

INSPECTION REPORT

DEDDINGTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Banbury

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123185

Headteacher: Mrs Lynne Stephens

Lead inspector: John Lilly

Dates of inspection: 15 – 17 March 2004

Inspection number: 255961

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Church of England - Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	188
School address:	Earls Lane Deddington Banbury Oxfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Linda Davies
Date of previous inspection:	14 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Deddington is a smaller than average Church of England, Voluntary Aided primary school with 188 girls and boys on roll between the ages of 4 and 11. It serves a rural village and surrounding area, and most pupils come from families with broadly average social and economic backgrounds. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average but an average number have statements or other significant needs. A significant number of pupils joins the school other than in the reception year, sometimes following lack of success elsewhere. Most pupils are white/British and all speak English. Most pupils join the reception class in the term of their fifth birthday with broadly average attainment, although the range is wide. The school has earned the Quality Award for basic skills, and works with a partnership of primary schools and a secondary school. Deddington works closely with a local pre-school, and this partnership intends shortly to form an integrated Early Years Unit on the school site.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12487	John Lilly	Lead inspector	English History Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) English as an additional language
9614	Carolyn Webb	Lay inspector	
21121	David Houghton	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT) Art and design Design and technology Geography Physical education
22058	Christine Richardson	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Science Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Deddington is a good school. It has many strengths that contribute to its continuing improvement. The headteacher provides clear, determined and very good leadership which is underpinned by an enthusiastic staff team and dedicated governors. Pupils join the school with average levels of attainment. All pupils achieve well. Although pupils achieve well because of good teaching, by Year 6 attainment is average overall because these pupils had not been taught as effectively earlier in their school careers and, at that time, their progress was slow. This currently good achievement by all pupils is because the school has a very strong Christian ethos and inclusive values and there is a shared belief that staff are responsible for helping pupils overcome their barriers to learning no matter how severe or unique. This belief leads to effective and highly committed teaching and, consequently, pupils are keen and eager to learn. By the time they leave the school pupils are mature, well balanced and thinking young people who relate confidently to others. The school offers good value for money and is a happy, purposeful and productive place in which to learn.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The determined, clear-thinking and strategic leadership of the headteacher backed by the expertise of the deputy headteacher, other managers and strong governance.
- Very effective assessment procedures show teachers when and why pupils are not achieving and this information drives improvements in teaching and curriculum.
- In lessons, teachers give pupils very clear guidance on how to do better.
- Except in English, marking does not consistently show pupils how to improve their work.
- The school's planning for improvement does not give all subjects an equally important part to play in raising standards overall.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Very good provision for pupils' personal development helps them to become responsible young people. Pupils love their school and feel responsible for others and themselves.
- Very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables all to be included in the life and work of the school.

The school is in a very different situation from that at the time of its last inspection in June 1999. It has gone through a very disruptive period with changes in staff and leadership; currently more pupils than before have barriers that hinder their learning. There is now a stable staff and governing body who are moving the school forward strongly. After a slow start following the last inspection, improvement within the last three years has been good, with weaknesses identified by the last inspection rectified and many further improvements made, for example assessment that supports effective learning. The school is now very well placed for further improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

The above comparisons should be treated with caution because the number of pupils in each cohort is quite small and so a single child can alter them significantly. **Achievement of all pupils is good.**

However, current pupils in Year 6 have broadly average attainment, with attainment in mathematics slightly below average. This is because these pupils have had less time to benefit from the much improved teaching. Despite an improving trend in attainment, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are still making up for previously weaker teaching. Attainment in Years 3 and 4 is better overall because these pupils have gained more from the improvement in teaching and curriculum.

Pupils join the reception class with average attainment and make good progress; most will exceed the goals set nationally for the end of the reception year in all areas of their learning. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2, attaining broadly average standards in all subjects by Year 2. This shows significant improvement since 2003, when results in national tests and assessments at the end of Year 2 were well below the average for similar schools.

Reasons for the improving trend in standards include much improved teaching and a more relevant curriculum. Above all, however, it grows from the very good personal development of the pupils that helps them to become confident, ambitious and independent learners who both want to and also know how to improve. They have good attitudes to their work and others, and their attendance is good. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good throughout the school and the curriculum is broad, balanced and very relevant. It is a highly inclusive school and good achievement is underpinned by very good support for pupils with special educational needs and good standards of care and guidance.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management, overall, are good. The school is very well led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and a staff team who work with common purpose, managing their various areas of responsibility well. Governance is good, and the governing body provides clear direction and strong support. As a result, strategic planning is very good and practice is effective and innovative. It is a rapidly improving school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils love their school and feel that they play their full part in its success. The large majority of parents value the school very highly and play a significant part in improving standards. Some, however, have more negative views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Create a school improvement plan that ensures that all subjects and aspects of provision contribute equally to raising standards overall.
- Using the good practice in English, improve marking in other subjects so that it gives pupils clearer guidance on how to improve.

While considering the above, the school should further raise standards in reading.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects.

Children in the reception class achieve well. Pupils achieve well between Years 1 and 6 and attain broadly average standards by the ends of Years 2 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils throughout the school achieve well, and those with special educational needs very well.
- Standards in mathematics in Year 6 are too low.
- Attainment in information and communication technology and physical education is above average.
- Improvement in English is much more rapid than in subjects that have had less priority.

Commentary

1. Pupils join the reception class with average attainment overall, although the range is wide. They make good progress and most will exceed the goals set nationally for the end of the reception year. All pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and most will attain average standards by the end of Year 2, and a significant number will reach above average standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.7 (17.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.1 (14.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.7 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. Results in national tests and assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. However, these comparisons should be treated with caution as a single pupil can alter them significantly. The results for 2002, which were slightly above the national average and broadly in line with the average for similar schools, are a better measure of the school's performance.
3. The lower results in 2003 were the result of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 then. The attainment of current pupils in Year 2 is broadly average in all subjects and shows an improvement since last year in writing. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving well and this shows that the improving trend of recent years continues.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.0 (26.4)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.3 (23.7)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.9 (27.8)	28.6 (28.3)

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

4. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were above average in English, average in science and well below average in mathematics. These results overall were well below the

average for similar schools, mainly because of low results in mathematics. Even so, there had been an improving trend over recent years and attainment of current pupils in Year 6 shows that this trend continues. Current attainment is average overall in English and science, although still slightly below average in mathematics.

5. Pupils achieve well between Years 1 and 6, but pupils in Years 5 and 6 suffered from disrupted teaching earlier in their school careers. They and their teachers are working very hard to catch up, and they are succeeding. To complete this picture, attainment in Year 4 is above average overall, showing what has been achieved once pupils benefit from the recently much improved teaching and curriculum. The main feature of better achievement in the lower years is the greater proportion of pupils gaining higher attainment levels. This suggests that the school could usefully focus on even better ways of helping able pupils to reach their potential.
6. Standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are broadly average in all years, and above average in information and communication technology and in physical education. There is a strong improving trend. Improvement is greatest, however, in subjects that the school has made high priority and less rapid in the subjects that have had low priority, for example, art and design. This unbalanced approach to raising standards misses the point that improvement in all subjects makes overall improvement more rapid, because high standards in one subject support and are dependent upon high standards in all other subjects. The school sets challenging targets for attainment, and this inspection finds that pupils are well on the way to reaching them.
7. The attainment and progress of pupils with special educational needs are monitored thoroughly. Pupils take part in setting their own targets which are clearly written in their individual education plans. Their progress is then monitored closely by the school and there is detailed evidence of pupils moving both up and down the register of special educational needs. As a result of this monitoring, their achievements by the time they leave school are very good in relation to their prior attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and their behaviour are very good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about their school.
- There are very good relationships between adults and pupils, and amongst the pupils.
- Very effective events, such as the inspiring Expressive Arts day, increase the pupils' keenness and ability to learn.
- The school's effective strategies to improve behaviour are consistently applied.

Commentary

8. Proud of their school, pupils arrive on or before time in the mornings. Their attendance and punctuality are good and well monitored. Registration is a calm start to the day; in several classes, pupils are encouraged to respond in a foreign language, for example French. Pupils quickly develop very good personal and social skills because of the school's high expectations, strong Christian values and clear moral guidance. Pupils are well mannered and very polite. They think about others and go out of their way to help those less fortunate than themselves. In a sponsored silence in aid of Macmillan cancer relief, even the youngest pupils managed to keep quiet for nearly 30 minutes.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.3
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

9. In the lively yet purposeful classroom atmosphere, pupils are interested in learning and try hard to do well. They are pleased with the rewards and praise they receive. They want to help and include all other pupils, whatever their difficulties, in activities. Pupils know the school rules and why they are necessary. They develop a strong sense of justice and accept the effective sanctions as fair. Behaviour is very good in classrooms and the playground. There have been four short-term exclusions in the past twelve months, although not involving four different pupils. The school has made considerable efforts to work with other agencies to support pupils at risk of exclusion.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
179	4	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0

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

10. Opportunities for spiritual development and awareness are many and excellent. For example: in a class assembly when Pele’s example was thoughtfully discussed; in powerful personal, social education lessons and, above all, in the dance, music, drama and art lessons during the Expressive Arts day – the children’s favourite. The spiritual dimension in this day shone through in the joy on the pupils’ faces as they ‘felt’ the music, danced with enthusiasm and were proudly surprised at the models they created – all brought together through powerful and involving drama. Pupils learn about and experience others’ cultures and traditions, developing a very good knowledge and understanding of how other people live and worship.
11. Pupils’ personal development is very good. They are expected to care for others and to behave responsibly, and they carry out tasks happily and well. School councillors are a powerful voice for their peers. They have formed a playground committee and look after the equipment. ‘Listeners’, wearing their band of authority, are always on the alert for those who need assistance. Through their personal, social and health education lessons, ‘circle time’ discussions, visits away from school and visiting speakers pupils learn about the difficulties and dangers found outside Deddington and how best to deal with them. By the time they leave, they have become mature young people, aware of their responsibilities to the school and wider community, and confident about the next stage in their education.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides good quality of education, with several very good features – in particular teachers’ use of assessment for learning.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are both good, and often very good or excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make very clear to pupils what they need to achieve.
- Teachers help pupils understand very clearly how to improve.
- Marking in English is more helpful than in other subjects.
- Teachers and skilled teaching assistants work very closely and effectively to ensure that all pupils achieve well.
- Teachers miss some opportunities to involve parents in supporting their children’s learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons or parts of lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (7%)	9 (21%)	24 (56%)	7 (16%)	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.

12. Teaching and the subsequent learning are strengths of the school. They have both improved since the last inspection, especially within the last three years. There is marked consistency of quality across years, classes and subjects, and both teaching and learning are usually good and often very good or excellent. This is because the leadership and management of the school have made improvement in both learning and teaching key priorities, and staff have received relevant training and guidance.
13. The school uses assessment very well to identify when learning needs to improve and how to achieve this, and where teaching needs to improve, and why and how. In addition, the school has carried out in-depth research into pupils’ attitudes and behaviour and how these aid or hinder learning. Together, these initiatives led to changes in policy and additional training that made it possible for teachers to focus on ‘assessment for learning’. This type of teaching means that pupils know very clearly what they are learning today (WALT), what ‘I’, the teacher, will look for in their work and behaviour (WILF) and the purpose of their learning: for example, morning work in literacy that will help with the afternoon science lesson. Consequently, pupils understand the value and purpose of what they learn and try very hard.
14. As one significant result of these initiatives, pupils are very aware of how to improve their work and often talk about ‘helpful criticism’. This means the teacher or another pupil giving helpful feedback on how to improve. Pupils can then review their own work, and think out ideas on how to solve problems and how to improve. Amongst other benefits, this has improved their speaking, listening and thinking skills considerably. Pupils are very willing to help others and receive help themselves.

15. Key strengths in the teaching are:

- Skilled planning ensures that pupils learn at the right level and one steady step at a time.
- Teachers make very clear what each pupil is expected to achieve.
- Teachers involve pupils in deciding how good work is and how to improve it.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together as a very effective team, ensuring that all pupils achieve well, whatever barriers to learning may need to be overcome.
- Teachers manage the learning and behaviour of pupils with warmth, pace and challenge and very firmly.
- Teachers use many innovative ways to make the learning fun and exciting.

16. These strengths help all pupils to achieve well. This is because pupils want to do well and know that teachers are always there to help them – but not before they have tried to do their work on their own. This rapid improvement in teaching is making a significant contribution to improving standards of attainment and personal development. However, staff recognise that there is still work to do; for example, marking in English is much more helpful than in other subjects. Opportunities are missed to work even more closely with parents in support of the children's learning, for example ensuring that both home and school play their full part in supporting reading.

The curriculum

The curriculum that the school provides is good. It is broad, balanced and highly relevant.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are effective links between different subjects.
- ICT is used very well to support work in other subjects.
- The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Provision for the expressive and performing arts is very good overall.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- Provision for very able pupils is insufficiently precise.

Commentary

17. The provision for the Foundation Stage is good, and the curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is broad, balanced and very relevant to the pupils' needs and meets statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and for religious education. It is well planned with a clear long-term overview that supports good medium and short-term planning. This ensures that pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are developed systematically. The school has clear and sensible plans to extend further the links between subjects and the relevance of the curriculum; there are already very good links between literacy and subjects such as science, and ICT plays a very effective role in supporting all learning. Extra-curricular provision is good especially for the arts. It enriches the pupils' learning opportunities significantly through, for example, the netball club and guitar lessons. Pupils take part in a range of outside activities including competitive sports and musical events with other local schools, and are encouraged to take part in activities arranged within the local community. Residential visits, a wide range of visits to places of interest and visitors to the school add further depth and breadth to the curriculum. Pupils' cultural and linguistic awareness is extended well in Year 6 by weekly German lessons and for pupils from Year 1 to Year 5 in weekly French clubs. Teaching in both languages is interesting, challenging and fun, and pupils make good progress. Pupils gain by being taught by teachers who have these languages as their first language.

18. The very strong emphasis on the expressive arts is impressive. All pupils work happily and constructively alongside each other. Pupils gain a great sense of personal pride through their high achievement in these areas and this significantly enhances their self-esteem. Their self-confidence is further enriched through the school's caring ethos and specific lessons where moral and social issues are discussed in depth. This personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) course includes specific lessons relating to personal safety, drugs misuse and sex education, some of which are led by the school nurse or a local police officer.
19. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils are set clear targets. They are given additional support as appropriate and are fully included in the life and work of the school. Teachers and their assistants make very effective use of a wide range of resources, including information and communication technology, to enhance and support their work. Consequently these pupils make very good progress. Gifted and talented pupils receive additional support through workshops provided at the local secondary school through the Warriner partnership of local schools, although provision within school is not yet well developed.
20. The school's built accommodation and outside green play areas provide a good and stimulating place in which to learn. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall and very good for information and communication technology. They are of good quality, of sufficient range and are accessible. There are sufficient qualified staff to meet the requirements of the curriculum and good training ensures that they work effectively and with confidence.

Care, guidance and support

Child protection procedures are very good. The school's procedures for health, safety and welfare are satisfactory overall. Pupils receive good guidance on their personal and academic development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school takes very good pastoral care of all pupils.
- Guidance through marking is very helpful in English, but is not consistently as helpful in other subjects.
- Although identified and evaluated, personal development is not systematically recorded and monitored.

Commentary

21. Health and safety are priorities for the school and risk assessments are carried out regularly by trained personnel. Teaching staff are well aware of child protection issues and what to do if they have concerns. Most have received first-aid training and practice is good. Not all minor incidents are recorded, however, which makes monitoring difficult. Inspectors noted that many of the pupils' indoor footwear is unsuitable for school activities.
22. Relationships amongst members of the school community are very good and pupils can and do approach many adults for advice or help. Pupils' views are actively sought and acted upon and they feel that they have a full part to play in the school's success. Teachers know pupils and their abilities well and set them targets using very good tracking procedures. Even so, not all of these targets are sufficiently 'smart' (precisely set so that they can be measured). They are sometimes too imprecise or long-term, and this makes evaluation of progress difficult. While marking is frequent and conscientious – an improvement since the last inspection – the very helpful marking in English is not consistently replicated in other subjects. The school realises this and has plans to rectify the weakness within the near future in order to make better use of the school's very good information from good assessment procedures. Staff recognise that pupils are not always sure how and where they can improve their work because marking

does not remind them of points gained through the very helpful feedback they receive in lessons.

23. Pupils' personal development, though promoted well, is not always recorded. The policy for identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator maintains a detailed register, which clearly shows the progress pupils make. The school makes good use of the local authority support services such as speech therapists, educational psychologists and behaviour support workers. There were Traveller pupils in the school until just before the inspection and they are likely to return. Working closely with the excellent local education authority support service, the school ensured that these pupils settled quickly and made good progress. Staff and pupils miss them because 'they brought a breath of fresh air.'
24. Good relationships with the local pre-school ensure that children settle quickly into the reception class and later there is smooth and well-managed transition between Years 2 and 3. Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for when they move on to secondary school. The school is very good at welcoming pupils who join other than at the reception year. They often lack success elsewhere, yet quickly feel fully included and rapidly make good progress, gaining in self-confidence and esteem.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with the large majority of parents. Links with the local community, church and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school acts quickly and highly professionally to address parental concerns.
- The school does not make sufficient use of, for example, reading logs and homework diaries to build the essential partnership between home and school.
- The school helps the community make good use of accommodation and resources, and these activities benefit the pupils.
- Good partnership leads to very effective fund-raising by parents.

Commentary

25. The school is determined to build on the good relationship which is developing with parents. The headteacher and governors recognise that a minority had concerns and a significant number are still unhappy with the amount and quality of information they receive. The headteacher has made considerable efforts to remedy these concerns but realises that there is still work to do. Parents are very openly invited to discuss concerns and action, where possible, is taken. Useful newsletters go home every fortnight, staff are approachable and the new, monthly parents' forum gives good opportunities for a frank exchange of views and information. Already a query has been raised about school lunches and acted upon, and a parent has taken on the responsibility for issues arising from the school uniform. Inspectors investigated parents' concerns and judge that the information they now receive is satisfactory although the school makes insufficient use of the home-school books to create an effective way of generating dialogue between parent and school.
26. Parents support the school's aims and ambitions for their children. A number regularly help in school, and most work with their children at home where they can. Their attendance at consultation meetings every term is very good, and performances are filled to over-flowing with proud relatives and members of the community eager to celebrate what 'their' child can do. Sports day too is a very popular event, eagerly contested by parents as well by their children. Successful fund-raising events run by the parent-teacher association are enjoyed by parents and local residents, and make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning and development.

27. The school serves the local community well, providing the venue for activities that include ballet classes and the Deddington Colts football team. The vicar takes assembly once a week and runs one of the lunchtime activities, known as the Holy Club. There are good links with the local library and pre-school. From Year 2, pupils join in an annual singing day, as well as participating every year in cross-country running, swimming and netball events with others from local schools. Professionals from these and other walks of life take part in the Expressive Arts days, demonstrating the good links existing between schools and community. The Warriner partnership of primary schools and the local secondary school is making a major contribution to the school's improvement. All these links enhance pupil's knowledge, experience and enjoyment during their time at school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The head teacher provides very good leadership. Leadership and management are good. Governance is good. Together these create a rapidly improving and very innovative school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, expertly supported by the deputy headteacher, provides very good leadership and this is underpinned by effective management.
- Subject leaders play a full and effective part in raising standards but the school development plan does not make clear enough how each subject and aspect of the school's management supports the others.
- Strategy for improvement is clear and effective.
- Governors provide strong and effective direction and support.
- The school uses partnership with others very well to improve leadership and management.

Commentary

28. Both leadership and management have improved significantly since the last inspection. The headteacher gives staff and governors a clear vision not only of the type of school Deddington should be but also of how everyone has a part to play in achieving that vision. This has created a very effective team of staff and governors, with secure foundations for further improvement. The headteacher has led the school through a period of great change and high turnover in staff, steering it with determination and courage through a time when negative criticism was rife. Her key skill is the way she enables people to work to a shared purpose and with joy. Consequently, even though several subject managers are new to their roles, they have already created a clear view of where their area of provision is and where it needs to be. Similarly, a fairly new governing body is now playing a major role in the school's improvement. They work efficiently and increasingly effectively, bringing their wide experience and expertise to bear on problems that need solving and checking that the school meets statutory requirements. A key person in the school's improvement is the deputy headteacher. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form a very intelligent and expert leadership team, providing high quality professional and personal leadership.
29. The school improvement plan provides a very challenging and coherent action plan, and very clear strategic leadership direction. The school's success in planning for an Early Years Unit in partnership with a pre-school is a clear example of the benefits of this clear and strategic thinking that leads to innovation. Progress has been good because the plan inspires people by showing very clearly how assessment, teaching and learning work together to raise achievement. Even so, discussion with subject managers suggests that there is now a need to give people a better understanding of how each area of management fits together as a whole. The current plan is complex and therefore people become confused by its many details. The school is now at a stage where every subject and aspect of the school needs to move forward together, seeing the plan as an integrated management plan: for example, showing the way partnership with parents links to learning and then to teaching and personal development, each aspect mutually dependent on the others.

30. An important aspect of the school's improvement is the very good partnership between the school's leadership and management and local education authority advisors and agencies, alongside the Warriner partnership of schools. These partnerships are making a major contribution to improving standards.
31. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership and management, and the governor responsible for special educational needs is very well informed and works closely with the co-ordinator. This powerful partnership makes a significant contribution to enabling these pupils gain full benefit from the life and work of the school.
32. Performance management is strong, supportive and effective. However, it is mainly carried out by the headteacher and senior managers, and the school recognises that there is a need to provide more time for subject managers to support teachers in lessons and for teachers to learn by seeing their colleagues teach. Subject managers see what they need to do but do not always see how it should be done, recognising that they need additional training. More involvement of staff in the leadership that comes from supporting colleagues in lessons is likely to provide additional information to support the already effective and accurate self-evaluation procedures and processes. It would help people to see more clearly how their management roles play a part.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	452,307	Balance from previous year	65,970
Total expenditure	439,396	Balance carried forward to the next	78,881
Expenditure per pupil	2,362		

33. Governors, with staff, keep a close eye on expenditure and energetically seek best value from investments. They employ an independent bursar who brings high value consultancy to the work of the governor's finance committee. A very efficient school secretary not only makes certain that administration is highly effective but also that information is accurate and up to date. The new finance committee brings considerable expertise to the task. This is necessary because the school receives less than the national average for schools of this type and, therefore, finance is tight. The balance above gives a false impression because the school will run into deficit within a few years should staffing be maintained at current levels. Realising this, governors are making the required hard and necessary decisions. The school offers good value for money, but governors are not yet fully applying the best value processes of 'compare and consult' as ways of increasing the value of expenditure. This means that they do not use information on expenditure in other schools sufficiently to see ways to improve and they miss some opportunities to spot good ways to invest by consulting with others.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **good**, overall, in the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

34. The school has built upon strengths identified at the last inspection and the provision has improved. Children join the reception class in three groups during the year, the majority having been at the local pre-school before joining this class. Most pupils join with average attainment but the range is wide. There are currently 15 children in reception. The school will create an Early Years Unit in partnership with a local pre-school within the near future. This is a very good initiative because it will build upon the strengths of both while improving the accommodation.
35. There are many reasons why children are achieving well:
- Leadership and management are good.
 - Teaching is good in all areas of learning.
 - Staff have high expectations of children and provide a good and imaginative curriculum that meets children's needs well.
 - Teachers use good assessment to plan work at the correct level for all children.
 - Staffing levels are good and children are well supported.
 - Relationships are very good and, as a result, children's personal skills improve and this leads to raising standards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships between children and adults create a good atmosphere for learning.
- Planning is good.

Commentary

36. This area of learning receives a high profile in the teacher's planning and by the time they start in Year 1 the majority of children have reached, and in many cases exceeded, the early learning goals. This is due to the good teaching, very good relationships and an environment in which children quickly settle and feel secure. Children know the routines for writing and mathematical activities and move quickly into place without additional instruction. A few children are too dependent on adults but most work independently on their tasks. They take the register to the office and give out materials for lessons very competently. Children clear away sensibly after play outside and lie quietly on the floor in relaxation sessions. Behaviour is very good. Staff plan a stimulating range of activities. This leads to sustained interest from the children and a strong desire to learn.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good opportunities for imaginative play enhance children's communication skills.
- The systematic and effective teaching of phonics promotes both reading and writing.

Commentary

37. There are continuous inventive opportunities during the day for children to develop their language skills through imaginative play and answering questions posed by adults. These extend children's language and thinking skills well. Children achieve well and most reach their early learning goals because of the well-structured teaching. Higher-attaining pupils are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. Children are taught to listen to one another as soon as they start school and this is consistently reinforced. As a result, listening skills develop well and staff provide challenging activities that are matched well to all children's needs. Well-focused support helps children to improve the way they form letters, and shared writing is introduced well. For example, they painted words on road signs, carefully spelling out the words with the teacher. Children sat with eyes fixed on the cards the teacher held for them to identify letters and sounds. They demonstrated that they already knew most of them. Many children are reading simple stories and take home their reading books to share with their families. They enjoy the visits to the library and love to dramatise the stories they hear. This shows their good progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of counting and number recognition is very good.
- Mathematical skills are put to good use across many areas of learning.

Commentary

38. The high quality teaching of facts about numbers helps children to achieve very well. Most are likely to attain the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1 and half of the group should exceed the expected levels. This good progress was very evident when children tried to guess the number a child had chosen off the board and asked questions such as, 'Is it higher than 14?' and 'Is it less than 18?'. The child responded thoughtfully with a 'Yes' or 'No'. Children's understanding of more and less increased significantly during the activity. Children solved problems through practical activities and skilled questioning helped them to develop a keen interest and understanding of numbers and shapes around them. Mathematical skills are extended successfully across all areas of learning. Children practise forming numbers carefully and sequence them correctly to ten.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching provides children with many and varied opportunities to learn.
- The reception class does not have its own computer.

Commentary

39. Teaching and learning are good and help to ensure that all children achieve well and most children are likely to at least reach the early learning goals. Children are provided with a wealth of opportunities to learn. The imaginative play area is changed regularly to keep interest levels high. Currently it is a cave that pupils access through a tunnel. This active and progressive learning was seen when they shone their torches on the walls to see what they could find and discussed with the teaching assistant what they felt and heard. One suggested an echo and explained, 'An echo is when you make a sound and it copies you.' Others suggested spiders, bats and rats, and went off to make these. One child started to make a skeleton. Children cook and see how materials change when mixed and heated. Similarly, they work with wood, clamping a piece of wood to the table very carefully. Girls used drills and hammered in nails with very good concentration. Children work hard, especially with paint, and design computer programs in their weekly session in the computer suite but they have no computer in their room to practise their skills in controlling the mouse.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is no separate outdoor area for the reception class but the staff make best possible use of the playground area for outside activities.

Commentary

40. Children achieve well in this area of learning because of the regular opportunities for physical activities in the playground. The majority will achieve the expected levels by the time they leave the reception class. Pupils make good progress because staff monitor these sessions well, noting those who lack any confidence in riding or steering cycles around the painted road and those who are very skilled. Consequently, children learn to use the space outside and stop and listen sensibly in response to instructions. Children's skills in handling tools, brushes, modelling tools and scissors develop steadily because staff provide many opportunities to mix, cut, stick and paint each day.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide children with a very good range of activities to enrich their learning.
- Direct teaching of skills is combined well with good opportunities for children to learn through play.

Commentary

41. Staff plan a wide range of stimulating opportunities. The good teaching ensures that children achieve well and are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. This good progress was seen in the way children made up their own stories, using boxes they had painted delicate shades of pink to make fairy-tale castles. They went into the cave to see what they could find to take back to their camp. Similarly, children worked together to design gardens in the sand tray. They painted portraits with careful attention to features and made colourful collages of different shapes and textures. Children enjoy playing musical instruments and singing and showed great satisfaction in handling the cold, 'squidgy' clay.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **good** and standards are improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising due to the priority given to literacy in full school planning and the full commitment to the effective implementation of these plans.
- Teachers use assessment very well to guide teaching and learning.
- Teachers develop pupils' speaking and listening skills very well.
- Partnership with parents is not used sufficiently to raise standards, especially in reading.

Commentary

42. Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection but the current pupils present a much wider range of learning needs and prior attainment than at that time. Standards are now improving because raising attainment is a key priority for teachers. This has led to deep research into what is needed for pupils to reach their potential and this in turn has led to much more effective teaching, improved progress of all pupils and, above all, much better understanding by pupils of how to improve their work. These developments take time, however, and the greatest benefits are seen in Years 1 to 4. All pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good progress, but the teachers find that they need to make up for less effective learning earlier in the pupils' time in school.
43. Assessment is the key reason why standards are rising. The school tracks the progress and attainment of each pupil accurately and in great detail, and looks ahead, setting standards to be reached. Staff consider what other barriers to learning pupils may have, for example behaviour and attitudes to learning, and plan how to overcome them. Teachers use this information to set clear objectives for each lesson and unit of work, and in lessons and through very helpful marking, continually show pupils where they succeed, why they meet problems and what they need to learn next. They often give pupils opportunities to evaluate the work of others and their own, so that they can give or receive 'helpful criticism'. This makes pupils powerful, reflective and independent learners.
44. All the above is underpinned by good leadership and management by the senior management and by the subject manager. Consequently, the provision as a whole is founded upon powerful collaboration between teachers and between teachers and teaching assistants.

45. The key strengths in the teaching are:

- Very good use of assessment to guide teaching and learning.
- Expert and perceptive planning that ensures that every pupil is working at the right pace and challenge, receiving the support each needs.
- The way planning adds relevance to the learning, for example by linking literacy to skills needed in other subjects.
- Strong management of lessons that keeps all pupils on track.
- The very good way that teachers use language to show pupils how to structure their talk and find meaning in what they hear.
- The strong and warm relationships between teachers and pupils that help pupils accept guidance and challenging targets.
- The very good teamwork between teachers and skilled teaching assistants.

46. Standards in Year 2 are average, and in Year 6 broadly average. Standards are weaker in reading, and to a lesser extent writing, than in speaking and listening. Learning in the reception class provides secure foundations for later. In Years 1 and 2, all pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils make the best progress in their learning to talk in ways that help them to think and express themselves, and in the way they do not just simply listen attentively but try to understand what they hear. They apply these skills well to all their learning. They make satisfactory and often good progress in reading, and the teaching assistants make an important contribution to the teaching in Year 1. Even so, although standards in Year 2 are average, they are rarely above average. This is because pupils have too little opportunity to read one-to-one with an adult. Reading logs go home but parents rarely record reading with their children. The school is missing important opportunities to build a powerful 'reading partnership' between home and school. Standards of writing in Year 2 are average, with some above average attainment. Pupils write in well-formed script and structured sentences that most can link together in meaningful ways and for a purpose.

47. By Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are above average and this is making a major contribution to their reading, writing and general learning. Writing reflects the wide range of ability and prior attainment in the class but is broadly average, and in the case of several pupils well above average. This good picture is helped by the way the learning is linked to other subjects: for example, a pupil in a lower class when asked to give 'helpful criticism' in a physical education lesson said, 'It's like editing'. Well-focused support from teaching assistants helps all pupils achieve well, sometimes by working productively in small groups. Standards in reading, however, are below average – albeit slightly. Even able pupils do not read with complete fluency and often skip over words they do not understand. However, they clearly understand how to improve. Again, as with Years 1 and 2, this less good progress is because they have too little opportunity to read one-to-one with another person, discussing the meaning of words and the flow of a story, and being held to account for reading well. The school recognised this and has employed adults from outside the school to read one-to-one with pupils. Pupils in all years are very good at finding information in books, however, and clearly enjoy reading.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Careful planning and collaboration between teachers ensure that speaking, listening and literacy skills contribute to learning in other subjects and, in turn, give pupils many opportunities to use and extend these skills in these other subjects. Good provision for drama forges strong links with creativity in English. This co-ordination between literacy and other learning is making a crucial contribution to raising standards overall, particularly in the way giving 'helpful criticism' improves pupils' speaking and listening skills, and the links between learning how to write is given relevance by use of these skills in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** and standards are improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- The subject is very well led.
- Recent innovations are bringing significant benefits: for example, pupils' mental calculations.
- Numeracy skills are developed well in other subjects.

Commentary

49. There are several reasons why standards are improving rapidly. Improvements are not yet reflected in recent results in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 because pupils in these years had greater learning needs. The subject manager has monitored standards very closely in partnership with the headteacher and the advisor from the local education authority, and any areas of potential weakness have been swiftly addressed. For example, the school has introduced very good tracking systems to ensure that pupils who need additional support, or attain at a higher level, are identified; they then have their needs met as effectively as possible. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well as a team and know pupils well. They plan tasks that are matched carefully to pupils' level of attainment. The strengths lead to good, effective teaching and good learning. There has been significant improvement in provision since the last inspection.
50. A strong feature of the lessons seen and a key reason for rising standards was the way that teachers worked hard to increase the speed of pupils' mental calculations. Egg-timers and stopwatches were used very successfully to encourage pupils to complete the task in a shorter time than in the previous lesson. In some classes, teachers offered pupils different tasks. For example, in Year 4 lower-attaining pupils threw a ball to each other and answered the question where their left thumb touched the ball. They reinforced their ability to add two numbers to make ten in an enjoyable way. A second group worked in pairs with cards to say quickly which group of figures was needed to make a certain number and higher-attaining pupils had to manipulate numbers with mixed addition and subtraction to make another number. Each activity was challenging, fun – and effective. Teachers used a range of interesting and new resources to challenge pupils' speed of recall.
51. Teachers use assessment well to check pupils' understanding and for the formation of groups. For example, in Year 5 the teacher uses a traffic light system so pupils can say whether they feel that they are on red, amber or green, according to how well they understand. This gives her useful information about each pupil and ensures that specific attention is given to pupils who need additional support or different tasks. Teachers set targets to indicate which level each pupil is expected to reach and in Year 6 pupils are aware of the level they are attaining and what they need to do to reach a higher level. This helps to identify pupils who will benefit from a 'booster' class for some weeks. However, marking of work in books does not always indicate what the pupils need to learn next or how they can improve their work and this is an important reason why standards in mathematics have not improved as fast as in English.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Numeracy has been developed well in other subjects. For example, in science pupils in Year 5 work out their pulse rate when doing different forms of exercise. This gives them valuable practice in doubling a number. Data-handling skills are well developed in ICT and in science when pupils use bar charts and pie charts. In ICT they plot and record co-ordinates to reinforce work done in mathematics and geography. Pupils in Year 2 use measuring skills in science to check the distance a car travels along a ramp and compare heights of ramps.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is very well led by the subject manager.
- Pupils achieve well because they know how to improve.
- Scientific enquiry stimulates pupils' curiosity and increases their understanding.
- Planned links with other subjects, for example English, develop pupils' scientific vocabulary and thinking skills.

Commentary

53. Standards by the ends of Year 2 and Year 6 are average, with a quarter of the pupils in Year 6 attaining at an above average level. This maintains the standards of the last three years. All pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and the emphasis that the school places on practical and investigative activities. The frequent and regular practical work stimulates pupils' interest and supports their understanding because it develops practical skills alongside increased knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs participate well in lessons because teachers ensure that they understand what they are to do and teaching assistants give them very good support and guidance. Teachers track pupils' progress carefully and as a result plan tasks that are matched well to the pupils' needs. However, although there are some good examples of marking in which teachers help pupils to improve their work, this practice is not consistent, failing to match the very helpful feedback in class.
54. The emphasis on learning through first-hand experiences leading to higher achievement was evident in lessons. In a very good lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils planned and carried out an investigation to test whether a car travelled furthest across the carpet from a high, medium or low ramp. Skilled questioning by the teacher ensured that the test was fair and pupils concentrated very well for the whole of the lesson. The teacher encouraged them to discuss every step and make hypotheses and deductions about what would happen in each attempt. Their scientific thinking developed very well in this investigation. In a lesson in Year 5, pupils ran, jogged, walked and skipped around the playground, testing their pulse at the end of each physical activity and telling the teacher or learning support assistant when their pulse was back to normal. Every pupil was highly involved and when anyone found it difficult to complete the recording sheet, adults quietly discussed it with them. Pupils talked about their investigation very thoughtfully and worked enthusiastically in the computer suite to record their results. They thought about their conclusions and felt that the activity had been worthwhile. They had learned a lot about the benefits of exercise.
55. Teachers plan thoughtful links with other subjects. ICT was used very effectively to support the lesson in Year 5 and was used well for pupils to record data and compile block graphs, pictograms and pie-charts in other classes. Literacy and science intertwined effectively in Year 6 when pupils discussed reversible and irreversible materials in science and worked out instructions for making chocolate cakes in English. The dimension of food technology was added when pupils with special educational needs made the cakes and shared them with everyone.
56. The enthusiastic subject manager leads the subject very well and encourages staff to plan imaginatively; other teachers also have a strong interest in investigative tasks. She is committed to continuing the enrichment of the subject through events such as the 'Grounds Day', when everyone carried out different investigations outside, working in mixed-aged groups on several activities. Many pupils recorded this as 'the best day of their school life'.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The expertise and enthusiasm of the subject manager are considerable assets.
- ICT is used very effectively to support work in other subjects.
- Resources are very good and enhance teaching and learning considerably.

Commentary

57. There have been considerable improvements since the last inspection. There is a dedicated ICT room which is well equipped with computers, programmable toys, digital cameras and an extensive range of programs. In addition, the school has some classroom keyboards which are used successfully to enhance the work of pupils with special educational needs. Interactive white-boards are gradually being installed and are being used very effectively to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Years 1 and 2 pupils, for example, use them confidently and without help to solve mathematical problems nearly every morning.
58. Because teachers have high expectations, pupils' competence in using ICT as a tool to aid their learning is good from an early age and they achieve high standards. In Years 1 and 2, they use the Internet confidently to research for information. They have good mouse control and successfully open and shut down programs. In Year 4, pupils continue to develop their skills in control technology. They learn how to write simple instructions so that the program will draw a specific shape or pattern. In order to assess pupils' learning, teachers challenge them not only to draw specific shapes but also to predict what shapes will be drawn by a specific set of instructions. By Year 6, pupils are confidently using a wide range of programs such as word processing, spreadsheets to collate and interrogate data, importing images to enhance their written work and using the Internet to research for information.
59. As a result of good teaching, a well structured curriculum and very good resources, pupils' achievements are good and standards are above average throughout the school. The subject manager is experienced and provides good support through in-service training and advice to all staff on an individual basis. She has overseen the successful development of ICT within the school and has a clear vision for its continuing development. She is now in the process of improving assessment procedures so that pupils' progress can be tracked more closely.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. The use of ICT to support work in other subjects is very strong. Teachers expect pupils to use computers to support their learning and place considerable emphasis on this aspect of their teaching. For example, pupils use programs effectively to write and modify musical compositions. They enter data into spreadsheets and other programs and draw computer-generated graphs in order to interpret their findings, for example in science. Teachers use specially written programs selectively to support pupils who have learning difficulties in specific aspects of the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers take care to ensure that pupils understand the cause and effect of different geographical features.
- ICT is used effectively to support learning.
- There has been little improvement in standards until recently.

Commentary

61. Standards are average in Years 2 and 6 and all pupils make sound progress and often achieve well. For example, they learn to use atlases sensibly to locate different places and use this information to increase their knowledge and understanding of the world. In the Year 1 and 2 classes, pupils identify the characteristics of settlements through their work on holiday resorts, using the Internet confidently to find the information they need. They then talk knowledgeably about the features of settlements. In Year 3, pupils become much more aware of the impact of climatic differences and older pupils gain a good understanding of conservation issues. There are good links with literacy, as when pupils in Year 6 wrote poems about the water cycle from the point of view of a droplet of water. Pupils learn history and geography in alternating longer units, and this allows each subject to be studied in depth.
62. The quality of teaching seen was good. Teachers were constantly asking pupils probing questions in order to increase their understanding. They have high expectations, for example ensuring that pupils in Year 2 locate places using an atlas and can explain the difference between a country and a continent. In Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of physical and environmental geography are further enhanced through a residential visit to Devon which enables them to compare and contrast this area with their own.
63. The development of geography has been under-emphasised until recently and this has resulted in standards remaining static. The school is fully aware of this and has given the subject a higher priority in the development plan for next year, including the implementation of more detailed assessment procedures.

History

Provision in history is **good** and sometimes outstanding.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and sometimes outstanding.
- Pupils gain a good balance of knowledge, understanding, skills and empathy for people in other times.

Commentary

64. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average; they are well above average in Year 4. Teaching is good, with examples of excellent teaching. Consequently, all pupils achieve well. A good example was the way pupils in Year 6 questioned adult visitors about what it was like to live from 1945 until the present day and about the changes they had experienced. The subject is well led and managed, and the subject manager has a clear vision of how provision and

standards can be further improved. She checks planning and resources, and has begun to check pupils' progress, although this offers opportunities for improvement.

65. The strength of the subject is that pupils learn to be historians, balancing and researching evidence, and coming to sensible and well-thought-through historical conclusions. They understand why life in the past was different, and how events and discoveries change the way we live over time. Links with other subjects such as literacy empower the learning: for example, in literacy lessons linked to a study of the fire of London in Years 1 and 2, and creative writing about World War II in Year 6. The pupils' learning is significantly extended and enriched by visits to places of historical interest. At times the teaching and learning is stunning – as can be seen below.

Example of outstanding practice

A Year 4 class studied invasion and settlement by Romans, Saxons and Vikings and the teacher wanted to help the pupils to understand fully events and peoples so long ago.

The class already had a very secure knowledge of historical events and peoples, and had produced excellent factual and creative writing on the Romans, using well-developed research skills and word-processing. The pupils were asked to work in another classroom. When they returned to their own classroom, it had been completely 'trashed'. They were distraught and very angry that anyone could have invaded their room. They wanted revenge and someone to be brought to justice, and called in the headteacher. She shared their distress and said she would call in the police. Learning later that it was a simulation, they discussed their feelings with the class teacher. The Year 5 class who had done the 'trashing' and who been part of the exercise, came and helped the Year 4 pupils put their classroom together again. Pupils said, 'I definitely would never have understood what it felt like to be invaded without it!' – but also, 'Isn't it a pity that people are not left in peace to settle?'. The pupils went on to discuss why people invaded other countries and what it felt like to be invaded, showing on a map how Saxons in Deddington would have fled to a fortified stronghold in Adderbury, and their feelings as they went. They then talked about current events in Iraq and the bomb tragedy in Madrid. Their understanding was very high indeed.

Religious education

66. This subject was inspected by Section 23 inspectors. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and makes a good contribution to preparing pupils for life in a multi-faith and cultural world.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Provision overall in this area is **very good with excellent** features.

Commentary

67. As will be seen below, the provision as a whole has greater benefits to the pupils' learning and personal development than can be seen in the quality of its constituent parts.

Example of outstanding practice

Expressive Arts days for pupils in Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 to 6, in alternating weeks enrich learning in the creative arts and are a strategy to help pupils become more dynamic, aspirational and independent learners.

At the end of the day, the only judgement possible was 'superb'. Playing to the strengths of teachers, pupils had single sessions of dynamic, expressive and exciting dance, making papier-mache sculpture to show movement and emotion, capturing the fun of the carnival through samba rhythms and excellent drama that took the risk of helping pupils to investigate deeply their own feelings and their reactions to other people. The day had a pulse and energy of its own, driven by the eagerness and confidence of the pupils and the way they caught the enthusiasm of their teachers. Management was so skilled it was not noticed. The learning was deeply reflective as pupils gave each other 'helpful and caring feedback'. Towards the end, an expert teacher from another school led Years 5 and 6 through rehearsal of production songs, culminating in a performance of incredible quality and theatrical excitement. The audience felt the hairs on the backs of their heads tingle with the electric performance of nearly 60 pupils. Seeing the joy of the pupils, including some with great problems, the term excellent was hardly enough.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is too narrow in class lessons.

Commentary

68. There is too little evidence of pupils' work in art and design to make a judgement about standards, achievement or the quality of teaching and learning. The small amount of work seen indicates that the pupils work in both two and three dimensions and use a satisfactory range of materials. In Year 6, for example, pupils make attractive clay pots to support their work in history while those in Year 4 have made simple yet original chairs and stools at home, for which they are going to design covers. Photographic evidence shows how art is used to enhance pupils' personal and cultural development, for example in expressing moods and feelings and by the study of Aboriginal art. The art curriculum is satisfactory but does not cover all aspects in sufficient depth, for example in the study of famous artists. Art is included in the expressive arts days which take place fortnightly and this helps to enrich learning. In lessons during such a day, pupils made papier-mache sculptures around pipe-cleaner armatures very successfully, capturing a range of movements well.
69. Pupils enjoy art and become thoroughly engrossed in their tasks and work industriously. They collaborate with and support each other effectively. They are taught in a calm and peaceful atmosphere and their success contributes well to their personal development.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Commentary

70. Although no lessons were observed, wider evidence suggests that standards are average in Years 2 and 6. Pupils learn successfully to follow the 'design and make' process and then to critically evaluate their work and say how it can be improved. In Year 4, pupils have disassembled purses in order to find out how they are made. They have learned a range of techniques such as sewing and examined different types of fastenings in order to re-assemble them. In Year 5, they continue to develop their skills and use cams practically to make simple

jack-in-the-box type toys as well as designing and making working musical instruments. All pupils are fully involved in the tasks and take great care with their work, ensuring that models are finished neatly and attractively. Design and technology might benefit from becoming an integral part of the expressive arts days. The resources are satisfactory overall but not extensive. The school is fully aware of this as the new subject manager has recently conducted an efficient audit which has identified the need to improve resources and raise teachers' expertise through further in-service training.

Music

Provision is **satisfactory** with some good features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils sing very musically and with a great sense of performance.
- Teachers lack the support of a sufficiently clear policy and a coherent scheme of work.

Commentary

71. All pupils achieve well and standards by Years 2 and 6 are average overall, and above average in singing. The subject manager has rigorously audited provision and ensured that resources are adequate in range and quality but has found a need for teachers to gain the support of a single scheme of work if standards are to rise and all pupils have appropriate experiences. Despite this, class teachers put their all into the teaching and it is good. Pupils enjoy creating music, gaining great pleasure from learning new skills, for example beating samba rhythms, discriminating pitch, and from singing especially when performing. Music plays an important part in the life of the school from singing of good musicality in assemblies to taking part in the well-attended recorder club, and from exciting school productions to rehearsing for a singing festival. There are some but not enough opportunities for pupils to learn individual instruments such as guitars. The school recognises that the provision as a whole needs to be drawn together and reflect the quality already achieved, for example, in English.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well balanced and is effectively linked through dance to the expressive arts.
- Links with other schools through the Warriner partnership enhance pupils' work.
- The school makes effective use of a range of commercial schemes.
- Assessment is too imprecise.

Commentary

72. Pupils enjoy their lessons and work hard to achieve high standards. All pupils make good progress, and standards by Years 2 and 6 are above average. All pupils achieve well because pupils with special educational needs are well supported and able pupils suitably challenged. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 work on apparatus at different heights using differing parts of their bodies in very original ways and in Years 3 and 4 they develop their gymnastic skills effectively by highly creative routines that involve changes in dynamics such as speed and direction. Dance lessons are exciting and stimulating. Pupils thoroughly enjoy this aspect of their work and move and respond well to different types of music. Evidence from pupils' success in matches against other local partnership schools indicates that standards in team games are at least satisfactory and often better, for example girls' football. In athletics, pupils compete successfully against other local schools through the Warriner partnership and

sometimes progress to represent the school in the district athletics tournaments. Pupils learn swimming and most can swim the required 25 metres by the time they leave school. However, the time it takes to reach the pool means that pupils are out of school for a considerable time, which impinges on other curriculum areas. The school is concerned about this and is looking into finding and using a nearer location that fulfils all health and safety requirements.

73. Teaching is good. Teachers plan their lessons constructively so that pupils make good progress both within lessons and over time. They pay attention to health and safety requirements and are constantly reminding pupils of the need for care when using apparatus. All lessons begin and end with appropriate warm-up and cool-down sessions and teachers ensure that pupils know why these activities are included in lessons. The subject manager is enthusiastic and makes good use of a range of commercial schemes to ensure that teachers can develop pupils' skills systematically. At present, assessment procedures are too subjective and are dependent on individual teachers' expertise.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

Provision in PSHCE is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is often very good or excellent.
- The subject enlivens the whole curriculum and life of the school.
- The school does not yet have ways of testing the effectiveness of provision.

Commentary

74. All pupils achieve well and the subject lies at the heart of the curriculum. It makes a very considerable contribution to pupils' personal development and, consequently, pupils by Year 6 are not only mature but also aware young people and citizens. The subject is well led and managed and teachers work to a good local scheme of work. This ensures that pupils learn a good and appropriate range of topics, at times relevant to their age. Teaching is good and often very good or excellent. The subject does not stand alone but gains considerably through learning in other subjects such as drama and it, in turn, enlivens learning in such subjects as history. The subject manager also has responsibility for the school council, a practical introduction to democratic citizenship, and teachers perceptively follow up immediate events in 'circle time' (times when pupils can discuss concerns and worries openly). There are strong links between such areas as codes of conduct and sanctions and rewards, and the manager is considering a stronger presence for the teaching of thinking skills. She has gathered samples of work as one way of monitoring standards, but might usefully consider using standardised tests that measure pupils' development in emotional literacy (people's ability to read the reactions of others and react positively to their own emotions). This would help inform the school's research on pupils' attitudes to their learning.

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	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
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	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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