

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wigginton, Tring

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117463

Headteacher: Miss R A Harwood

Lead inspector: Mrs Barbara Taylor-Harris

Dates of inspection: 19th – 21st January 2004

Inspection number: 257594

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: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll; 78

School address: Commonfield
Wigginton
Tring
Hertfordshire
Postcode: HP23 6EP

Telephone number: 01442 822364
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr L Clark

Date of previous inspection: 30/11/1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Bartholomew's Primary School is situated in the village of Wigginton. The school is smaller than many primary schools. It serves the immediate area and a few pupils come from the nearby towns of Tring and Berkhamsted. Wigginton and surrounding areas have largely owner-occupied housing with some local authority housing. Currently, 78 pupils (42 boys and 34 girls) attend the school full time, and three boys and one girl attend part-time. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups (5 per cent) and none are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. The school has identified 22 pupils (26.4 per cent) as having special educational needs, which is above the national average. One of these pupils has a Statement of Special Educational Need.¹ Children's attainment on entry to school varies from year to year and covers a wide range. When the current reception children joined the school their attainment was in line with that expected for children of this age. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times of first admission or transfer to secondary school is similar to that found nationally.

¹ Stages of special educational needs used to range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 1 and 2, now known as school action, means that the school provides additional and often different support for a pupil with special educational needs. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school and these three stages combined are now called Action Plus.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22518	Mrs Barbara Taylor-Harris	Lead inspector	Inclusion Personal, social and health education The Foundation Stage ² English Creative aesthetic, practical and physical subjects
14061	Mr Leonard Shipman	Lay inspector	
32197	Mr Michael Dukes	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Humanities

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² The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Bartholomew's primary school is an effective school that provides pupils with a **good quality** education. Standards are **above** expectations in the reception class and in Years 1 to 6 due to consistently **good** teaching. The school is **well led** by the headteacher and provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides good leadership in ensuring high standards are achieved year on year.
- Standards in the reception class exceed expectations in most areas for children of this age and, in Years 1 to 6, pupils achieve standards above the national average in English, mathematics and science.
- Consistently good teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6 and good support from learning assistants ensures pupils achieve well.
- Standards in music and physical education are above national expectations but standards are below expectations in information and communication technology, art and design and design and technology.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to achieve well.
- Pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities are good and attendance is very good.
- Some lessons are too long and some subjects are receiving insufficient attention, which has a negative impact on standards.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory as deficiencies restrict learning opportunities for some groups of pupils.

The school has made **good improvement** since the previous inspection and has successfully addressed the key areas of concern raised in that report. Progress and attainment in reception and Years 1 and 2 are now good. The quality of teaching has improved and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Pupils' behaviour is now good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' results in national tests in Year 6 have been **consistently high** over the last four years, and the trend in attainment has been above that seen nationally. This reflects a commitment to achieving high standards across the school and good provision for pupils with special educational needs, which raises the overall level of attainment. The lower results in English in 2003 were due to a spoilt paper, a number of pupils joining the school in Years 3 to 5 and one in the final year and a high number of pupils with special educational needs.

Year 6 results - The table below shows the school's national test results over the last 3 years and how well the 2003 Year 6 pupils progressed over time.

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

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.

Caution is needed in interpreting data as the number of pupils taking the test was relatively small at 15 and the effect of one pupil can be significant.

Pupils' achievement is good overall. When children start in reception their attainment varies from year to year. Attainment was average on entry to reception for the current group of pupils. Good teaching and provision in the reception class ensures children make good progress and are likely to leave with standards above expectations for their age by exceeding the early learning goals³. Consistently good teaching in Years 1 to 6 ensures pupils continue to make good progress and reach standards above expectations in English, mathematics, science, music and physical education. There is satisfactory use of numeracy across the curriculum but insufficient use of information and communication technology and literacy in a few subjects.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. They behave well and are keen to learn, which aids their progress. Pupils' personal development is good and promotes maturity and a willingness to accept responsibility. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' attendance is very good and punctuality of the pupils is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching is consistently good and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen, compared with 16 per cent of unsatisfactory lessons in the last inspection in 1998. Effective team work, good communication and a commitment to raising standards leads to consistency of approach. All the very good teaching was in the specialist teaching of music. Assessment arrangements are **good** and teachers assess pupils' skills and knowledge accurately. The school's curriculum and planning is **satisfactory**. There is good enrichment of the curriculum provided by after-school groups. The quality of care, guidance and support provided by staff is good. The school has satisfactory links with the parents. The school has yet to fully capitalise upon the parents' enthusiasm to support their children's learning at home. Links with the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory overall**. The headteacher provides good leadership in ensuring good improvement and high standards are achieved year on year, and in promoting a culture where all pupils are valued equally. The governing body are new but are well structured and keen to develop their role as effective critical friends. They provide satisfactory governance for the school. Subject co-ordinators provide satisfactory leadership overall for their subjects but their monitoring role is not sufficiently developed. Special educational needs provision is well led and managed by the headteacher.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have **satisfactory views** of the school. A few parents expressed concerns about the quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 and the leadership and management of the school. Inspection evidence finds no concerns in these areas. A few parents were concerned about the quality of the information they receive about their children's homework. The inspection team agree that this could be improved. Pupils have positive views of the school and see it as a happy place to be. They enjoy their work in school, value their friendships and like and respect their teachers.

³ These are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in information and communication technology in Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6.
- Review the curriculum and subject timings to promote less reliance on worksheets in science, history and geography and a wider range of opportunities and more creativity in art and design and design and technology.
- Remedy deficiencies in the accommodation.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Rectify the very minor omissions of information in the governors' annual report to parents and the brochure.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children in reception attain standards **above** expectations for their age and are likely to exceed the early learning goals in most areas of learning. Overall standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are **above average** in several subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception class make good progress.
- In Years 1 to 6 most pupils make good progress
- The good provision for pupils with special educational needs addresses their needs effectively and helps them to achieve well.
- Standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations for pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- Standards in music and physical education are above national expectations

Commentary

1. **Foundation Stage:** At the time of the previous inspection standards achieved by children in the reception class were below expectations for their age, particularly in relation to listening, reading and writing. There was insufficient challenge in mathematics. Children's progress was unsatisfactory because that group of pupils entered the reception class with standards above expectations for their age. The school has made good progress in addressing these issues. The quality of teaching is good and there are high expectations for children's behaviour and attitudes to learning. Each year, children's abilities on entry to school vary. The current reception class has average skills and experience. Due to effective teaching they are making good progress and are likely to exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning, apart from knowledge and understanding, where they are likely to be in line with what is expected for their age. There are insufficient opportunities for children to discuss activities with an adult to extend their learning.
2. **Years 1 and 2:** The previous inspection found that standards achieved in these years were below what should have been expected. Pupils' progress was unsatisfactory, particularly in aspects of English and mathematics, because the curriculum lacked challenge and there was ineffective use of teaching time. Pupils' listening and writing skills were below what was nationally expected. The school has made good progress in addressing these issues. Pupils make consistently good progress in all aspects of English and mathematics. Standards in Years 1 and 2 have risen due to improvements in the quality and consistency of teaching, and effective leadership that ensures high expectations of pupils are maintained. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above national expectations. All pupils achieve well particularly pupils with special educational needs.
3. Over the last five years the improvement in standards has been above that seen nationally, with good improvement in writing over the last two years. The standards achieved were well above the national average in each test (reading, writing and mathematics). Overall the school's results were in the top 5 per cent of all schools nationally in reading and mathematics. Standards were well above those of similar schools in all three areas.
4. **Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.** Standards in mathematics and science are above national expectations in each year group. All groups of pupils are making good progress in lessons and achieve well. There is good support and challenge for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates because they are supported

well by their teachers and learning support assistants. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls or pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The last report found that pupils' writing needed improvement. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' writing is much improved, there is great pride in the presentation of their work and the quality of handwriting is much improved. The school has made good progress over the last four years in raising standards and maintaining high standards. Standards are consistently above the national average, despite variations in ability due to relatively small cohorts. The 2003 results were above average in mathematics and well above in science when compared to similar schools. In English, test results have been consistently well above national averages, until last year, when they were in line with them. Some pupils with specific special educational needs performed less well than expected in the tests, which negatively affected the statistics. Small numbers of pupils take the tests so each pupil can make a significant difference statistically. The lower results in English in 2003 were due to a spoilt paper, a number of pupils joining the school in Years 3 to 5 and one in the final year and a high number of pupils with special educational needs affected the overall average points scored. This made achievement against the Key Stage 1 results in 1999 appear worse than they were. Overall pupils achieve well over time.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4(29.8)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	28.6 (28.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.6 (29.8)	28.6 (28.3)

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

- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school. Their levels of attainment are just below the average for their age in many cases, which contributes well to the very good comparisons between this school and other schools nationally. Their learning needs are identified very effectively and skilfully broken down by staff into small, achievable learning steps. The quality of support from class teachers, support assistants and the headteacher in her role as special needs co-ordinator ensure pupils achieve well.
- The security of teachers' subject knowledge has a strong impact on the standards achieved. For example, pupils across the school achieve standards above national expectations in music and physical education. In music, this is because a music specialist teaches all the music and the quality of the teaching is very good. Similarly, the quality of teaching in physical education lessons is consistently good and ensures good provision, which leads to standards above national expectations. Where teacher knowledge is weaker, such as in information and communication technology, standards are below national expectations. Insecurity of knowledge is also evident in the quality of pupils' work in art and design, and design and technology.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is **very good** and the pupils' punctuality is **good**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good overall** and promotes **good** attitudes to learning and **good** behaviour. Pupils' personal development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and this reflects the good quality teaching.

- The school promotes positive relationships and ensures all pupils are valued as individuals.
- Pupils are happy, enjoy coming to school and respond well to taking responsibility.
- Their behaviour is consistently good and significantly improved since the last inspection.
- Levels of attendance are very good.
- There are a few inconsistencies in the marking and recording of the attendance registers.

Commentary

7. Positive attitudes to school and learning start in the reception class. A good induction system ensures children quickly know and understand school routines and expectations. In other year groups, pupils demonstrate good attitudes to their learning. They are interested in their lessons, listen carefully to adults and each other, and concentrate well on their work. Pupils willingly answer questions and contribute their ideas to discussions. They take pride in their work, present it well and write neatly. They work well in small groups, pairs or individually with a minimum of adult intervention. Parent and pupil interviews and questionnaires strongly stated that pupils like coming to school as it is a very friendly environment. This is a small village school, where pupils and staff know each other well. Pupils trust each other and the staff and this is seen by parents as stemming from a strong caring lead from the headteacher.
8. The provision for the pupils' moral and social development is good and promotes consistently good standards of behaviour. The last inspection report raised a key issue about the standard of pupils' behaviour. There has been good improvement in the school's practice and the issues have been fully addressed. Good quality teaching, linked with good classroom management ensures lessons flow without interruption, and this aids pupils' learning. Pupils move around the school calmly and sensibly, are respectful and show courtesies, such as holding doors open. Playtime is lively and enjoyable with no evidence of any aggression. Pupils value the 'buddies' system where Year 6 pupils support anyone who needs a playmate or someone to talk to. Pupils with special educational needs or with specific behaviour problems are monitored and supported effectively. The school uses exclusion as a last resort. There were no permanent exclusions. Last year following several fixed period exclusions a pupil left the school.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	87	5	0
White – any other White background	1		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		

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

9. The school successfully promotes maturity and a willingness in its pupils to take responsibility. They enjoy the reward systems in school, particularly the award for achieving the most house points, which celebrates aspects of personal development and academic achievements. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility such as being a buddy, a captain or a vice-captain of a house. All year groups have pupil representatives on the school council, which is helping develop the future of the school and giving each member a sense of responsibility for the school. Circle time⁶ encourages pupils to discuss their feelings and promotes respect for others.

10. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils' appreciation of the 'Arts' is enhanced by music, art and design and drama; such as dressing up for a 'Victorian day in school'. The school ensure all cultures and faiths are respected and pupils visit the local churches, a mosque and other local places of interest to further their knowledge and understanding. Charitable donations are made to a mission in Africa and a community in Armenia to help pupils empathise with other's situations. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies clearly display the Cross, positioned on a white tablecloth as a focal point for daily reflection. There is music by a famous composer of the week to open and close the assemblies, which creates a calm atmosphere. There were few moments of awe or wonder in pupils' daily lessons.
11. Levels of attendance are very good and consistently well above the national averages. Many parents accompany their children into school and this helps to promote good punctuality. Pupils are engaged in creative activities before and during registration, which promotes a good start to the day and positive attitudes to learning. The school's procedures to monitor and promote attendance are satisfactory. There are a few inconsistencies in the recording of the attendance registers. For example, a few entries do not signify absence or lateness, and reasons for absence are not always shown in the appropriate column.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	95.4%	School data:	0.0
National data:	94.2%	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 for its pupils. Teaching and learning are **good**. The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall with **good** opportunities for enrichment. The school takes **good** care of its pupils and has **satisfactory** links with parents.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is **good** and ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning. Assessment procedures are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and results in good levels of learning and standards above expectations for children's age.
- The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is consistently good, and promotes standards above expectations in English, mathematics and science.
- The teaching of music is consistently very good.
- Teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There are thorough and effective assessment and tracking procedures for monitoring pupils' progress.
- The quality of teacher's marking is inconsistent.

Commentary

12. Three-quarters of the class teachers have joined the school since the last inspection and one teacher is on a temporary contract due to a recent change in staffing. At the previous inspection the school had a key issue related to improving the quality of teaching. This involved

making better use of time and assessment information, raising expectations of behaviour in class and effective use of monitoring information. The school has made good progress in addressing the issues raised and the quality of teaching is now consistently good in all year groups, particularly for English, mathematics and science. The strengths seen in the teaching of music have been maintained and the weaknesses in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 fully addressed. Sixteen per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. During the period of this inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was seen.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	12	7	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

13. In all classes there is a strong commitment to the promotion of inclusion and equality of opportunity. Teachers maintain consistently high expectations of behaviour, to which pupils respond well. They have a clear understanding of routines and rules, and work consistently well, with concentration and pride in their work, whether working with an adult or individually. Teachers make good use of learning support assistants and these contribute well to pupils' learning. All staff provide good levels of encouragement, and relationships in the classrooms are good. Most pupils believe they work hard and that teachers help them to improve. Teachers keep comprehensive records of their pupils' achievements and levels of attainment. Good use is made of these details to track pupils' progress across the school and inform the end-of-year reports. In English and mathematics there are good systems that set pupils clear targets for improvements. These targets use child-friendly language and are dated when they are achieved. There is a good system for referring to these in the books through stickers. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work across all subjects shows that, whilst books are marked regularly and pupils receive praise and rewards, there is insufficient marking to show pupils what levels they are achieving or how they can improve particular pieces of work.
14. The quality and use of assessment procedures are good. As it is a small school the staff work as a team and look at a range of pupils work on a regular basis so they have a clear view of how all groups of pupils are progressing. The school has a good range of procedures for analysing statistical data from tests and teachers' assessments. The information is effectively used to identify those pupils who need additional help and support. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils are quickly identified and their learning needs are skilfully assessed. Teachers know their pupils well and take good account of the school's strategies for identifying their needs. They meet pupils' identified needs through setting small, short-term targets and planning work to support achievement of these targets. As a result, the pupils progress well in their learning. Teachers creatively arrange for the pupils to be taught individually, in a variety of groups or in a different class, according to where the pupils are most likely to succeed. This strategy is successful and is praised by parents for making the best use of the mixed ages within the classes.
15. Teachers are well supported by a well-trained and caring team of learning support assistants. The assistants have received a high level of training that has provided them with the skills to teach and assess pupils in small groups very successfully, for example, in literacy. They ensure pupils receive very good support in small group situations and class lessons. For example, in whole class sessions they sit close to them, provide extra explanations and help pupils to maintain concentration and interest.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**, and provides a sufficient range of learning opportunities with sufficient resources and accommodation. There is good enrichment of the curriculum provided by after-school groups.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills in using information and communication technology, which results in standards that are below what is normally expected.
- There are high levels of pupil participation in a good range of after-school groups.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by knowledgeable and caring assistants.
- The teaching timetable leads to some lessons being too long and some subjects receiving insufficient attention, which means that standards are lower than they should be in these subjects.

Commentary

16. The curriculum includes all the subjects that it should to meet legal requirements. However, the teaching timetable means that some lessons are too long, such as in science, where pupils tire and their rate of learning drops. In addition there are subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, which are not taught for long enough, with the result that pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable. The school is aware of this issue and plans to review the curriculum in light of national guidance on promoting creativity and enjoyment. Inspectors agree with the headteacher that the school should improve the balance of teaching times for subjects and plan the timetable to enhance further the interest and enjoyment of pupils. Personal, social, and health education is effectively interwoven within the school's timetable and monitored well by the co-ordinator.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. The team of very well trained learning support assistants provide good learning and assessment support in the classroom and in teaching small groups. As a result, these pupils achieve well. Although there are opportunities for some more able pupils to be taught in older age groups, the school does not formally identify the most gifted and talented pupils in order that their learning needs can be well met. The curriculum supports pupils learning about cultural diversity satisfactorily. The school has purchased reading books to ensure they appeal to both boys and girls.
18. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to learn after the school day and these are very well supported. Indeed, all but two of the pupils in the juniors attend at least one of the clubs. Opportunities for participation in the arts are good and, in sport, they are very good, drawing as they do on links with parents and the community to provide coaching in cricket and rugby. The range of pupils' clubs is a remarkable achievement for a small school and represents a real strength of commitment from staff and parent helpers.
19. The teachers and support staff are sufficiently trained and experienced to meet the demands of the curriculum. They have sufficient resources for the curriculum, although the limited number of computers is contributing to the lack of opportunities for pupils in information and communication technology. Staff and governors are taking action to remedy this weakness. The spacious, clean accommodation is capable of allowing the curriculum to be taught well. However, the heating in the reception class is inadequate and unsatisfactory. The roof leaks, causing damage to resources and decoration, and rendering some teaching areas unusable when it rains. This restricts learning opportunities for groups of pupils who would otherwise have small group sessions in these areas. The accommodation is unsatisfactory overall.

Care, guidance and support

The pupils receive a **good** quality of care and the involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting upon their views is **good**. Procedures to ensure all pupils are valued and included are good. **Good** links to specialist outside agencies provide additional support when needed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection, first aid and all aspects of health and safety are good.
- The provision for pupils' support and guidance is good. The provision is good for those with special education needs.
- The views of the pupils are sought through the school council or interviews by staff. Where practical, the pupils' views help shape the school's future.

Commentary

20. The school has maintained and consolidated strengths identified in the last inspection and has made good improvement in ensuring procedures to promote good behaviour have been effectively implemented. This has successfully addressed past issues related to pupils' behaviour. The school has good procedures to ensure all pupils are effectively involved and included in all activities. Pupils' views are sought and valued, which raises their sense of responsibility and self-esteem. The school council is developing effectively to reflect pupils' views and suggestions for school improvement, which generates feedback from the senior management. Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' in playtime to befriend and support other children and this contributes to maintaining good relationships and standards of behaviour. The school ensures that all forms of harassment are eliminated as far as possible. There has never been any form of racial incident and there is good care for the few children from minority ethnic backgrounds.
21. There are good procedures to ensure pupil's safety and well-being. Child protection procedures are in place and all staff have been fully trained. First-aid provision is in place and any accidents are properly recorded in the accident books. Health and safety procedures, including risk assessments, are in place. Health and safety is a good feature of physical education lessons. Teachers are aware of risks and ensure pupils carry equipment sensibly, correctly and safely. The older pupils care for the younger ones. Parents value highly the good quality of care their children receive and the pupils feel happy and safe in school. They have a good understanding of who to go to if they need support.
22. There are good relationships between staff and pupils. This is a small village school where members of staff know the pupils well. As a result, any concern, whether academic or social, is quickly noticed and addressed. The support and guidance provided for pupils with special educational needs is good. A dedicated and experienced team of teaching assistants supports very well the pupils with special educational needs. Teachers write clear individual education plans and all staff regularly review each term the effectiveness of these plans. They assess the progress of pupils and modify the future support and guidance in the light of this, which ensures their needs are well met. There are good established links to outside agencies that provide additional support and advice to the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The parents' perception of the links with the school is **satisfactory**. The links with the wider community are **good**, with some very good aspects. There is a **good** level of parental support for learning within school. Links with other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The input by the governors and voluntary parent helpers, supports teaching and learning effectively.

- Links with the parents association and the wider community are good.
- There are good established links with local pre-school groups, primary schools and the senior schools.
- There is insufficient clear guidance for parents to enable them to support teaching and learning at home, and there is some inconsistency in feedback on homework.
- There are some minor omissions in the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents.

Commentary

23. Issues from the previous inspection have improved. Links with parents are satisfactory. The school seeks the parents' views in a number of ways such as newsletters and the home-school contracts. Parents are encouraged to play a full part in their children's education. In many areas this has been successful because many parents help with trips or in a voluntary capacity with reading, which helps raise standards in literacy. Overall parents provide satisfactory support to pupils' learning. The parents' association works very hard in fund raising to purchase resources to improve the quality of education, such as the purchase of library books, televisions or overhead projectors. Homework is satisfactory but inconsistent both in quality and quantity, and does not always challenge the more able pupils. It is most effective where parents' involvement is clear and they respond with written comments. Many parents feel that they do not receive clear enough guidance on how to support teaching and learning. A few would like clearer information during consultation sessions; one suggested bullet point strengths and weaknesses. The school has yet to fully capitalise upon the parents' enthusiasm to support their children's learning.
24. The quality of information for parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents are kept well informed and invited to attend meetings to draft their child's individual education plans and review their progress. They are encouraged to include a written comment themselves and to support the plan by helping pupils at home. Annual reports to parents contain good information on progress and a self-assessment sheet from their child. There are secure annual review procedures for the statemented pupils.
25. Links with other schools and the community are good, and some aspects are very good. There are effective links with other schools, which enhances the curriculum and provides additional sporting and musical opportunities for pupils, and joint staff training. Many parents praised the induction system because it re-assures them that their children are safe and enter school with confidence. Good and established links with parents and the secondary school ensures a smooth transfer for Year 6 pupils to their next stage of education. A few parents thought the village should be used more as a learning resource. Inspectors found that the school makes satisfactory use of its local environment through a variety of visits to support different subjects, such as science, and religious education. There is a long-term strategy to develop information and communication technology both within the school and with other nearby schools to improve information technology skills.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school is **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher provides **good** leadership. There is **satisfactory** governance of the school. The leadership and management of other key staff is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good leadership in promoting a culture where all pupils are valued equally and high standards are achieved year on year.
- There is good leadership of physical education, the Foundation Stage, English and mathematics.
- Other subject co-ordinators provide satisfactory leadership and management but their monitoring role is not sufficiently developed.

Commentary

26. The governing body provides satisfactory governance for the school. The governors are fairly new and inexperienced, but are keen, enthusiastic and eager to develop their roles fully. They are awaiting training to help them develop a fuller understanding of their corporate roles and responsibilities. They meet their statutory duties and ensure performance management arrangements are followed correctly. Governors have developed a sound committee structure and several visit the school to look at specific aspects in connection with a specified role, for example, to survey the state of the buildings, with regard to health and safety, in order to put together a long term plan for repair, maintenance and development. Similarly the curriculum committee is reviewing policies and subject schemes of work with the school. Governors rely on good support from the headteacher and the school secretary in managing the school's finances, and are developing well their monitoring role. Financial planning is firmly linked to school improvement priorities.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	310,922.21	Balance from previous year	12,694.83
Total expenditure	302,021.49	Balance carried forward to the next	8,900.72
Expenditure per pupil	3,212		

27. The headteacher provides good leadership in creating a school where high standards are achieved year on year. She ensures each pupil is included irrespective of their academic or physical abilities, race or gender and monitors all pupils' progress well. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and where it needs to go in the future. She manages improvement well and ensures that the school addresses key priorities. Good relationships are the key to how well the staff work together and know all the pupils well, thus ensuring good progress. She is supported well by the senior teacher and the rest of the staff. The leadership and management of subject co-ordinators is satisfactory overall, and is good in physical education, English and mathematics. They have a clear view of key aspects they want to improve but lack strong evaluative strategies to help them to plan and measure improvement. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is good and has ensured that issues raised in the last inspection have been fully addressed.
28. The leadership and management of special educational needs by the headteacher are good. Her very wide experience and strong commitment to equal opportunities ensures a high priority for this area, which is marked by the pupils being well provided for. She ensures that the school makes good provision through creative use of teaching arrangements, good use of diagnostic information and good quality support from well-trained staff.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

What is the effectiveness of community provision?

The school's links with the wider community, including other schools is **good**, with some **very good** aspects developing.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good established links with other schools and groups, which both enhances the curriculum and aids pupils' transfer between their stages of education.

Commentary

29. Links with other local schools enhances the school's curriculum and aids development. For example, local schools have had a joint staff training session on 'Drugs Awareness'. Music is a strong feature of the school's work and its musical provision is enhanced by participation in local school's musical events. Many pupils play and sing in local events in Tring. The school celebrates and uses the musical skills of pupils who learn to play instruments in and out of school. Pupils also use their musical abilities to entertain senior citizens in the village and to support church festivals such as the Harvest Festival. The wide range of extra-curricular activities is good and many are supported by parents. 'Touch rugby' is played by girls and boys and coached by members of the local rugby club. Pupils' participation in these clubs is very good. There are inter-sports activities that enable pupils to play competitive games in larger teams. The newly elected governors are making a significant impact on raising standards in school. Governors bring their experience and skills into school. For example, one who is an established author of non-fiction books supports literacy. He talked about his work in assembly and set up a competition with a prize for the best story in each year group. Governors are anxious to develop information and communication technology in the school, ideally with a new suite to improve standards and this is part of a plan to develop information and communication technology. With assistance from the local education authority, the co-ordinator and other schools, it is hoped to provide a community resource.
30. Effective relationships with other schools ensure a smooth transfer from one stage of education to another. Parents expressed their satisfaction with the induction process from the local pre-school groups into the Foundation Stage. There are established procedures in place to ensure that their children come into school with confidence, and parents are fully involved in this process. Pupils moving onto the next stage of their education from Year 6 into the high school do so with confidence. There is a series of exchange visits, and members of staff from the high school meet with pupils and parents. Valuable information, such as the special education needs data, is shared between the co-ordinators, ensuring that the continuity of learning and support is well managed.
31. The school is deemed a 'triad' school by the local education authority. This means that it meets local criteria for effective schools and, as a result, works on school improvement priorities with two other schools rather than always with the local education advisers.
32. A few parents expressed concerns that the school does not use the village as a community resource. Inspection evidence does not support that view. Pupils make regular visits to the local church, which supports both religious education and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The village is also used to support science and geography through 'conker' hunts, visits to some bluebell woods or seeking tadpoles in ponds. The school joins in with local events. For example, there is a stall at the annual village fete.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the reception class is **good**.

33. There was a key issue about this stage in children's education in the last inspection. The co-ordinator has worked very hard and successfully addressed each of these issues and ensured that the school has been awarded a local certificate for quality in early years education.
34. The curriculum and individual sessions are well planned and matched carefully to the early learning goals and other appropriate guidance. The teacher's planning includes very clear statements about what children will learn which are shared with them before each lesson. This makes the purpose of each session very clear and explains what they should learn. All sessions are well paced. There is a good range of adult-led activities and a wide range of supplementary activities to which children are directed and redirected during the session, which leads to a very controlled environment. However, there is too little child-initiated or child-selected activity.
35. The quality of teaching is good overall. Consistently good teaching ensures that children make good progress. By the end of the reception class they are likely to exceed the early learning goals in most areas of learning. The teacher and the learning support assistant work well together. The accommodation for the reception class is good apart from the heating, which is inadequate.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident about the class routines and respond well to the teacher's high expectations of behaviour.
- Every effort is made to include children in all activities and good attention is paid to those with differing abilities.
- There is a strong focus on promoting good behaviour, politeness and good manners.
- There are too few opportunities for children to select activities and resources for themselves.

Commentary

36. The reception class is a bright, stimulating and lively environment for children. Very careful arrangement of the classroom ensures resources are easily accessible but rarely do children select resources for themselves. The children feel confident and secure. They are usually engrossed in their activities and sustain concentration very well. There are good strategies to teach children to listen and follow instructions. Children respond well to staff and to each other. They particularly play well together, sharing ideas and equipment, which has a positive impact on their development. Nursery and reception children have good levels of personal independence, and dress and undress themselves with little adult help. Children are sensible, eagerly take responsibility and show initiative, for example, when tidying away a child sweeps up the spilt sand without being asked. Most children are very likely to **exceed** the standards expected of them by the end of reception.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good support and challenge for children of differing abilities and good promotion of writing skills.
- There are good opportunities in class sessions for extending children's spoken language.

Commentary

37. The teacher follows the Literacy Strategy guidance to accustom children to the approach and extend their concentration levels and listening skills. The sessions are introduced well and resources are used effectively to stimulate children's imaginations. For example, the learning support assistant 'discovers' some large Wellingtons. The children respond excitedly as they recognise the link to the story they are reading. They rise to the thought that the giant has been in the classroom. They quickly spot labels upside down or in the wrong place and set about correcting his mischief. The teacher-led session promotes good listening and an enjoyment of books and stories. Writing activities encourage children to write their names, spell simple words and copy others to make a simple sentence. Their books show that they are making good progress in learning to write but some still struggle with forming letters correctly. They speak confidently, listen well and take a keen interest in books. Most children are likely to **exceed** the early learning goals by the end of reception.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children's achievements in numeracy are good.

Commentary

38. The teacher uses good clear questioning and correct mathematical vocabulary. A well-chosen range of activities re-inforce children's grasp of the concept of more and less, and how this relates to simple addition and subtraction. There are good strategies for interesting the children, for example, using the context of picnic, with pieces of fruit, to explore numbers and subtraction by eating the grapes one by one. Children make good use of the same vocabulary when role-playing the picnic on their own with toys. Sessions are fully focussed on mathematical activities with good use of a wide range of different resources. More able children were challenged to deal with larger numbers, such as sorting out a number line and matching pictures from 0-20. Several children learn to count successfully to 20 and most do simple addition and subtraction. Most children are likely to **exceed** the early learning goals by the end of reception.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a wide range of activities to develop children's knowledge.
- Children's learning is limited by the teacher being too heavily engaged with one group.

Commentary

39. There are daily opportunities for children to observe and record weather conditions using a chart. This helps them recognise the days of the week and understand how to state the date. They successfully change the captions and symbols to match their observations of the weather. Resources for information and communication technology are good, and children confidently use computer paint programmes and recognise which symbols send the picture to the printer. Children enjoy exploring resources such as shadows, reflections and how colours mix when transparent coloured films are placed on an overhead projector. They lack sufficient technical vocabulary to describe what they are doing, and there are missed opportunities to develop their learning further because the teacher is tied to one group for the session. Most children are likely to achieve the expected standards.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for teaching children to control small utensils such as pencils and brushes and scissors.
- Good use is made of the outdoor area and the hall to promote a range of physical responses.

Commentary

40. The outdoor area is used well in daily exercise sessions where children play games and ride a variety of wheeled toys. There is good use of the area for noisy activities, such as taking giant steps, and using a giants' voice for chanting a rhyme. As the outdoor area lacks a covered area the children have Wellington boots to ensure that there are good opportunities to play in the fresh air, even if the ground is wet. Children move confidently around the hall and match a range of well-controlled movements to 'traffic light' cards held up by the teacher. The range and pace of activities is good and challenges children's fitness levels. Throughout the day there are many opportunities for children to learn to control small pieces of equipment and use pencils and crayons with care. Their physical development exceeds expectations for their age overall and particularly when using the small movements and control necessary for writing and creative work, for example, carefully cutting along a line to make a spiral.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **good**. Children are likely to exceed the expected standards in this area of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The specific music session taken by the specialist music teacher was very good
- There is a good range of opportunities to explore art based activities and develop children's imagination through role play.
- There are too few opportunities for children to select their own materials.

Commentary

41. In a music session with the specialist music teacher, children benefited from very good teaching that introduced a good range of well-chosen songs and rhymes. They were taught to use their voices expressively and to name and play instruments. There are missed opportunities for staff development and continuity as the reception staff do not join the lessons. Children confidently create patterns with a variety of materials. A good activity was when children selected their own strips of material to weave into a large piece of safety netting. They discussed what they chose and worked well together. Children also played well together on

role-play situations, discussing and negotiating who does what and how they will play, for example, when creating a beach scene and playing in the home corner or the artists' studio.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and this enables pupils to achieve well.
- Well-trained learning support assistants provide good assistance to pupils' learning.
- There are too few planned opportunities in other subjects for pupils to use and practise their literacy skills.

Commentary

42. Standards in English are above average in Years 2 and 6 and pupils make good, consistent progress throughout the school because teaching is good. This represents good improvement on the findings of the last inspection, particularly in the development of listening and writing skills. The previous inspection found that unsatisfactory standards of behaviour disrupted lessons. This led to lack of attention and concentration in Years 1 and 2, and pupils' progress in English was unsatisfactory, particularly in the quality of their handwriting. The co-ordinator has provided good leadership and management and ensured that these issues have been successfully addressed and are no longer a concern. Standards in Years 3 to 6 since the previous inspection have risen from meeting the national average to above it. Good provision for pupils with special educational needs and well-organised extra additional literacy sessions provide good support in developing pupils' skills.
43. Standards have risen steadily over the past five years representing good improvement over time. In Year 2 and Year 6 national tests the school's trend has been above that seen in schools nationally. In Year 2 tests, the school compares very favourably with all schools nationally, and with similar schools. In reading, the school's test results fall into the top 5 per cent of all schools nationally. In writing the school is well above all schools nationally and similar schools. More able pupils' attainment was high in both Year 2 and Year 6 tests. All groups of pupils are making good progress. In Year 6, test results have been consistently well above national averages, until last year, when they were in line with them. Some pupils with specific special educational needs performed less well than expected in the tests, which negatively affected the statistics. Small numbers of pupils take the tests so each pupil can make a significant difference statistically. A spoiled paper and numbers of pupils joining the school in Years 3-5 affected the overall average points scored and made achievement against the Key Stage 1 results in 1999 appear worse than they were. Inspection evidence shows that standards for the current Years 2 and 6 are above the national average because good support to pupils with special educational needs brings them to levels around the average. This represents good achievement.
44. Reading standards are above average in Years 2 and 6. Most younger pupils read simple texts accurately and know how to work out unfamiliar words. They enjoy reading, readily talk about the books they read and show a good understanding of the story and characters. The older pupils have very good attitudes to reading and read very fluently, with very good expression. They show understanding of the main ideas, talk confidently about what they read and express their views about books they have enjoyed. Reading diaries are a satisfactory communication tool with parents and are regularly completed. There are missed opportunities to make full use of them, for example, by including guidance to parents in the front cover, and more information about strategies pupils use, with criteria-based comments to show how well they are reading.

45. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour, and they respond well. There is a good emphasis on promoting listening skills and suitable opportunities for pupils to explain, describe, discuss and ask questions. Pupils express their ideas confidently and clearly, and willingly respond to the teachers' questions and thinking carefully about their response. In a Year 1/2 lesson, pupils understood the main aspects of a story and confidently offered ideas about the characters involved. They speak clearly and are aware of their audience. In a Year 5/6 lesson, there was a good focus on developing pupils' vocabulary when comparing traditional tales, legends and fables. The teacher quickly picked up on misconceptions in the way language was used in the past, for example, looking at the meaning in the text of words such as 'alas' and 'sorely'.
46. Standards in writing are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and they have improved since the last inspection. The majority of pupils achieve well because of the good teaching across the school. Work samples from all year groups indicate that teachers have clear expectations for the recording and presentation of work. As a result pupils take great pride in the presentation of their work, and their handwriting is neat, well formed and joined. They make good progress in developing their written style from a good start in Years 1 and 2. Pupils learn about grammar and punctuation, and have an increasing knowledge of how these should be used. They write with greater length as they go through the school and respond well to the targets for improvement, which are written in the front of their books. This is a good system and consistently used. The targets are noted and referred to in pieces of work and dated when they have been achieved. There are examples of some very good marking that provide good feedback on how well pupils have done, but it does not always state clearly what is needed to improve further.
47. The teaching is of good quality. Teachers have a secure understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and implement it effectively. Throughout the school, staff work hard to ensure that pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills and this encourages effective learning. Learning support assistants are well prepared for lessons and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. When teaching the whole class together in the first part of a lesson, teachers use questions well to direct pupils' thinking, and the rate of pupils' learning is consistently good. The subject leader has a clear view of what needs to be improved. She recognises the impact of high quality resources to interest the pupils, and supports the staff successfully.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. The links between English and other subjects are not planned in a structured way and are not analysed to see what opportunities there are for the application of pupils' skills in all other subjects. There are too few opportunities for pupils' writing skills in subjects such as art and design, design and technology, history and geography.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics are above national expectations.
- The quality of teaching has improved, which has led to better standards.
- Teachers' marking does not show well enough to pupils how they can improve.
- Pupils with special educational needs have good support and they achieve well.
- Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good and they present their work neatly.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently developed.

Commentary

49. Standards in mathematics in both Year 2 and Year 6 are above national expectations. The school does well for its pupils, with all groups making good progress in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as their peers. Higher ability pupils achieve well over time. The movement of pupils between classes for mathematics lessons provides well for the most and least able. In the 2003 national tests, all pupils in Year 2 attained the expected levels, which put the school in the top 5 per cent of all schools nationally. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above the national level. Last year the percentage of Year 6 pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was well above the national average and these pupils made good progress against their prior attainment. Some pupils with special educational needs did not do as well as expected.
50. Staff have worked hard to raise standards in mathematics. Over the past three years, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels has steadily risen and now firmly exceeds national levels as the quality of teaching has improved. This is in contrast to the much poorer results at the time of the last inspection, when standards were below average for seven year olds and average for 11 year olds. Teachers build on the good start that pupils receive in the reception class so that, by Year 2, pupils are working at a higher level than is normally found. Their mental recall of the number facts to ten is swift and accurate, and they successfully add three-digit numbers using different strategies. As the pupils move up the school the speed and range of mental calculations increases. By Year 6, pupils calculate large numbers accurately and explain the strategies they use confidently.
51. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good. In the lessons seen, teaching was good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Evidence from pupils' work showed teaching to be effective overall. This is a significant achievement and a good improvement from the last inspection, when teaching was unsatisfactory. Teachers now plan their lessons well, based on the National Numeracy Strategy, and they use their good assessment of pupils well. This ensures a good progression of learning throughout the school and a close match of the work to the pupils' abilities. Good teaching has developed in the pupils' positive attitudes to the subject, making them eager to learn and to show pride in their work.
52. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. Teachers carefully plan their work to ensure the level is well matched to these pupils. Teachers arrange for pupils to be taught in small groups and sometimes place pupils with different classes to challenge more able pupils. The well-trained and caring team of assistants provide good support. As a result, the pupils make good progress in their learning. Teachers' marking contains too few comments to help pupils improve. Teachers have begun to regularly use computers in their mathematics lessons with small numbers of pupils and this is beginning to have a positive effect on their learning.
53. Mathematics is well led by the co-ordinator. Her good management of the subject has helped to raise standards. Her regular monitoring of teaching and learning has many strong points but is weakened by the lack of clear feedback to teachers about how they can improve. Overall, the provision in mathematics has improved well since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. Pupils use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and, consequently, develop an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. Although the links between mathematics and other subjects are not planned in a structured way, the teachers' good awareness of the issue ensures that regular links are made. For example, all age groups use a range of graphs, charts and diagrams in geography and science, sometimes presented by computer.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above national expectations at both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching that utilises skilful questioning to extend their learning.
- Teachers use their good knowledge to present practical work in lively and interesting ways, which captures pupils' imagination.
- Teachers' marking does not give pupils enough feedback about how they can improve their work.
- In some lessons teachers do not always challenge sufficiently the more able pupils and some pupils lose interest when lessons are too long.

Commentary

55. Standards in science in Year 2 and Year 6 are above national expectations. All groups of pupils are making good progress and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates because they are supported well by their teachers and learning support assistants. When pupils do the same tasks, this restricts opportunities for more able pupils to achieve even more. In the 2003 teacher assessments for Year 2, and national tests for Year 6, nearly all pupils reached the expected standards. Half of the pupils in Year 2 and two-thirds of those in Year 6 reached higher than expected levels.
56. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school but the long timetabled lessons means staff have to work hard to sustain pupils' interest as they tire and lose concentration. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and they use this to show a clear focus in their lesson plans to ensure that most pupils learn well. They question their pupils with great skill to lead them towards the next steps in learning, such as in a Year 1/2 lesson, in making comparisons between different sources of light. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out their own experiments. As a result, they develop a good understanding of what makes a fair test. Teachers taught in a lively, stimulating way using interesting props and resources to capture pupils' imagination. In a Year 5-6 lesson on condensation, for example, the teacher placed her spectacles in a refrigerator and used humour to reinforce the learning as she struggled to see through her misted up glasses. By contrast, some of the work in pupils' books showed a heavy reliance on worksheets and was dull in comparison. Teachers mark the science books for correctness and praise, but too rarely provide comments for pupils on how they can improve.
57. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Teaching has improved and, as a result, pupils' achievement is higher than it was and standards have risen considerably. Currently, there is no co-ordinator for science due to recent staff changes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology cannot be judged because the timing of the inspection prevented inspectors from seeing teaching in this subject. However, from pupils' work, school documents and meetings with staff and governors it is possible to report on other aspects of the subject.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and resources have been insufficient, leading to standards below national expectations.
- The new co-ordinator, supported by new governors, is creating significant improvements in the subject.

- Improvements in the subject are hampered because senior staff are not sufficiently involved.
- Pupils' self-assessment of their skills in the subject are very effective.

Commentary

58. By both Year 2 and Year 6 all pupils' skills are below average and their achievement is unsatisfactory. In spite of improving standards over the past two terms, pupils by Year 2 reach levels that are below average for their age. By Year 6 pupils assess their skills at around two terms below where they should be for their age. Teachers' assessments suggest their actual levels of attainment are lower than this. There are a number of factors, which have affected standards in this subject. Until recently the school lacked a coherent curriculum to ensure progressive teaching of skills. Staff had insufficient knowledge or training and lacked confidence. Consequently there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to use computers and practice their skills.
59. National initiatives have helped the school to address weaknesses. For example, the school has begun to use national guidance as the basis for planning to ensure that all pupils will experience the expected subject strands. National funding has meant that the resources for the subject have improved and staff confidence and expertise have developed through training. These positive developments have led to the school now being in a position where significant improvements in standards can begin.
60. No teaching of this subject could be seen due to the timetabling for the lessons. However, inspection evidence shows that teaching and learning are unsatisfactory across the school. The number of computers available to teachers is insufficient to teach skills adequately and there are too few opportunities for pupils to practice their skills in other subjects. As a result, the pupils' work does not reflect the full range of skills expected, especially for older pupils.
61. The knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator has an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and promotes commitment to improvement. She works in close partnership with a new governor who provides very good support and, together, they have produced a high quality improvement plan. However, as a learning support assistant and a junior member of staff, her ability to lead teachers in securing improvements in information and communication technology is hampered by the lack of status, which a senior member of staff could provide. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. The school recognises that this subject aspect is a weakness and plans to take remedial action. During the inspection some work was seen when a small number of pupils followed up on computers lessons in history or science. However, the level of access for individual pupils is limited by the few computers available. It is not yet a regular or consistent feature of teaching or work in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

63. In humanities, work was sampled in **history** and **geography**, with no teaching seen in history and only parts of two lessons seen in geography. It is, therefore, not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. There is every indication that standards are broadly average, as they were at the previous inspection. This is a voluntary aided school so religious education is not included as it is inspected by diocesan inspectors.
64. In the two geography lessons seen, one was good and one satisfactory. In the good lesson in Years 1 and 2 the teacher used lively creative ideas and successfully captured the pupils' interest in their topic on Bangladesh. She used a video clip and a display of Bengali food which pupils tasted, and used drama with pupils in costume to help them play the roles of Bangladeshi villagers. As a result, all of the pupils were totally absorbed in their lesson and

their knowledge and understanding of similarities and differences developed in leaps and bounds. Teachers mount bright attractive displays in their classrooms to link with work in history and geography. Maps and globes feature prominently in classes, along with timelines to help the pupils understand chronology. Years 1 and 2 have colourful displays about the village of Kukri Mukri in Bangladesh; Years 3 and 4 have a history display of books and pictures on the Vikings and Romans, and Years 5 and 6 have a large attractive display to demonstrate the water cycle. Consequently, teachers' displays help to inspire pupils, develop their awareness of cultural diversity and provide good support for learning in these subjects.

65. Pupils' books show that they are learning from a suitable range of topics in both subjects. Pupils of all ages show pride in their work, which they present neatly. Homework is used particularly well in Years 5 and 6. However, books of pupils of all ages show a heavy reliance on worksheets. On many occasions, the same task is given to pupils of different abilities. Often, these tasks do not provide enough challenge, for example, extensive cutting and sticking tasks done by the older pupils.
66. The leadership and management of these subjects are satisfactory. The co-ordinator receives good guidance in her role from a management file, which states clearly the expectations of the post. However, her monitoring role is not yet developed. There are adequate resources for both subjects.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and design and technology

67. It is not possible to judge the quality of provision in art and design or design and technology. No lessons were timetabled and only limited pupils' work was available for scrutiny.

Commentary

68. There are no co-ordinators for these subjects, which leave staff without precise direction. The school produced limited examples of pupils' work for inspectors and these were of variable quality. In art and design Year 1 and 2, pupils have good opportunities to explore materials and develop their skills. The quality of work seen is in line with expectations for pupils' ages. Explorations of techniques such as colour mixing and pencil shading are recorded well in sketchbooks. Design and technology work does not have an agreed clear structure to help pupils through the design process. Pupils' books in Years 1 and 2 indicate that they have evaluated a local playground. They applied their scientific knowledge of forces from science when designing play equipment. Their understanding of the design process is incomplete, as their work and evaluation is not recorded.
69. In art and design in Years 3 and 4, the class benefit from the assistance of a knowledgeable parent. This factor, coupled with the enthusiasm and skills of the staff in the class, mean that pupils explore a wide range of techniques and media. They respond well and take great pride in their work and how it is presented. They study other artists' work such as Monet and Seurat, and research styles such as Impressionism for homework. Good use is made of information, technological and mathematical skills in exploring pattern making. In design and technology pupils were set clear objectives for their project and made satisfactory working pneumatic monster models. However, there was insufficient attention given to the quality of the finished article. Simple structured planning sheets satisfactorily support pupils to plan and design their models. However, the structure of the evaluation sheets is too limited and did not provide a clear criteria or subject specific vocabulary to evaluate against. There was good use of a digital camera to record work in progress. There is insufficient use of literacy skills.
70. Little art and design work is recorded in Years 5 and 6 books. It is not well presented and appears to be a collection of jottings of low-level quality. More recent work, where pupils have drawn objects from observation, shows that pupils when challenged have better skills than

their previous work would suggest. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' work on designing and making slippers is well structured so that they consider the purpose, the choice of materials and health and safety concerns. The activity shows that pupils have reasonable making skills and have worked hard to produce a good quality finish. However, there is no in-depth analysis of how the product developed, differed from the plan, how well it worked or how it could be improved.

71. There is no evidence of work being marked or commented on, which leaves pupils not knowing what they have done well, or what or how they could improve. There is no evidence of assessment of recorded work or pupils' skill development. Consequently, all pupils reach broadly the same standard. The use of sketch-books lacks a clearly defined rationale.

Music

Provision for music in is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A specialist teacher ensures pupils benefit from very good teaching.
- Standards are above those expected for pupils of this age.
- Pupils enjoy music and have very positive attitudes.

Commentary

72. Music is a key strength of the school and is valued by parents and pupils. The strengths identified in the last report have been maintained. The good curriculum provides a wide range of musical experiences, which include performing with other local schools and learning about music from different times and cultures. Appreciation of music is well organised and included in assemblies. Informal homework to research about the life of the composer of the week resulted in one pupil returning the next morning with a good piece of information taken from the Internet. Peripatetic staff and several staff with musical skills teach pupils to play a range of other instruments enhancing the music curriculum. Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. There are missed opportunities for class teachers to watch and learn from specialist sessions.
73. The quality of teaching in all the music sessions seen was very good and ensured standards are above those expected for their age. The lessons created a love of music as well as pleasure in performing. All pupils sing well, tunefully and with enthusiasm. Pupils develop a good understanding of interpreting and creating moods in music through singing in different ways. The specialist music teacher has very good subject knowledge, and the capacity to change and adapt her style of teaching and the content of lessons to challenge all pupils, from the youngest to the oldest. This ensures all groups of pupils achieve well. A very good range and mix of work and clear planning ensures that lessons have a fast pace, and make the best use of time. With the younger pupils, the teacher skilfully introduced musical notation to the songs as pupils sang, thus providing a good introduction to reading and recording music. With older pupils, very effective use of a pre-recording of a past performance by the pupils challenged them to listen carefully and identify clear criteria for how the performance could be improved. In both lessons, pupils learnt well because the teacher combined a lively approach and enthusiasm for the subject with good expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils clearly enjoyed their music lessons, concentrated well and improved through instruction and practice. In all lessons pupils were successfully included and were eager to perform. There is good recognition of pupils with specific talents. The teacher made good use of the choir to take a descant part in a complex two-part round. This resulted in improved performance.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good improvement since the previous inspection because teaching and pupils' behaviour are consistently good and have led to effective learning and improved standards.
- Effective and enthusiastic leadership by the co-ordinator promotes dedication and commitment from staff.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and very good levels of participation by pupils.

Commentary

74. At the time of the last inspection the quality of teaching was good when taught by the co-ordinator in Years 3 to 6 but just satisfactory in Year 1 and 2. Teaching has improved and was consistently good in lessons. In a Year 1/2 dance lesson, the teacher's careful choice of a good range of music fired pupils' imaginations and ensured they responded well to the atmosphere. Good teaching strategies ensured all groups of pupils made good progress. For example, effective use of a blue sheet, to simulate the sea, spurred pupils to move imaginatively like sea creatures. Through instruction and practice pupils developed their skills and used a range of well controlled movements. Pupils attained above average standards. The teacher made good use of the learning support assistants, which meant all pupils were successfully included.
75. Lessons in Years 3 to 6 are taught by the specialist co-ordinator, enabling the school to play to the strength of individual staff. In the Year 5/6 gymnastic lesson, there was a clear awareness of health and safety issues. The class teacher and pupils carefully went through a good range of warm up activities before taking out the apparatus for the lesson. Pupils undertook this task very sensibly and efficiently, which demonstrated good self-discipline and good response to health and safety advice. Very secure knowledge of the subject led to good demonstrations and the teacher's enthusiasm promoted concentrated effort and a very good response from pupils. Pupils improved their skills through advice and practice and demonstrated good balance, co-ordination, and control. They worked well individually and in groups. The lesson had a good pace and challenged pupils to use their initiative and try more complex and different movements. As a result the standards achieved were above those usually seen for pupils of this age.
76. The school's curriculum allows a satisfactory amount of time for all elements of the subject, including swimming. Effective links with other schools ensure that pupils have suitable opportunities to take part in competitive sports. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to take part in after-school sporting activities, and participation levels are very good. The range of opportunities reflects the dedication and commitment of staff, who are assisted by several parents. The range of opportunities reflects the enthusiasm and effective leadership of the co-ordinator.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

It is not possible to judge the quality of provision in personal social and health education and citizenship as no lessons were timetabled.

Commentary

77. Governors and staff have reviewed the school's policy for personal, social and health education and aspects of it are woven through the curriculum. This ensures that all assist in creating a caring and happy community. Assemblies celebrate pupils' academic and personal achievements in and out of school. This ensures all pupils have opportunities to succeed and

develop good levels of self-esteem and confidence. A clear target system involved pupils effectively in their learning by setting clear goals for improvement and as a result all pupils work hard. Staff are good role models and promote good relationships between adults and pupils. Consequently pupils feel secure, are tolerant and respectful to adults and to one another. Pupils also have opportunities in circle time to discuss issues and how they feel which develop their understanding of themselves and others. They are encouraged to develop their social awareness and that of cultural diversity through communicating with a mission in Africa, and collecting for charities to help others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils develop their social role in the school through drawing up classroom rules. Year 6 pupils learn citizenship through finding out how democratic representation is structured in their local area. The school council helps pupils consider and develop their responsibilities as school citizens. They are articulate and have clear views about how well the school works. For example, they think that the house-point scheme promotes good work and deeds. Pupils also develop responsibility through undertaking a range of jobs in their classes and older pupils are 'buddies' and befriend younger pupils. The school has implemented a number of new initiatives in this area since the last inspection, under the guidance of a pro-active co-ordinator.

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	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
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	3
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).