

INSPECTION REPORT

HALCON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Taunton

Somerset

Unique reference number: 123707

Headteacher: Mr R Adams

Lead inspector: Dr M J Bradshaw

Dates of inspection: 24th – 26th May 2004

Inspection number: 256311

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	155
School address:	Outer Circle Taunton Somerset
Postcode:	TA1 2BU
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Brumby
Date of previous inspection:	1 st – 4 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school has 155 full-time pupils from reception to year 6. The numbers of boys and girls are similar. About 30 per cent of the school's roll arrive or leave during the school year; this is above the average. Children enter reception in the September of the year in which they are five years old. Data show that the attainment of children joining the school is very low. All pupils are from a white ethnic background and all speak English. Over 50 per cent of full-time pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals, a figure which is high. Almost 40 per cent of pupils in reception to year 6 have been identified as having significant learning needs, a figure that is well above the average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. A nursery, funded under a government initiative, opened on the school site less than two years ago.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6169	Dr M J Bradshaw	Lead inspector	Science Physical education Religious education
32667	Mrs E Coleman	Lay inspector	
25019	Mrs D Butterworth	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language English Art and design
32124	Ms H Ogburn	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography History
25778	Mr A Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Halcon Community Primary School is an **effective** school that gives a **good** quality of education and provides **good** value for money. Most pupils achieve well during their time in school. In recent years, owing to relatively small numbers in year groups and differences in pupils' abilities, standards have varied significantly from year to year. Teaching is good and the new headteacher has a very clear understanding of the areas that require improvement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's ethos and the way all pupils are socially included in what the school does are good.
- The provision for children in reception is good and they make a good start to their school life.
- The quality of teaching and hence pupils' achievement are good.
- Pupils' attainment by years 2 and 6 is below or well below average in English (especially writing), mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- In year 6, pupils' religious education (RE) knowledge is below expectations.
- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the further improvement of the school.
- Pupils' personal development is well supported and results in positive attitudes and behaviour.
- The school provides very good pastoral care.
- Resources, both financial and human, for supporting pupils with special educational needs are not used to best effect and this slows pupils' progress in English.
- Marking is weak and information about how well children are doing is often not used effectively.

Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Pupils' attainment by year 2 has increased significantly since 1999, but remains well below average. Pupils' scientific skills are developed better. Their speaking and listening skills, and their use of a wider vocabulary, are also better. Pupils' attainment by year 6 in RE is not as good as previously reported. Very good procedures are in place to monitor and encourage attendance; as a result attendance has improved. Teaching remains good. Pupils' social and personal development has improved. The role of subject coordinators has not developed sufficiently and there has not been enough progress in improving the provision for some pupils with special educational needs.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Achievement in the school is **good**. Children enter the school with very low attainment levels and make good progress. Changes to the approach in reception have led to significant further improvements this year. About three quarters of these children will reach the standards expected by the time they start year 1. The main exception is their English skills, which remain well below those expected. Good progress continues in years 1 and 2, but standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT are below or well below average, by the end of year 2. Pupils' attainment is similar to that expected in RE and physical education (PE).

Achievement in the juniors is good. However, by year 6, standards in English, mathematics, science, ICT and RE remain below or well below average. In English, reading and speaking and listening skills

are about average, but writing is a continuing weakness. The 2003 similar schools results in the table indicate that pupils made insufficient progress in the juniors. However, these pupils' results when they were in year 2 were exceptionally low. Given this starting point, their progress during years 3 to 6 was very good. In PE, pupils' attainment by year 6 is above that expected.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good**. Very good relationships exist between pupils. Their attitudes are good and behaviour is very good. Pupils' awareness of other cultures is not developed sufficiently. Owing to the school's action, attendance has improved and is now satisfactory. Punctuality is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching is **good** and this is leading to good learning in most lessons. Examples of good or very good teaching occur in all classes. Teachers consistently have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Good systems have been developed to identify how well pupils are doing, but these are not yet used consistently. Marking is limited and does not help pupils know how they can improve, or what they have done especially well. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which is enriched by a suitable range of visits and extra-curricular activities. English and mathematics are given a high priority, and the curriculum has been modified to focus on the development of pupils' skills. At times, this has led to limited coverage of some other subjects, such as aspects of RE, geography and history. Pupils with learning difficulties do not always receive sufficient support to help them improve, especially in English.

This is a caring school in which the personal needs of pupils are looked after very well. Pupils' education is aided by good links with the wider community, parents and local schools, including the nursery on the same site.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The new headteacher has already demonstrated very good leadership qualities and has identified areas requiring further improvement. Management is satisfactory, but the roles of subject coordinators have not yet been developed sufficiently. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

A questionnaire sent out by the school shows that parents are satisfied with the school. Pupils are positive in their views of school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in writing throughout the school;
- ensure that RE is consistently taught to raise standards in year 6;
- make better use of the financial and human resources to support pupils with special educational needs, particularly in developing their English skills;
- improve marking and the use of information about how well pupils are doing.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

While standards by the end of years 2 and 6 are below or well below average in English, mathematics and science, pupils achieve well. Children in reception achieve well and about three quarters are likely to meet the goals expected in most areas of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in reception and will meet the goals expected in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development.
- Achievement in years 1 to 2 is good, but pupils' attainment is mostly below or well below average in English, mathematics, science and ICT.
- In the juniors, pupils achieve well, but pupils' attainment is mostly below or well below average in English, mathematics, science, ICT and RE.
- Writing standards are well below average throughout the school.
- Good achievement in PE leads to standards that are above those expected.

Commentary

1. In recent years, pupils' attainment by year 2 has tended to be well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. There has, however, been a marked improvement since the exceptionally low standards in 1999. Currently, attainment is below or well below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Year 6 results in English, mathematics and science have fluctuated over time, reflecting the different character of each year group and the relatively small numbers involved. In the three years up to 2001, results were generally similar to or better than the national average in mathematics and science. Last year they declined dramatically, but this reflected the very low attainment of these pupils when in year 2 in 1999. Despite these results, careful analysis shows that pupils actually made good progress. Similarly this year, despite good progress, attainment is below or well below average in English, mathematics and science by year 6.
2. Children enter the school with very low attainment levels. Children in reception achieve well and by the time they enter year 1, about three quarters should have reached, and occasionally exceeded, the goals expected in almost all areas. The main exception is their English skills, which remain well below those expected.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.0 (13.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.4 (12.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.9 (14.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Recent results by year 2 show that girls and boys attain similar standards in reading and mathematics, but girls' results tend to be better in writing. No difference is evident this year. The numbers involved are relatively small and this makes comparisons with national averages somewhat unreliable. Pupils make good progress in years 1 and 2 and build effectively on the progress made by the end of reception. Reading is close to the standard expected and speaking and listening skills, which are also about average, have improved. Writing, however, does not

develop satisfactorily and is well below average. In mathematics, attainment is well below average particularly in number work and the completion of written problems. In science, pupils' knowledge is well below average, but the good opportunities for practical work mean that skills are better, being only below average, which represents good achievement. In ICT, achievement is satisfactory, but pupils in year 2 attain below the standard expected. In year 1, pupils' work shows good achievement in art and design. Pupils achieve well in RE and reach the levels expected. Literacy skills limit the quality of pupils' written work, but drawings, labels and simple phrases show a suitably broad understanding of important religious texts and stories from the Bible. RE also makes a strong contribution to personal development. In PE, year 2 pupils make good progress in developing ball control skills and reach the expected standard.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	21.5 (24.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	22.6 (27.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	22.6 (27.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- In recent years, results by year 6 show that boys have tended to perform slightly better than girls in English, mathematics and science. However, the number of pupils involved is relatively small and no significant differences are evident currently. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests, attainment was very low in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement, however, was good and good achievement continues to be a feature of years 3 to 6. Attainment in English this year is below average. Both reading and speaking and listening are about average, but writing continues to be a significant weakness. Throughout the school, pupils' speaking and listening skills have improved well since the last inspection. In mathematics, pupils develop sound basic number skills but attainment remains well below average. Despite this, their achievement is very good given the low scores these pupils attained in year 2 in 2000. Science knowledge is below average, but pupils' skills are close to the average, although few attain higher than the expected level. The improvement in science skills represents good progress since the last inspection. In ICT, pupils achieve satisfactorily, but their attainment by year 6 is below the standard expected and pupils do not use their ICT skills sufficiently in other subjects. Although at least sound progress in RE continues in years 3 to 5, the lack of attention to RE in year 6 means that attainment is below that expected. In PE, pupils make good progress and achieve well. By year 6, their gymnastic skills are well developed and better than many pupils of their age.
- The school currently has very few very able pupils, but does successfully challenge them to attain higher than the levels expected for their age. In subjects other than English, pupils with special educational needs often achieve well and make good progress in lessons when they receive support from teaching assistants. However, progress in reading, writing and spelling is too slow even for the pupils who have additional withdrawal support.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The school is very successful at developing the pupils' personal and social qualities and as a result they behave very well and have good attitudes to learning. The school is taking effective steps to improve attendance, which is now about average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good social development and good provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development throughout the school.
- The school has high expectations of very good behaviour.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good.

- Attendance has been improved by more effective monitoring.

Commentary

6. A strength of the school is its focus on the personal development of pupils. Social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is woven into the provision throughout the school. For instance, in reception, pupils are given the valuable opportunity to meet the challenges of the outdoor environment. In year 6 it is particularly impressive and pupils are given many diverse opportunities to broaden their horizons. With this encouragement they reach a stage of maturity where they reflect sensitively on themselves and their relationships with others. As a result they are socially aware, form good relationships and have respect and concern for others. This is reflected in the very perceptive writing that many older pupils produce and the charitable fundraising the school has done.
7. The school has thoughtful assemblies that support the good spiritual, moral and cultural provision. Good use of discussion times also reinforces this aspect of provision for the younger pupils. Pupils are aware of cultures and faiths other than their own, although there are limited references to these in displays and the work planned in the school. Pupils understand the importance of a moral dimension to codes of behaviour. The school also makes good use of the Family Advice and Liaison Worker, who is based in the school and works closely with the school, pupils and parents to promote pupils' personal development.
8. The school has a strong and consistently implemented behaviour policy as a result of which behaviour is very good throughout the school. There are many strategies to reinforce this, including well-displayed rules in the classroom and playground, certificates and awards, and 'golden time' awarded to classes who have achieved required standards. Staff provide very good role models and older pupils are encouraged and are confident to mediate in disputes between younger ones where appropriate. As a result most pupils enjoy coming to school and their attitudes to learning are good. There were some very good examples of good manners seen among pupils. There were three temporary exclusions last year, a reduction on the number reported previously.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
Mixed – White and Asian

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
149	3	0
5	0	0
1	0	0

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

9. Attitudes and behaviour of children in reception are very good. This is fostered by sensitive support, good use of adults and a well-planned curriculum that includes many opportunities for collaborative and independent learning. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with specific behavioural concerns, display positive attitudes in school and almost all behave well.
10. The perception by some parents that there was a significant amount of bullying in school was not supported by most pupils or teachers or seen by inspectors. Pupils were confident that a member of staff would swiftly deal with any incidents of bullying should they occur.

Attendance

11. Attendance in recent years has been well below average for primary school pupils. The school has taken effective steps to address the unsatisfactory attendance rates and there has been an improvement in the last year because monitoring procedures, including the follow up of non-attending pupils, have been tightened. Attendance this year is satisfactory as figures show that both authorised and unauthorised absences have been reduced further to close to the national average. A new draft attendance policy has been drawn up and the Family Advice and Liaison Worker is involved with individual families to develop strategies to address attendance problems. Positive encouragement is also given to pupils and families to improve their attendance and punctuality, with an incentive system and awards for those with the best records. Punctuality is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.2	School data	0.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education based on a satisfactory curriculum and good teaching. The care provided for the pupils is good. Links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is satisfactory in years 1 to 6, and good in reception.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good throughout the school.
- Marking does not help pupils know how they can improve and the information from National Curriculum tests is not analysed or used sufficiently.
- Good relationships and very good pupil management help to ensure good learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	8 (26.7%)	12 (40.0%)	10 (33.3%)	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 learning are good and have improved since the last inspection. Two-thirds of lessons featured good or better teaching, with this standard being seen in every class. In year 6, teaching was consistently very good.

13. Teaching and learning in reception are good and supported well by detailed assessment. Children are beginning to take part in assessment of their own learning by contributing to planning based on what they have already learned. Learning through play has enabled the

effective integration of all areas of learning and this good provision has been enriched by the inclusion into the curriculum of a regular visit to the outdoor Forest School (an open-air resource area in rural Somerset with woodland/open field access). Children's capacity to work independently and collaboratively is good in all areas of learning.

14. Teaching in the rest of the school is good. Apart from the consistently very good teaching seen in year 6, there is little difference in the teaching in different classes. Teaching and learning in mathematics and science are good throughout the school, and very good in PE. Teaching and learning in English are also good in the juniors. In years 1 and 2, RE is taught well. In other areas, where there is sufficient evidence to make a judgement, teaching is satisfactory. Strengths of teaching, which help to ensure mostly good learning, include the insistence on high standards of behaviour, good planning and generally high expectations of pupils. Relationships with pupils are also very good, leading to positive attitudes. In many lessons, teachers involve pupils effectively and encourage them to discuss and share their ideas. In PE, where teaching was very good, teachers inject pace into lessons and ensure that no time is wasted; this keeps pupils focused and minimises any risks of misbehaviour. On occasions, good use is made of teaching assistants, such as when supporting pupils making science observations or ensuring a wheelchair-bound pupil can be fully involved in the PE ball skills lesson. However, in some more formal lessons they are not always so effectively employed. Although a very strong personal development theme is established in many year 6 lessons, insufficient attention is given to the teaching of RE. One weakness in teaching in a number of lessons is that teachers do not enable pupils to develop sufficient independence in their learning.
15. Although there are very few pupils in the school who display high ability, teachers usually do well to meet their needs. Pupils with special educational needs are usually offered tasks that are matched to their needs, and so they learn well. However, without additional support in English lessons, they struggle to write independently. These pupils do not receive enough support in whole-class lessons and, as a result, their progress is too slow.
16. The quality of assessment and its use are satisfactory. Throughout the school, marking is inadequate. It is often limited to a few ticks and does not identify what pupils have done well or explain sufficiently how they can improve. On occasions, however, good verbal guidance is given during lessons, such as improving PE skills associated with throwing or striking a tennis ball. Assessment in reception is good. It covers each of the areas of learning and builds into a good record of each child. The assistant headteacher has introduced well-planned assessment procedures, which are closely related to the development of specific knowledge and skills within the recently modified subject plans. These procedures are not yet used consistently in every class or subject, but where they are they help to follow pupils' progress and meet their needs. Similarly, on occasions, teachers' assessments of how well pupils have done in a lesson are used to inform what pupils will do later and this works well. The school uses a range of procedures, including reading tests, to monitor pupils' progress. The results of these tests are not used consistently to set targets for pupils. National Curriculum test results are not analysed sufficiently to identify patterns or individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This contrasts with the effective use of information when children entered school that helped to set clear targets in reading, writing and mathematics for each pupil in year 2 this year. These targets guided teaching so that virtually all pupils met or exceeded their targets.

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that has been specifically designed to cater for the needs and aptitudes of the pupils and has a focus on developing pupils' skills.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A strong focus is given to personal, social and moral education.
- A good reception curriculum includes effective outdoor links.
- There is a lack of balance in some subjects.

- Few extra-curricular activities are provided for pupils in years 1 and 2.

Commentary

17. The school has developed a curriculum based upon a range of themes that enables pupils to make connections across a wide range of subjects. This curriculum focuses on the development of skills within the different subjects. Whilst this is effective in supporting pupils to make sense of their learning, the themes have created some imbalance in subjects taught and led to a lack of depth of study and progression for pupils in subjects such as geography. On occasions, suitable use is made of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects, but their use is not planned with sufficient detail or is extensive enough.
18. The newly appointed headteacher has constructed a plan to develop the school's current curriculum. This plan, when implemented, should ensure that all staff plan for and deliver a broad and balanced curriculum whilst maintaining a focus that supports pupils' learning and the development of their skills. Across the curriculum, the school places a strong focus on personal, social and moral education. Pupils are regularly engaged in collaborative learning, expected to take responsibility for others and interact with each other and adults in a mature and appropriate manner.
19. The curriculum for children in the reception class is carefully planned. All areas are adapted to meet the needs of the children, who are actively involved in planning some of their own work. The move from the nursery to the reception class is smooth, owing to the liaison of staff and the regular exchange of teachers between the sites. The reception children visit the Forest School on a weekly basis. This enables them to experience all areas of learning by using an outdoor environment in an active and stimulating way. This resource provides an extra dimension that enriches the children's learning.
20. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. However, weaknesses exist in the organisation of extra support in English in particular. Some additional English support programmes have been withdrawn and, as a result, progress in reading and spelling is slow for the majority of these pupils. Individual education plans are suitably detailed, identifying pupils' targets but they are not regularly monitored to ensure good progress in developing skills in reading, spelling and writing.
21. The school has links with the community through the local Anglican and Baptist Churches and superstore. The latter has supported the science curriculum and the school's health promotion. Visits and visitors make a significant contribution to the curriculum, which adds to the diversity of the pupils' experiences. These events are regularly at the heart of the theme studied each term; for example, pupils in year 6 visited the Quantock hills in support of a scientific and geographical theme, whilst pupils in year 2 visited the Bath Museum of Costume to develop their skills of historical research. A suitable range of extra-curricular activities is provided for junior pupils, including French and Morris dancing, however, with the exception of a sports club, there is no extra-curricular provision for pupils in years 1 and 2.
22. Sufficient teachers and support staff ensure that the curriculum is delivered in a satisfactory manner. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. The reception outdoor area is good, enhancing the learning environment for these children. The recent acquisition of a specially designed, attractive outdoor area for reception has significantly improved the safety of large equipment for physical activities. The school also has an attractive eco-garden supporting a range of subjects. The school is aware that access for the disabled needs to be improved and plans are being drawn up to address this. There is a satisfactory range of resources for all subjects.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for the personal care and support of both parents and pupils and good procedures ensure pupils' welfare and safety.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides good care and support, well matched to pupils' individual needs.
- There are very good relationships between pupils and staff.
- Induction arrangements are well developed to ensure pupils have a positive start to school life.
- The school monitors progress well.

Commentary

23. The school makes good use of the Family Advice and Liaison Worker to support families and individual pupils when required. The additional support she provides allows the school to benefit from an independent and well-rounded approach to family problems, which helps pupils to cope with difficulties and achieve well in school. She has introduced a number of valuable schemes to help parents support pupils' learning. Health and safety procedures are good. Child Protection procedures are well developed.
24. The relationships between pupils and members of staff are very good and pupils report that they would have no hesitation in approaching a teacher with any difficulties either with work or relationships. They believe their views are taken into account through the school council, although the agenda for discussion is at present decided by the headteacher.
25. Teachers know their pupils well and value their achievements. They monitor progress well and intervene appropriately to support particular needs, for example with the toe-by-toe reading scheme to reinforce key words. Reports are clear and informative but will benefit from the planned changes to focus more on individual progress and targets. Pupils with special educational needs are identified effectively.
26. Induction arrangements for reception children are good. The school has a close relationship with the adjacent nursery. Before starting school, children have good opportunities to become familiar with their new environment and the members of staff who will teach them. All new children are given good opportunities to visit the school and learn about it from a well-designed booklet, parent workshops and meetings with key staff. These ensure that children have a positive start to school life. The start of the school day is relaxed; children come to school happy and smiling and are keen to share their thoughts with the teacher.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school makes good use of its links with the community and other schools. The very good support they receive from a number of parents makes a valuable contribution to learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good systems to promote parents' involvement in their children's learning.
- Good contributions are made by a number of parents to the learning environment of the school.
- Links with the nursery are very good.

Commentary

27. Parents are provided with good information about the school and they are well informed about the progress of their children through detailed reports. The Family Advice and Liaison Worker has developed a good practical programme to involve individuals or groups of parents in supporting their children's learning, inviting them into school to watch a video or to take part in activities linked to the curriculum. This programme is at present directed only at parents who request it. There are also welcome packs available to parents from reception onwards, which contain a wealth of information about services available to them. The school is making efforts to

involve parents more closely in the running of the school by taking account of their views in the review of the behaviour policy and with the introduction of a range of projects.

28. The parent teacher association makes a particularly valuable contribution to school life with the development of the environmental garden, which is a source of pride for the school and pupils alike. The pupils learn gardening and construction skills together with a respect for growing plants. This project builds on foundations learned at the Forest School and provides an imaginative educational resource. A group of parents also runs a number of clubs and social events, which are well supported and raise funds for the school. A valued group of parents also volunteer for reading support.
29. The school and the Family Advice and Liaison Worker have a well-developed expertise in making use of community resources to advise and support parents and pupils. There is also regular contact with the Education Social Worker and a weekly visit from a counsellor to work with referred pupils. Social Services input helps to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have good opportunities to access all areas of the curriculum effectively.
30. The school has close liaison with a group of local Taunton schools, which are being developed most obviously for sports fixtures. The close links with the nursery have benefited learning in reception. The school makes painstaking efforts to ensure the smooth transition of pupils to secondary school, especially vulnerable pupils, such as those with specific special educational needs or behavioural problems. The induction process into reception is simple and effective and the teacher has been successful in improving home school links through parent workshops.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is very good and that of other staff is satisfactory. Governance and school management are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher has a very clear vision of what needs to be improved.
- Leadership in reception is very good.
- The role of subject coordinators is underdeveloped.
- The school's positive ethos embraces a strong commitment to including all pupils and to their personal development.
- The use of human and financial resources is not having sufficient impact on the progress made in English for pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

31. The new headteacher has begun a rigorous review of key areas of the school's work such as pupils' performance, the curriculum and teaching and learning. Perceptive analysis across a broad front has enabled him to identify what the school is currently doing well and to set out, at present informally, a clear vision for what needs to be improved. He shares his vision well with all in the school community, having a natural enthusiasm, which infects others. There is a strong sense of teamwork and, as a result, the school's capacity for further improvement is good.
32. School management is satisfactory, but the role of subject coordinators and other managers in leading developments and in monitoring the work of the school is not defined clearly enough. This leads to variation in practice. The reception teacher provides very good leadership and good management. She has actively sought liaison with the on-site nursery and encourages staff from both settings to train and work together, building an effective team. The links with the nursery and the introduction of the national guidance have been major catalysts in the development of a revised curriculum, which is having a positive impact on standards. In other areas of the school, subject leaders and other managers have not been sufficiently involved, for example in

monitoring pupils' work and teachers' plans. Consequently, they are not in the best position to formulate development priorities and to advise colleagues.

33. All adults in the school share a vision that values the contribution of every child. Relationships between all adults and pupils are very good, leading to a positive ethos where pupils feel secure. The school successfully meets the needs of most of its pupils. The significant budget for special educational needs is not yet having sufficient impact upon the progress that these pupils make and resources, including teachers and support staff, are not always used to best effect. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is not responsible for the management of the individual work programmes and does not monitor work or progress regularly. The support staff, who work with pupils with special educational needs, rely on the class teachers for support and guidance, and the interpretation of the individual education plans is left solely to the teachers and teaching assistants. These factors, together with the discontinuing of some support programmes, has meant the progress in English for these pupils has been too slow and not as good as for other pupils.
34. The governing body is satisfactorily involved in identifying and shaping priorities for development. Frequent meetings with the headteacher and other staff, and occasional lesson visits, keep governors well informed. There are clear lines of management and communication, linked to a range of committees, each of which monitors a different area of school practice. Priorities for school improvement are set out in the school development plan. However, links with staff performance management, time-scales for completion and criteria for evaluation are not clear enough. The school is therefore not able to monitor effectively how well it is progressing towards its development targets.

Financial information

35. Financial control is satisfactory. A recent audit identified areas for improvement, most notably to ensure that all relevant paperwork is kept up-to-date. The school office passes regular budget reports to members of staff and the governing body so that they may monitor spending. The school saved a higher than usual amount of money to carry forward into the 2003/4 financial year. The carry forward into 2004/5 is considerably lower because last year the school spent more on staffing to keep class sizes down and to minimise the amount of supply cover needed to cover temporary staff absence. This helps to ensure that there are consistent approaches to class management and also to prevent disruptions in pupils' learning.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	499,741
Total expenditure	463,060
Expenditure per pupil	3,087

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	51,939
Balance carried forward to the next	44,310

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The school provides a good education for reception children, an improvement since the last inspection. The designated area provided for the children is bright and attractive and has been much improved by the recently developed outdoor area. The reception teacher understands the needs of young children and how they learn. This is clearly demonstrated in the high quality play and wide range of activities she provides for the children. Good teaching enables all children to achieve well and by the time they start the first year of the National Curriculum, most are reaching the early learning goals in all areas except communication, language and literacy.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of good teaching and sensitive support.
- Routines are well established and children's attitudes and behaviour are good.
- Children with special educational needs receive good support.

Commentary

36. From a very low starting point, all children achieve well in developing social skills, most reaching the goals expected by year 1. All activities are planned to include opportunities for collaboration with others and to promote independence. All children register themselves each morning using a series of name charts placed around the classroom and, whilst choosing activities, they are sensible. During speaking and listening times, all children listen attentively and take turns to contribute. Following lessons, all children take responsibility for tidying up, working effectively together. The cross-curricular theme of the Forest School enhances children's motivation to learn. All children behave very well and are supported in this by appropriate examples from all adults in the classroom. Constant positive praise for good behaviour encourages children who respond appropriately, this has a significant impact on the learning environment.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Collaborative learning opportunities are good.
- Although most children make sound progress from a very low start, standards remain well below average when children join year 1.

Commentary

37. The quality of learning and teaching is good. Speaking and listening opportunities are constantly created to enable children to develop their vocabulary and sentence structure; for example, after a 'choosing' session, children recount their experiences to the class puppet. The puppet 'helps them' by providing clues and modelling key vocabulary. Opportunities for talk are systematically built into activities to allow children to respond to significant experiences, such as the examination of living things found in the environment. Talk to clarify thinking is also a feature of their work. Children share stories in the classroom and are supported to understand the text through the use of a range of aids. During the sharing of the story of the Gingerbread Man, children used puppets to help recount the events. Most children listen to and join in with stories

and are interested in illustrations in books but are unable to read any words, although some recognise initial sounds. The most able children write some recognisable letters and display good pencil control. Despite the good provision, due to the exceptionally low levels of entry to reception, few children will reach the goals expected by the end of reception.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of active learning experiences are provided.
- Support for children with special educational needs is good.

Commentary

38. Teaching and learning are good, particularly in the area of mental mathematics. Most children are on track to achieve the early learning goals by the end of reception despite their very low levels on entry. The development of some mathematical skills is linked well to other areas of learning. In a guided reading session, for example, the teacher takes the opportunity to use the index of a book to encourage children to count on and back and the use of large construction blocks promotes the use of positional language. The Forest School provides a key focus for mathematical development where children engage in active learning; for example, the children are asked to measure the trunk of a tree, order their collections of natural objects by length or size and collect five sticks that are 'as long as your middle finger'. In the classroom, pupils are supported by the good use of visual resources. In one lesson, the teacher creates an imaginary bus which children get on and off to develop their understanding of 'more than' and 'less than'. Children with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants who use a range of clues including fingers and cards to ensure these children have access to the lessons.

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

Provision in these areas is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Forest School makes a very positive contribution to children's experiences.
- Effective links are made between different parts of the curriculum.

Commentary

39. Teaching and learning in these areas are good. The detailed use of assessment information supports learning well, as does good planning and good use of play. The Forest School makes a significant contribution to the development of knowledge and understanding of the world through the opportunity it provides for active learning in the environment. Children experience an awareness of change by visiting the environment through the year and exercise their senses in many ways; the teacher frequently asking, "What does it smell/feel/sound like?" Through play in the classroom, children develop their learning by experimenting with a range of resources; for example, in one activity, a group attempted to empty water from one container to another using guttering. During this activity, the children found out that water will not flow uphill and moved on to try to find another way to empty the container. Children also develop skills in art through creating sculptures and weavings from natural objects collected at the Forest School and through printing, sticking and observational drawing activities. In physical development, they are aware of the need to warm up before exercise and make good use of space and apparatus. They are careful of each other's space and participate with confidence.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for speaking and listening and this is having a positive impact on standards.
- Teaching and learning in years 3 to 6 are good overall and, as a result, achievement by the end of year 6 is good.
- Standards in writing are too low.
- Marking and assessment are not helping pupils to improve their work or to raise standards in writing.
- The range of reading materials in years 1 and 2 is too narrow.

Commentary

40. The results of the 2003 National Curriculum tests showed that standards were well below the national average in English. Pupils generally enter the school with poor English skills and make sound or better progress in years 1 and 2 and good progress by the end of year 6. Evidence shows that reading and speaking and listening have improved since the last inspection, and achievement is good. However, standards in writing remain persistently low, and achievement in this aspect is not adequate.
41. Teachers work hard to develop listening skills and pupils are encouraged to develop their speaking skills in paired and whole class discussions. Progress is good, and by the time the pupils leave the school they are confident speakers with an appropriate vocabulary.
42. Reading is taught systematically throughout the school, and there is a good stock of large books to support whole class reading. However, there is a narrow range of books available in the classrooms and the library is small for the size of the school; many books are worn. In years 1 and 2, reading materials are largely restricted to similar books from a main reading scheme and, as a result, pupils struggle to talk about books or the meaning within stories. Pupils in year 1 have low levels of skill in reading and writing on transfer from reception, and all benefit from the additional literacy support provided in small groups to learn letter sounds and develop spelling skills. Teachers take every opportunity to reinforce and develop reading skills; for example in a very good and challenging year 5 lesson the teacher asked questions which prompted pupils to look closely at how the writer of a letter persuades the reader to accept a particular viewpoint. There are opportunities to read the letter as a class and individually, and valuable thinking time is given before any answer is accepted. The teacher ensures further reading practice with written questions, vocabulary and small sections of the earlier material, which helps the pupils to develop fluency and confidence in reading as well as giving more time to think, read and verbalise their understanding.
43. There is encouragement to take books home, and many parents hear their children read, but the range of reading material is restricted and pupils take the same book home and read it over and over again. In contrast, the year 6 classroom has an excellent range of modern children's fiction, and as a result, the pupils in this class are enthusiastic about reading. They speak knowledgeably about the authors, their style of writing and how the plot is developed. They confidently recommend their favourite books such as David Almond's 'The Fire Eaters', because the author does not give the plot away but "keeps you mystified and you want to read more". They also remember, however, that reading was "boring", before they were allowed free access to books of their choice, and just allowed to read books from the reading scheme.

44. The school is aware of the need to raise standards in writing, but these are slow to improve. In years 1 and 2, pupils develop their ability to write independently very slowly because they are not provided with sufficient resources such as alphabets and word lists to support their independence. This means that they rely heavily on adults, and are slow to write, when working alone. It is also evident from the unaided work of older pupils that they find it difficult to write without the support of teachers and teaching assistants, because the quality and amount of work is much more restricted.
45. Additional support programmes for pupils in years 3 and year 5 has been withdrawn. As a result, pupils with low levels of skill and special educational needs are not receiving the targeted support that they need to improve their writing. Joined fluent handwriting becomes evident only in year 6 for the higher attaining pupils, and this prevents many pupils from achieving higher standards. Pupils' independent writing is assessed twice each year to inform teachers about standards, but not all teachers are accurate in their assessments. These assessments do not give enough, regular information about progress to enable teachers to plan and target further work at the level it is needed.
46. Teaching in years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and is good overall in other classes. Some very good teaching was seen in years 5 and 6. Relationships are very good and teachers are good role models, encouraging pupils so that they want to learn. Marking is very brief and does not help pupils to improve their work. In general, teachers have low expectations for the quality of presentation, accepting low standards, crossings out and poor handwriting without challenge.
47. The subject is managed satisfactorily, although there has been no recent opportunity to monitor lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make slow progress, work is not always adapted to their individual needs and they rely too much on the support of the teaching assistants to tell them what needs to be done. There is little evidence of the use of ICT to help pupils in research.

Language and Literacy across the curriculum

48. There are some opportunities to develop literacy skills in other subjects, but these are limited. Although the school had planned to use the creative subjects to raise standards in literacy, there is little evidence to support this.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well by the end of year 2 and very well by the end of year 6.
- Teaching is good.
- Practical tasks are well matched to pupils' needs.
- Not enough use is made of assessment information to guide planning.

Commentary

49. Standards of work in year 2 are well below the national average. However, given the very low standards with which this group started school, they have achieved well. Nearly half of the pupils have exceeded the target set for them earlier in the year. Standards in year 6 have improved since last year although they remain well below the national average. However, this group's performance in the year 2 tests, which they took in 2000, was exceptionally low. Since then they have made very good progress and they are achieving very well. There is no difference in the performance of boys and girls.
50. Teachers plan well. The discussion generated in practical work contributes well both to the development of pupils' language skills and to their mathematical understanding. Year 2 pupils

made collections of symmetrical and non-symmetrical plastic shapes and most used mathematical language correctly to describe shapes such as a square or hexagon. However, not all could measure the lengths of the sides accurately in centimetres. An excellent discussion on how to find the volume of a person's hand by immersing it up to the wrist in a container full of water and measuring the amount that overflowed began a year 6 lesson. Working as a whole class, pupils went on to investigate whether those whose hands had the largest palm area also had the largest volume. Pupils had a good grasp of area and volume, but careless mental calculation errors led to mistakes in some answers. This contributed to the difficulty of interpreting results, which were inconclusive overall.

51. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and set demanding work. They manage behaviour well and classroom relationships are very good. Most pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute well to the brisk purposeful lessons commonly seen and to their achievements. However, some small groups of pupils are difficult to manage. This occasionally causes lesson time to be lost, affects the learning of others and restricts the progress that could otherwise be made.
52. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Classroom assistants work well with small groups, discussing work, helping pupils with recording and where necessary managing their behaviour. As a result of the good support they receive, pupils with special educational needs achieve equally as well as others in the class.
53. Teachers assess pupils regularly and keep satisfactory records of progress. However, assessment information is not yet used well enough to plan what pupils need to do next or to ensure that pupils know what they have to do to improve. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Teaching is now good overall and standards are rising slowly.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. Pupils use their mathematical skills well in physical education, for example measuring the distances that balls are thrown, and in science, for example using graphs to analyse temperature changes in an investigation of thermal insulation. However, there was little evidence of use in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, so that pupils achieve well and make good progress in developing their scientific skills.
- By year 6, attainment remains below average.
- Pupils enjoy science and demonstrate good attitudes and very good behaviour.
- Marking and the use of assessment information are not well developed.

Commentary

55. In the past two years, pupils' attainment in year 6 has been well below average, having fallen from above or well above average figures from 1999 to 2001. These fluctuations reflect differences in the abilities of pupils and the relatively small numbers in each year. Last year it was well below average by year 2. Attainment is currently well below average in year 2 and below average in year 6, but achievement is good throughout the school. Since the last inspection, steady progress has been made in improving provision and improvement is satisfactory overall. Good progress has been made in developing pupils' scientific skills, and these are now about average by year 6. The quality of pupils' knowledge and understanding is limited by their literacy recording skills and ability to express their ideas clearly.

56. In all lessons, pupils behave very well and show high levels of interest and concentration, which aids learning. They are keen to learn about science and enjoy being involved in practical activities, such as when pupils in year 6 were investigating the elasticity of elastic bands when stretched with different masses. In this very good lesson, the teacher organised the activities very well, supported pupils very effectively and gave them a challenging task. Careful measurement and numeracy skills associated with graph drawing were features of all pupils' work, including those with learning difficulties, who were well supported by a classroom assistant. The teacher's challenge of creating a calibrated measuring device, to estimate the mass of an unknown object, using the results obtained, was successfully completed by a few higher attaining pupils. Pupils behaved very well and became fully involved in the activity.
57. All teaching seen was a least good and featured careful planning, very good management of pupils and clear explanations. These features enabled pupils in years 3 and 4 to plan successfully an investigation about the habitats preferred by woodlice. Similarly successful teaching helped year 5 pupils consider how different materials can influence the flight of a balloon along a track and, helped year 2 explore healthy diets. Although pupils' knowledge and understanding of science is limited by difficulties in recording, pupils in year 2 are beginning to understand the difference between natural and made materials, observe and record facial features of a friend and use ICT to record information about the number of legs different animals have or how they move. Assessment is satisfactory. A useful system to record pupils' progress has been introduced, but marking does little to help pupils know how to improve. The results from year 6 National Curriculum tests have not been analysed to identify trends or strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performances. As a result, plans do not specifically identify how the weaknesses can be overcome.
58. Few year 6 pupils attain higher standards in their skills because throughout the school pupils do not have enough opportunities to plan and carry out investigations, which are not organised by the teacher. Opportunities to evaluate their work and appreciate the need for repeating measurements are not developed sufficiently. Good use is made of mathematical skills because of the large amount of experimental work followed. This includes measuring the distance travelled by a vehicle down a ramp in year 2, and the recording of results in tables and the drawing of relevant bar charts or line graphs in years 3 to 6. Occasionally ICT is used to present data. The previous coordinator did well in bringing about improvements in pupils' skills, but there has been insufficient opportunity for coordinators to monitor teaching and the quality of pupils' work across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below expectation by the end of years 2 and 6. Only work based on text and graphics is developed to sufficient depth.
- Teachers make some good links with English and science.
- The computer suite is underused.

Commentary

59. Standards by the end of year 2 are similar to those reported at the last inspection. Pupils type short passages of text describing important events in their life such as 'When I had my Christening'. They 'draw' computer graphs to show their favourite foods and program a 'robot' to move around the floor. However, their understanding and recall of the processes involved in this work is weak. Given the low ICT standards with which pupils start school, they achieve satisfactorily overall. Standards in year 6 are also similar to those at the last inspection. The best work, such as illustrated stories, combines text and pictures effectively and is broadly in line with

the standard expected for year 6 pupils. However, their understanding of other aspects of ICT, especially computer modelling and control technology, is weak. Although there are gaps in pupils' knowledge in years 3 to 6, the focus on text-based work is appropriate for pupils and achievement, overall, is satisfactory.

60. Teaching is satisfactory. In one lesson pupils explored how to add pictures to their 'favourite things' writing to make work more interesting. Early discussion encouraged them to explain what they already knew and led well into the practical work that followed. However, much of the teacher's time was taken up in helping individual pupils to practise basic keyboard and mouse skills. Additionally, many pupils found it hard to read the onscreen instructions and consequently needed considerable help in locating the picture 'library' and selecting suitable images. In another lesson, sound teaching satisfactorily developed pupils' skills in searching a computer database. Searching on several criteria, most correctly identified, for instance, 'minibeasts with six legs and no wings'. The lesson was well organised and clearly much enjoyed. Pupils concentrated well and most completed the exercises set.
61. Subject management is satisfactory. The coordinator has set out a useful list of key skills to help ensure that learning builds progressively on what pupils already know. However, monitoring of the quality of teaching and pupils' work is not firmly established.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. Each class is allocated two lessons each week in the computer suite. These are for specific ICT lessons or for work related to the wider curriculum. There are additional times when the suite may be booked. During the inspection few of these lessons were taken up and the computer suite was much underused. Samples of pupils' work and displays are limited to writing and science. Word-processed stories such as 'The Mystery Toyshop' on display in infant classes and 'Joe's Dream' in junior classes are presented well. Care has been taken to edit work to remove spelling errors and to improve the layout of finished work. There are many examples of writing, especially by older pupils, on topics ranging from poems to letters to concerned local residents about how to treat a plague of woodlice! Teachers link ICT and science effectively in the junior classes through work in handling data. Pupils in year 3 store and search 'minibeast' information. Year 5 pupils investigate the solar system by searching a planets database to find out whether there is a link between the size of a planet and its surface temperature.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

63. Neither geography nor history was a major focus during the inspection. Only one lesson was seen in history and none in geography. Therefore it is not possible to make firm overall judgements about provision for these subjects. The curriculum for both subjects is planned to develop specific skills and taught through termly themes, which may focus on history or geography in any one term. There is a lack of depth of study and progression for pupils in the planned work. A limited scrutiny of work indicates that standards are below expectations by years 2 and 6. Suitable links are established with a number of other subjects, such as with art and design through the representation of textures in the environment using a range of media and mathematics through a survey of litter. Pupils have also undertaken an environmental project in their school locality which links with design and technology through the creation of musical instruments from waste products.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- RE strongly promotes pupils' personal development.

- By year 2, pupils achieve well.
- In year 6 insufficient attention is given to RE, and pupils' attainment is below that expected.

Commentary

64. At the end of year 2, pupils' achievement is good. Although pupils' literacy skills limit the quality of their written work, their drawings, labels and phrases show their attainment matches that expected. In a very good lesson in year 1, pupils responded well to stories about God and learnt about the importance of Guru Nanak to Sikhs. By year 2, they know some of the features of a Christian church and record that the Torah is an important document for Jews. They recall the Christmas Story, stories from the Old Testament, such as Moses and the Ten Commandments, and the importance of Mohammed to Muslims. They also record special events in their own lives, such as a christening or the funeral of a close relative. In years 3 to 5, steady progress continues in developing religious understanding. For instance, in a carefully planned lesson, pupils in years 3 and 4 learned about the importance of religious writings by comparing The Ten Commandments and the Five Pillars of Islam. In all classes, RE makes a strong contribution to personal development. Pupils in year 1 write about the importance of friends and in year 2 they reflect on the importance of 'self' and 'belonging'. In year 6, this personal development theme is strong, for instance pupils explore the idea of conflict and its resolution, or personal goals and being part of a team. However, rarely are these themes related to examples of religious teaching or how, for some people, religious beliefs influence an individual's life. Although year 6 pupils have been introduced to aspects of Hinduism and dressed in Indian clothes, their knowledge and understanding of a range of religions lacks depth and detail, and is below the standard expected.
65. The coordinator has produced a revised curriculum that, if followed consistently in all years, should ensure sufficient depth in pupils' studies throughout the school. Similarly, he has developed suitable procedures to monitor pupils' progress, but currently these are not used consistently. Since the last inspection progress has been unsatisfactory overall. Improvements have been made in RE in years 1 and 2, but standards have dropped by year 6. RE does not have sufficient focus in year 6 and in classroom displays in much of the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and design and technology

66. Neither art and design nor design and technology was a major focus during the inspection. No teaching was observed in art and design and there was not enough evidence across the school to judge achievement or provision. However the work seen in year 1 was good where pupils have worked intensively on portraits. They have looked at the portraits of Picasso, Escher and Andy Warhol and produced self-portraits with pencil, charcoal, stick and ink. After looking carefully at portraits of Marilyn Monroe, the pupils used brightly coloured paint for their own quality work in the same style. One lesson of design and technology was seen and planning was examined. Planning follows national guidelines and is satisfactory overall. The lesson seen was satisfactory. Good supervision ensured that pupils worked safely in preparing salad vegetables. Throughout the lesson there were many opportunities for pupils to join in discussion, for example to explain that they found peeling carrots harder than slicing the cucumber and to describe the sensations experienced when eating fruits such as tomato. The lesson ended with a short period in which pupils reflected on their good fortune in having ready access to fresh food, in contrast with others around the world who do not due to poverty or poor growing conditions caused by climate. This contributed well to pupils' spiritual development.

Music

67. Music was not a major focus during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence on which to judge provision. At present the school does not have a coordinator for music and all lessons are prepared and taken by a visiting teacher. These lessons did not fall during the period of the inspection. There is no other evidence of pupils' work.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achieve well and, by year 6, gymnastics skills are above those expected.
- Teaching and learning are very good.

Commentary

68. PE was not a major focus during the inspection, but it was possible to observe three lessons. Teaching is very good because it is clearly planned, challenges pupils very well and ensures pupils remain very active during physical education lessons. As a result, pupils achieve well and reach the expected standard by year 2, and above that expected in year 6. In year 2, the teacher challenged pupils to improve their throwing skills by, for instance, pairs of pupils gradually moving further apart as they became accurate with under-arm and over-arm throws, and by the use of both left and right hands. Pupils rose to these challenges and tried hard to improve. In year 5, pupils were challenged to improve their hand-eye coordination and movement skills when striking a tennis ball with a racquet. The subject knowledge of the teacher helped to ensure that pupils held the racquet correctly and helped them learn to move forwards, backwards or sideways to strike the ball with a forehand shot. In a particularly good year 6 lesson, very fast pace and high expectations resulted in good quality, demanding balances and movements that were effectively transferred from floor to apparatus. Not a moment was wasted because of the very effective use of a wide range of resources. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in PE lessons are very good; they are enthusiastic, behave very well and enjoy the physical challenges involved. Although all teachers used pupils to demonstrate what they had achieved, rarely were pupils encouraged to comment on and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of other pupils' skills. The improvement since the last inspection in both teaching and attainment has been good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

69. It was not possible to observe lessons in this subject and there was not enough evidence to support a judgement on provision. Their personal, social and health education is an integral part of the life of this caring school. The school has a sex education policy and the teachers support pupils' personal development by providing opportunities to explore a range of topics and discuss feelings. For instance, a very good RE lesson in year 1 allowed the pupils to empathise with the feelings of others and encouraged them to talk to their partners about how parents might worry if their child was lost.
70. Teachers make a positive contribution to the development of the pupils and by the end of year 6 pupils are sufficiently confident to produce personal profiles, and write about their fears, ambitions, feelings and moments of pride. This is used as a basis for some poetry of quality where pupils write short evocative poems with such titles as 'My secrets inside', 'I may daydream' and 'The secret of the unknown'. This sensitive and personal work indicates the quality of trust and care that exists between the pupils and with their teacher. They are confident, independent individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

