Ancient Egypt and produced research information about hedgehogs. They have used the Internet to search for information in geography, produced a very wide range of designs for the covers of investigation folders and used an appropriate program to create Aboriginal art designs.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in Years 3 to 6.
- First hand experiences enrich pupils' learning.
- Good use of resources.
- ICT is used effectively to extend learning.

Commentary

77. In geography, only two lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from discussions with teachers and pupils and an analysis of pupils' work and displays. Overall, pupils in Year 2 are attaining average standards and pupils in Year 6 are reaching above average levels. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

78. Overall, teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory and result in satisfactory achievement. However, in the lesson observed in the Year 1 class, pupils made good gains in their learning about the school grounds. This was achieved because the teacher used effective open-ended questioning, which encouraged the pupils to think for themselves, as they walked around the outside area of the school. She enabled them to focus on the geographical features of the school, such as the plants and animals in the school pond and why it was important to keep the school a litter-free area. Consistently good teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 result in pupils' good achievement so that attainment is above average.

79. Pupils in Year 1 study the local environment. After an enjoyable visit to a local farm, they were able to compare this well with the school and the nearby locality. The visit to Horton Kirby field study centre by pupils in Year 3 and the visit to the Isle of Wight by pupils in Year 6 are invaluable first hand experiences, which extend their geographical knowledge of other areas well. Stories, such as the *Katie Morag* books about a little girl on the Isle of Struay, are used well to help pupils in Year 2 to gain

a satisfactory understanding of the physical and human features of the island. They are able to describe some of the main differences between the island and their local environment. In a good Year 4 lesson, pupils used photographic evidence well and made good gains in their learning about Saint Lucia. They used the secondary information well to come to conclusions about similarities and differences when comparing families, homes and schools in Saint Lucia with those features in their own locality. Pupils' learning was extended well by the teacher's good use of correct geographical terms, which she explained very well, ensuring that pupils fully understood the new vocabulary. ICT is used well to extend pupils' learning of different parts of the world. Pupils in Year 6 used the internet well for their good research work on rivers in many different continents.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy the detective skills required in history.
- Family members are used well to tell pupils about the past.
- Literacy and key historical skills are undermined by the extensive use of worksheets.
- Good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

80. In Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average and all groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection so improvement has been satisfactory. Judgements are based on two classroom observations, looking at displays and pupils' books and talking to them.

81. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory across the school although the two lessons seen during the inspection were good. Teachers maintain a suitable balance between giving pupils information and allowing them to research their own questions about the past. They draw well upon the natural curiosity and enthusiasm of younger pupils. There is a sound emphasis on the language of time and teachers develop a thoughtful response from pupils about their own lives and the past. Year 1 pupils talked to their parents and grandparents to find out about old and new toys. They have developed their understanding of past and present through looking at homes and household items that change over time. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils successfully developed their sense of time and change by comparing it with the past in their study of the Great Fire of London. They understood why the fire burned for so long and realised the importance of eyewitnesses like Pepys and Evelyn in recording what happened at the time.

82. Year 3 pupils have looked at the impact of invasion such as the Roman occupation of Britain and are discovering how the Ancient Egyptians were dependent on the riches of the Nile for their survival. In their study of Tudors in Year 4, pupils have looked at Henry VIII as a young man and king and the sea journeys of Elizabethan explorers. In Britain since 1930, Year 5 pupils learn about the Road to War and the privations of wartime Britain. In a Year 6 lesson comparing the modern and ancient Olympics, confident, structured and imaginative teaching developed pupils' skills well as young historians. The teacher encouraged pupils to think critically about the importance of the quality of evidence and to raise their own questions for research. As a result, pupils were able to develop their own lines of thought and enquiry about aspects like training, prizes, location and the role of women and to comment intelligently on the sources they used. Although pupils undertake independent research and use the internet effectively, literacy skills are not used well in the subject. Across the school, teaching and learning are too dependent on worksheets which result in too rapid coverage of topics. These do not develop different forms of writing, historical language or skills and pupils' independence as young researchers. It is compounded by low level tasks like colouring in. These modest expectations restrict pupils' ability to reach higher standards in the subject.

83. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There are good links with ICT. Curriculum activity weeks like the Victorian theme, Tudor and 1940s days and the rich heritage of the local area

effectively bring the subject to life. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development when they look at beliefs about life and death in Ancient Egypt, discuss the gulf between the rich and poor in Tudor times, research information about the Celts together and understand the legacy of ancient civilisations.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good rapport with teachers enables pupils to discuss their own feelings.
- Pupils are taught to respect religious and cultural diversity.
- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to discuss important questions.
- Spiritual awareness is not developed adequately through the subject.
- Too many worksheets are leading to lower standards than in the last inspection.
- There are not enough visits or visitors to enrich pupils' learning.

Commentary

84. In Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with those expected for the locally agreed syllabus for RE. Across the school, achievement is satisfactory. Three lessons observed, looking at pupils' books and displays and talking with them and teachers show that pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the basic concepts of world religions including Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism.

85. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning across the school is satisfactory. Teachers create a quiet, focused atmosphere in class where pupils can explore their responses and develop new thoughts and ideas. This was evident in a Year 3 class where pupils were learning about the events leading up to the arrest of Jesus. Under the sensitive guidance of the teacher, pupils thought about the feelings of Jesus when he was betrayed by Judas and denied by Peter and considered their own emotions when deserted by a friend. In contrast, there were cries of excitement in a Year 1 class as pupils re enacted the entry into Jerusalem by waving 'palm' branches and chorusing *Sing Hosanna* joyfully. Pupils in different year groups have been looking at the stories that Jesus told such as *The Good Samaritan* and *The Sower* and how these are relevant to their own lives. Pupils are also taught to appreciate and respect the diversity of religious beliefs and values. Year 4 pupils have looked at aspects of Sikhism, explored how symbolism expresses religious meaning and investigated the significance of the 5Ks. In a good Year 5 lesson, pupils explored Salah and its importance to Muslims and compared it with the Christian concept of prayer. Pupils in Year 6 have studied Beliefs in the Community. They gave their presentation of a Hindu story and explained the significance of the puja tray as part of a whole school celebration of Holi in assembly.

86. There is not enough evidence of teachers developing pupils' spiritual growth through opportunities to reflect on the beauty, order and mystery of the natural world. There is also an over frequent use of worksheets which mean that aspects of certain faiths are not being taught in sufficient breadth and depth. This has resulted in lower standards than at the last inspection when progress was judged to be good. Improvement has, therefore, been unsatisfactory.

87. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The subject leader is not given enough time to develop her role. There are no whole school assessment procedures for the subject. Pupils visit the local church and the vicar comes to the school very often. A Rabbi from a local synagogue has also visited recently but there are too few visits and visitors to bring the curriculum to life.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

88. No lessons were seen in **design and technology**. Therefore, there is too little evidence to make an overall judgement about attainment, achievement or the quality of teaching and learning. However, in Year 2, pupils have designed and made 'Technicolor Dreamcoats' and 'Incy Wincy Spider' models that work. Designs for these were satisfactory, and products were generally good. Indications are that they have made appropriate gains in understanding design and the use of skills in making. In Year 6, pupils have produced designs for advertising and packaging drinks. They have focused on target purchasing groups, slogans for advertising and self-evaluation of their work. They have also planned and made healthy yoghurts. They designed containers and recipes for the yoghurt, sampled each other's products and evaluated the results.

89. Not enough evidence was gathered during the inspection to make overall judgements about provision and teaching and learning in **music**. Indications from the hymn practice, one lesson observed and talking to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are that standards in music are above average in Year 6. In the hymn practice for older pupils, they responded well to the music, sang with enthusiasm and obviously enjoyed the experience. They sang with accurate pitch, varying dynamics and showing their appreciation of rhythm. However, occasionally, there was a tendency to shout which remained unchecked. In a Year 4 lesson about building up texture in music, pupils enjoyed the vitality of Caribbean music and there was a sense of lively enjoyment in music making. However, some weaknesses in managing pupils' behaviour undermined potentially good learning.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, pupils in Year 6 reach well above average standards.
- Art skills are used well across the curriculum.
- Subject leadership is giving strong drive and direction.
- Visits to art galleries enhance learning.
- There are no assessment procedures in the subject.

Commentary

90. Pupils develop a wide range of art and design skills, as they progress through the school. Standards are average in Years 1 and 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. By Year 6, standards are well above average and achievement is good overall. The good use of sketchbooks throughout the school enables pupils to experiment with different techniques, which they incorporate in their own artwork. Pupils learn how to create shading by making different marks with a pencil. They use their detailed observational drawings of still life well, such as shells, a Russian doll and seed heads, to create aesthetically pleasing watercolours. Pupils in Year 6 designed imaginative masks based on the theme of the seasons, after looking at masks from different cultures. They used a wide variety of materials to create elaborate, high quality masks and, on completion, evaluated their designs.

91. Although some teachers lack confidence to teach art and design, teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good overall in Years 3 to 6 with some very good teaching. In order to help to improve standards, the art subject leader works with small groups of pupils from each class, when pupils in her class are having their music lessons. This enhances pupils' learning and extends their art skills very well. It is enabling many pupils, especially those in Year 6, to reach well above average attainment in art and design.

92. Good links are made with other subjects, such as history, geography, science and mathematics, when pupils study the work of famous artists, such as Picasso, Georgia O'Keefe, Jackson Pollock and Matisse and artwork from different cultures. As part of their study on the Ancient Greeks, older pupils made large three-dimensional Greek pots. Pupils in Year 5 used their knowledge of Japanese art well when painting delicate flowers on white tissue paper and their good Aboriginal-style paintings

were linked well with their study of Australia. Art skills are used well by pupils in Year 4 to illustrate their science work on the need for a healthy diet. Pupils' artwork is displayed on the school website, which helps to enhance their self-esteem and to instil a feeling of pride.

93. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader is an experienced artist and has very good subject knowledge, which she shares with staff. She is a very good role model for others and provides very good support for the staff. She has a wealth of ideas to help teachers provide a stimulating art and design curriculum.

94. Over the past few years, visits by pupils in Year 2 and 6 to the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Tate Gallery and the National Gallery make a valuable contribution to their learning. After the visits, pupils in Year 2 used fluorescent paints to create paintings in the style of Jackson Pollock and pupils in Year 6 created intricate designs similar to those seen in Indian and Islamic paintings. Although the school does not have any formal assessment for art and design, plans are in place in the school development plan to introduce this during the coming year. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching promotes interest and good response from pupils.
- Extra-curricular activities provide valuable enrichment.
- The hall accommodation is unsatisfactory for some physical activities.

Commentary

95. No teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2. In the games lesson seen in Year 6, standards were average. Pupils linked ball control skills in a series of exercises with reasonable accuracy and control. They had opportunities to comment on and evaluate their own and others' performance. Achievement by all pupils was satisfactory.

96. In the lesson seen in Year 6, teaching and learning were satisfactory. Key skills were carefully taught and pupils were productively involved and interested because the challenge for them to develop skills was appropriate. Instruction was clear and they listened well. However, on occasion, they had to wait too long before they could start activities. For example, they spent too long listening to instruction after a good warm-up session. Most pupils made good physical effort to learn and use the skills taught. Good creative and physical effort was seen in a good Year 4 dance lesson. Pupils were allowed to develop a range of imaginative dance movements and build them into sequences set to music. At times, too long was spent on discussion rather than movement. However, the outcomes were good as pupils clearly acquired a range of dance skills and consolidated these into imaginative sequences. They worked very well together to achieve this.

97. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Pupils take part in a good range of activities some of which require them to compete against other schools or go on residential visits. The school provides a good range of after school activities for pupils and swimming is a regular feature of the week in Years 3 to 6. Priorities for improvement have been identified, for example, to update the programme of work for dance.

98. There has been a satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, but the hall still places some restriction upon the range of activities in which pupils can engage.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Commentary

99. Not enough evidence was seen during the inspection to make reliable overall judgements about PSHCE. It is taught as a subject, but it is also seen as an integral part of every day life. It helps to create a positive ethos within the school. Pupils are encouraged to be confident and feel that they can succeed. This is reflected in the very good relationships between everyone in the school and in pupils' very good attitudes to learning, which enable them to achieve well in their work. Although all aspects of the PSHCE are planned well, the school is to implement a good new scheme of work at the start of the summer term. In some classes, there is an unnecessary overuse of worksheets, which limits pupils from expressing their own ideas. The advantage of healthy living is given a high profile in the school. Sex education is sensitively taught appropriate to the level of pupils' age and stage of development within science lessons. In a good Year 5 lesson, after watching a video and acting out difficult situations in role-play, the teacher sensitively helped pupils to understand how they could respond when they felt under pressure to do wrong. Visitors to the school, such as the school nurse; firemen, railway police and theatre groups are very beneficial in extending pupils' learning of real life situations.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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