

INSPECTION REPORT

**STAVERTON VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED CHURCH OF
ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Trowbridge

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126360

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Bannister

Lead inspector: Mr Fred Ward

Dates of inspection: 20th – 22nd October 2003

Inspection number: 258024

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 controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	202
School address:	School Lane Staverton Trowbridge Wiltshire
Postcode:	BA14 6NZ
Telephone number:	(01225) 782 388
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Robert Magill
Date of previous inspection:	18 May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average-sized primary school for pupils aged four to 11, having nearly doubled in size over the past five years to cater for new housing development. There are a few pupils of mixed descent, mainly Afro-Caribbean and Asian, some travellers and looked after children, with the rest being of white British heritage. Around half the pupils come from low-income families. The proportion with special educational needs is below average, covering mainly moderate learning and behavioural difficulties. There are a few gifted/talented pupils in the juniors. Children start school full time in September if they are five before the following Easter and part time until January if their fifth birthday falls in the summer term; overall their attainment is below average. For the past three years the proportion of new children born in the summer has been well above average. As the school has grown, more pupils have come from other schools and around half reaching Year 6 did not complete their junior education at Staverton. Staffing is stable, although the deputy head has just returned from a year's leave of absence. The school was awarded the Investors in People standard in 2001 and the School Achievement award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18605	Fred Ward	Lead inspector	English, Geography, History, Physical education, French
11566	Hilary Smyth	Lay inspector	
18090	Richard Brock	Team inspector	Science, Art and design, Design and technology, Music, Special educational needs
22246	Geoff Cresswell	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Mathematics, Information and communication technology, Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Pupils enjoy learning and taking part in the exciting and interesting activities in and beyond the classroom. They achieve well and make good progress because teaching is generally good. Overall, standards are average. Pupils are very well looked after. The school is very well led and managed, providing good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in speaking, listening, art, design and technology and information and communication technology are above average for seven and 11 year olds.
- Literacy skills are used well to support pupils' learning in all subjects, but their numeracy skills are not applied in a similar way.
- Pupils' initial low personal and social skills improve by the end of the infants and when they leave aged 11 they are mature and confident learners.
- Pupils from different backgrounds, the more able, the gifted/talented and those with special educational needs are given particular attention and achieve well.
- Pupils' awareness of the diversity and richness of cultures other than their own is limited.
- Teachers know their pupils very well, showing them what they need to do to improve.
- The curriculum is full, varied and exciting as staff are always looking for ways of improving and extending pupils' experiences, such as introducing French this year.
- Parents think highly of the school but are not always given enough information in reports about how their children can improve.
- The headteacher, senior staff and governors are a very strong team with a clear idea of how the school can move forward.

Since the school was inspected in 1998, improvement has been good, with nearly all the key issues tackled successfully; however, handwriting in the juniors is still unsatisfactory. Pupil numbers have doubled and the school has gained the Investors in People standard and the Schools Achievement award.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils achieve well. As the school has grown, more pupils have joined at ages older than four. This makes an overall comparison of the performance of pupils when in Year 2 and later in Year 6 unreliable. In recent years there have been an above average number of very young four-year-olds starting school. So, although pupils make good progress through reception year, the youngest do not reach the Early Learning Goals set for them; this holds back their learning through Year 1 and has resulted in standards in reading, writing and mathematics being generally below average by the end of Year 2, with only science average. Staff are tackling this issue successfully and now Year 2 pupils are achieving well. Pupils who have been in the school from Year 3 to Year 6 make good progress and achieve well, including those with special educational needs. Those who joined later quickly begin to achieve well but take time to catch up. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average in

speaking, listening, art, design and technology and information and communication technology and average in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very well fostered. They acquire very good moral values and social skills but are less aware of the contribution people from other cultures and backgrounds make to the world. Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic learners. Behaviour is good and pupils from different backgrounds get on very well together. Attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education, as teaching overall is good and often very good. Arrangements for pupils starting school are excellent and the teaching of the youngest is very good, helping them settle and get into good learning habits. In Years 1 to 2, teachers continue to help pupils keep their interest and concentration so that by the time they start the juniors they are more ready to work hard on their own. In Years 3 to 6 there has been a strong focus on helping pupils develop their writing by making sure there are plenty of interesting topics and subjects to discuss. Throughout the school, staff expect a lot from pupils and, through a sensitive mix of challenge and support, all pupils are striving to do their best. While pupils' literacy and new technology skills are used and practised right across the curriculum, less emphasis has been given to developing their numeracy skills outside mathematics lessons.

The curriculum has been well thought out to meet requirements and gives pupils as much first-hand experience as possible. The extra activities, including visits, residential trips and school clubs, are very good. Staff also try out new ideas, such as French this year and an excellent project to help pupils overcome their emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school works very well with parents, listening and taking account of their views. Pupils are very well looked after as staff know them so well and help them identify and tackle any problems in work and their personal development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher, very well supported by senior staff and governors, has a very clear view of the school's future and knows what needs to be done to fulfil her vision. Governors are very involved and make a very good contribution to continuing school improvement. Developments are based upon carefully checking and examining teaching, learning and pupils' performance to identify and tackle what is most important.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very appreciative of the school. A few were concerned that there was insufficient information in school reports on what their children need to do to improve; inspection findings agree with this view. Pupils like new activities, feel trusted and know they have to work hard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Give pupils more opportunities to use their numeracy skills to support their learning in all subjects.
- Make sure pupils in the juniors write legibly in a joined style.
- Help pupils have a more balanced view of different cultures and celebrate the contribution of other ethnic groups to British society.
- Provide parents with more helpful information in reports on their children's progress in all subjects, explaining what they need to do to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, pupils achieve well and standards in English, mathematics and science are average for seven and 11 year olds.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils aged four achieve well from starting at a low level in personal, social and emotional skills.
- Achievement in Years 1 to 6 is good and standards are above average in speaking, listening, art, design and technology, and information and communication technology.
- Pupils with special educational needs, the more able, the gifted/talented and those from different backgrounds make good progress.
- National test results for seven year-olds improved last year.
- Handwriting in the juniors is below average and pupils are not so good at observational drawing as they could be.

Commentary

1. Pupils start school aged four with below average personal, social and emotional skills. While they achieve well, around half who will not be five until the summer are not good at concentrating and their immaturity affects their learning in other areas. This large proportion of very young pupils has been a feature of succeeding cohorts for the past four years and has held back their learning until they reached Year 3. It is too early in the autumn term to make firm judgements about the progress of the current reception year towards the Early Learning Goals set for them, but in previous years many of the youngest did not catch up in their personal development and in the other areas of learning.
2. The school has been tackling the effects of pupils' immaturity by providing more 'hands-on' experiences and guided play. These efforts have begun to be successful and results in national tests have started to improve in the last two years. Until 2002, standards were below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics compared with those in all and in similar schools. In 2003 they had risen to average in all three subjects, as can be seen in the following table.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.2 (15.6)	15.9 (15.7)
writing	15.1 (12.9)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (14.9)	16.4 (16.5)

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

3. Current findings confirm that this improvement is continuing and pupils are achieving well in Years 1 and 2. It is too early to make secure judgements about standards in all subjects by the end of Year 2, except in areas where a high proportion of pupils are already in advance of their age; standards in speaking, listening, art, design and technology and information and communication technology are above average. Currently, pupils are attaining generally as expected in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

4. In recent years, as the school roll has nearly doubled, the number of pupils joining, particularly in the juniors, has risen. Many of these pupils have had unhappy experiences in other schools and, while they quickly start to achieve well, take time to catch up. However for the past four years pupils starting in Year 3 have achieved well and made good progress and by the time they reach Year 6 have moved from standards that were well below average to average in English, mathematics and science, as this table shows:

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (26.4)	27 (27)
mathematics	27.2 (27.4)	27 (26.7)
science	28.7 (28.7)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. As for Year 2, it is not possible to make firm judgements about all standards at the end of Year 6 so early in the first term. However, the above average standards continue in speaking, listening, art, design and technology and information and communication technology. Currently, Year 6 pupils are generally achieving as expected in English, mathematics and science.
6. The school carries out very good checks on individuals' progress and in this way is able to make sure that pupils with special educational needs, the more able, the gifted/talented and those from different backgrounds (including travellers, looked-after children and those from other ethnic groups) are achieving as well as others with the same capabilities. There are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls.
7. Standards are high in speaking, listening, art, design and technology and information and communication technology because the school has deliberately made learning interesting and given pupils plenty of practical activities that they want to talk about and then learn the appropriate skills. While writing has improved because of innovative approaches using storytelling and drama, handwriting in the juniors is not as good as it could be. Also in art the focus has been on developing pupils' use of different media and, in the process, observational drawing has not been developed to the same degree.
8. The school is very aware of these shortcomings and has plans to raise pupils' achievement further. Targets for pupils, classes and the school are realistically challenging, based on the different characteristics of each cohort and group.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils generally behave well, enjoy all that school offers and show increasing maturity. Overall, their spiritual development is good, their moral and social development is very good and cultural development is only satisfactory, as pupils lack awareness of other cultures. Attendance is above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils quickly acquire a love of learning and try their best.
- Generally, behaviour is good and the few instances when pupils behave inappropriately are dealt with sensitively and effectively.
- The school is very friendly, welcoming and supporting of all pupils regardless of their backgrounds and capabilities.
- There is a very strong emphasis on developing pupils' personal qualities, but their awareness of other cultures is limited.

- Pupils become very articulate, mature and confident as they develop.
- Pupils are very punctual, no time is wasted and high attendance is encouraged and attained.

Commentary

- Pupils enjoy coming to school, as is confirmed by their parents, questionnaires and inspection findings.
- On the few occasions when families have difficulty getting their children to attend school, staff make every effort to help. Good attendance is actively encouraged; letters, the school prospectus and class teachers discourage pupils from taking holidays in school time. As the following table shows, attendance is above average:

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.6
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

- The school is a friendly and welcoming place where pupils feel happy and secure. Relationships between pupils are generally good. Pupils from different backgrounds are fully involved and included in school activities. Often those joining from other schools have initial behavioural difficulties and class teachers and support staff work very effectively together to make sure that individuals are given particular help and support when they encounter problems. In recent years, nearly all pupils have adapted well, but just occasionally one does not and the school has had to resort to exclusion procedures. Currently, there are no pupils at risk of exclusion at the school.

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	188	21	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

- The youngest pupils entering reception and others from families where parents had bad experience of school do not easily settle into good learning habits. However, staff successfully help them develop positive attitudes to learning by providing an interesting range of exciting activities. By the time they reach the juniors, most pupils are enthusiastic learners and able to work well in class, in groups and on their own. When they leave, aged 11, they are confident, mature and ready for the next stage of education.

13. Pupils' personal development is given a high priority. Their spiritual awareness is well developed through the prevailing Christian ethos and also in religious education lessons and assemblies. Moral values are present throughout the life of the school and pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong, whether applied to their own lives or in the wider community. Their social development is very good as there are so many opportunities to work in small and large groups, taking responsibility for their own actions and playing a full part in school life. While pupils' understanding of their own local and traditional culture is very good, they have a rather unbalanced view of other world cultures and do not appreciate the contribution of different ethnic groups to British society.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good as teaching overall is good and often very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall and very good in the reception year. Pupils' progress is very well checked and the information very effectively used.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reception pupils respond well to the very good teaching and achieve well, but many take time to overcome their initial reluctance to settle into good learning habits.
- Teaching in Years 1 to 2 shows imagination and variety in capturing the interest and attention of pupils.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 work very hard and want to learn as they find the teaching exciting and are stimulated to do their best.
- All classes are very well managed and high expectations of behaviour and work are set.
- Teachers are very aware of pupils' differences and successfully make sure everyone can participate fully in lessons.
- Pupils' progress is very effectively checked so that individuals know what they need to do to improve and teachers can plan appropriate work for them.
- Staff work well together, but on occasions teacher assistants leading small groups do not help pupils to listen carefully enough.

Commentary

14. Of the seven lessons seen in reception, teaching was very good in six and satisfactory in one. In Years 1 to 2, teaching was very good in one lesson, good in seven and satisfactory in three. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching was excellent in one lesson, very good in two, good in ten and satisfactory in nine. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Most of the satisfactory teaching was observed on the first day of the inspection. From an examination of pupils' past work and talking with them it is apparent that generally teaching is usually better, as it was later in the inspection.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	9 (22%)	17 (43%)	13 (32%)	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.

15. The very good teaching in reception occurs because the teacher and assistant work very well together to plan a range of practical and highly suitable activities for a younger than average class. This is particularly important in mornings when all pupils are present. Staff are very alert

to the mood and feelings of individuals when they first arrive at school. Many of the youngest find Mondays especially challenging when they have forgotten school routines over the weekend. The teacher and assistant know their pupils very well and provide them with appropriate challenge and support so as not to turn them off learning.

16. In Years 1 and 2, teachers have been reviewing the way they teach and have become more adaptable so as to retain pupils' interest and involvement. They have included more opportunities for practical activities and guided play and found that this helps younger pupils to acquire good learning habits.
17. By Year 3, pupils have become far better learners, able to concentrate, solve problems on their own and work very hard. Teachers in the juniors build on these positive skills by setting high expectations and planning interesting and exciting activities that stimulate pupils to get on with their learning and find out more.
18. All teachers set high standards of behaviour and deal sensitively with the few pupils, usually new to the school, who have difficulties in class and at play. Staff are particularly adept at trying out new ideas to help these pupils.
19. Throughout the school, staff have taken a deliberate decision to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. All lessons provide many opportunities for paired, group and class discussion. Teachers are very good at encouraging and praising pupils for their efforts when they put forward views. As a result, pupils are very clear about what they are studying and able to explain what they have achieved and the problems they encounter.
20. Teachers also make very good use of new technologies to support teaching and learning. However, while numeracy is well taught in mathematics lessons, teachers do not take enough advantage of opportunities in other lessons to use and develop these skills. Teaching in English is consistently good. On the evidence of pupils' achievements, teaching in mathematics, science, art, design and technology and information and communication technology is also good.
21. Staff take particular care to make sure that pupils with special educational needs are identified early and their individual educational plans carefully followed and reviewed. More-able pupils are also challenged to extend their thinking, and those with specific gifts and talents are well supported and their achievements celebrated. This does not support the concerns expressed by a few parents. Staff fully involve pupils from different backgrounds and make use of their knowledge and experience when appropriate.
22. The school has very thorough and systematic ways of checking and tracking pupils' performance. Test results, staff observations and marking of recorded work are all looked at carefully to identify shortcomings and then tell individuals what they need to do to improve. Pupils are also very much involved in this process, regularly discussing their progress and agreeing targets for improvement.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good, with very good opportunities beyond the classroom, including innovative projects. The accommodation is very good and resources good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is particularly strong provision for English and information and communication technology and skills in both areas are used very effectively in other subjects.
- Numeracy skills are not used widely to help with other subjects.
- Pupils' personal and social education is very well provided for and pupils with special educational needs are well supported in all subjects.

- The many interesting and diverse activities keep pupils enthusiastic and involved learners.
- The very good school building is a great help, as are the good-quality materials and equipment.
- Some aspects of art and religious education are not covered thoroughly, although overall the provision for art is good.

Commentary

23. The drive to produce an interesting and stimulating curriculum for pupils has been successful. National guidance has been effectively adapted to suit the needs of all pupils and much use is made of their first-hand experiences. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Clever ideas, such as using a storytelling theme to make pupils write better in all subjects, have been particularly effective. The inclusion of French broadens pupils' appreciation of language and culture. Good and imaginative artwork pervades the school and lifts the whole environment, even though some still-life drawing is not being developed as well as it could be. Pupils' experiences are broadened further by trips linked to topics being studied, including a residential trip for Year 6. After-school clubs offer a wide choice of experiences in the arts and sport. No group of pupils, including those with special educational needs, the more able, the gifted/talented and those from different backgrounds, is left out of anything that is going on, either in or out of lessons. Individual educational plans for pupils with special educational needs are helpful and regularly reviewed.
24. Good equipment and resources are everywhere enabling lessons to proceed at pace and pupils to enjoy learning. Very good use is made of the up-to-date computer equipment so that pupils produce stylish work in many subjects which gives them a great sense of achievement.
25. The building and grounds are great assets. The building is spacious, modern and light. It is very well designed, making it easy for teachers to teach the whole class, small groups or individuals. The hall and grounds are excellent for physical education.
26. There is a rich English curriculum that clearly motivates and inspires pupils. The provision for pupils' personal and social education also bears fruit in the good attitudes displayed by pupils towards each other and to learning in general. A project to help isolated pupils make friends has been extremely effective.
27. Senior staff are fully aware of areas where improvement is needed and keep track of how changes they make are affecting pupils' learning. They recognise the need for pupils to extend skills learnt in mathematics lessons to other subjects. This happens in some instances, such as the use of a bar graph in Year 3 to show the number of first and adult teeth for each individual in the class, but not extensively. They also appreciate the need to ensure that the good coverage of Christianity in religious education is extended to Judaism and Islam, where these are included in the syllabus.

Care, guidance and support

Overall, the school takes very good care of pupils, helps them achieve well and takes their views into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a caring, friendly and well-ordered community.
- All pupils, regardless of their background and capabilities, are fully included in the life of the school and their achievements celebrated.
- Pupils with low self-esteem are given excellent support.
- Induction arrangements are excellent.
- Pupils are given very good support and guidance.
- Their views are actively sought and valued.

Commentary

28. The school is a very friendly, caring community doing all it reasonably can to keep pupils safe. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Staff know pupils very well, are aware of their various needs and respond in a positive and supportive way. Pupils overwhelmingly reported in questionnaires and discussions that they feel secure and have every confidence in turning to staff for advice and support. This helps their love of learning.
29. The school takes very good care of pupils with special educational needs, particularly those who are isolated and have difficulties relating to others. An innovative project, tried out last year, has proved so successful in raising these pupils' self-esteem that the governing body has decided to continue to fund this work. As a result, these pupils are becoming more involved in learning.
30. The induction arrangements for children starting school aged four and at other times, are excellent and very much appreciated by parents and pupils. These pupils settle quickly and start to achieve well.
31. The school is very keen to make all pupils feel appreciated. Their efforts, attitudes and behaviour are celebrated regularly in class and in assemblies. Pupils from different backgrounds are made to feel fully a part of the school.
32. Pupils are continually encouraged to put forward their own ideas and views in lessons and, by the time they are in the juniors, classroom debates are a common feature of lessons. The school council is a recent innovation but has already given pupils the chance to discuss how playtimes can be improved.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Overall, the school works very well with parents and has good links with local schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very appreciative, feel listened to and find staff very approachable.
- Although the school keeps parents very well informed about school life, annual reports on pupils' progress do not always explain what individuals need to do to improve.
- Links with partner schools, the on-site playgroup and the local community are good.

Commentary

33. Parents are very well informed about the school through regular newsletters, well-sited notice boards and a monthly discussion forum and feel that their views are taken into account. While informal and formal meetings with staff are much appreciated by parents and serve as an effective way of exchanging information about pupils' progress, the annual written report does not give clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve in all subjects. The school values the help parents give at home to reinforce learning but finds that a small number do not do enough to support the high values promoted by staff. As a result, a few pupils do not receive at home the praise for their achievements that they are given at school and therefore become disillusioned and less positive towards learning.
34. The school plays a central part in the local community as many opportunities are planned into the curriculum for visitors to talk to pupils and for classes to undertake fieldwork, such as studying the nearby canal. The vicar of the Anglican Church is chair of the governing body and a frequent visitor, taking assemblies and contributing to lessons. The reception teacher runs

regular afternoon sessions for parents and carers with young children to help them prepare for school. This helps new entrants quickly settle to learning.

35. Links with the on-site playgroup are very good and staff work together very well to help children when they are starting school for the first time. Liaison between local primary schools and the main secondary is good. Staff hold regular curriculum meetings and agree transfer arrangements which make sure that there is little disruption to pupils' learning when they change schools and they know what to expect.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is very well served by the governing body; the headteacher is a very good leader and very well supported by effective managers.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are very active in helping the school improve further.
- The headteacher and senior staff are very keen to drive up standards.
- Developments tackle what is most important.
- Staff are enthusiastic and committed to improving teaching and learning.
- Innovation is encouraged to make sure all pupils benefit.
- Financial management is very well controlled but flexible.

Commentary

36. Governors have successfully faced the challenge of the school roll nearly doubling since the previous inspection in order to accommodate children from families in nearby new housing. This has caused particular difficulties in setting a budget as the planned completion date announced by builders has not been met. As a result, the school has agreed with the local authority to operate with a large deficit of around £45,000 in order to keep existing staff and not disrupt pupils' education by organisational changes during the year when new entrants start.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	550,549	Balance from previous year	10,879
Total expenditure	596,241	Balance carried forward to the next	(45,692)
Expenditure per pupil	2,952		

37. In order to make sure their financial decisions were in the best interest of the pupils currently in school, governors have made sure they had an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. To this end, they frequently visit the school and have undertaken planned observation of teaching and learning, under the guidance of the management team. In addition, they are fully involved in all-important decisions and ask searching questions of the headteacher and senior staff, especially with regard to performance results and what is being done to raise standards.
38. Equally, the headteacher has a very clear vision of where the school is going and is very active in encouraging and supporting staff to do their best. She has a very good team of senior managers, who share her enthusiasm and are keen to try out new ideas, such as the introduction of French this year, using storytelling and drama to develop writing and introducing 'nurture' groups to help isolated pupils make and keep friends. They work with teams of teachers covering different subjects and aspects to tackle those areas deemed to be most important in improving teaching and learning and advancing the aims and ambitions of the

school. The most important of these is to give all pupils the opportunity to do their best and to feel proud of their achievement. In this the school has been most successful, as all pupils are confident, grow in maturity and achieve well, regardless of their different backgrounds and capabilities. Governors and staff have created a friendly and inclusive school.

39. The school is very good at checking and developing teaching and learning. Information on pupils' progress is very carefully examined, the most important shortcomings are identified and realistic plans are drawn up on which to focus energy, expertise and funds. Recent successes have been in developing speaking, listening, art, design and technology and information and communication technology, where standards are now above average. Currently, efforts are continuing to improve younger pupils' approach to learning, raising achievement in writing and practical mathematics, areas identified in the inspection and therefore confirming the effectiveness of the school's own self-evaluation.
40. Staff are valued, appreciated and helped to develop professionally. Performance-management procedures are seen as crucial in making sure that staff are well prepared and able to meet the ongoing challenge of raising standards higher. Teachers, assistants and other support staff regularly meet senior managers to review their work and discuss what can be done to help them improve. Students from initial teacher training institutes and local colleges are also fully included in school life and helped to make an effective contribution while being trained.
41. The school is innovative and focused on improving pupils' opportunities so that they grow in maturity and become enthusiastic learners. The governing body and headteacher are very aware of the need to make the best use of the human, physical and financial resources available to them. They are not afraid to take calculated risks but make sure that they operate within the principles of best value, as they have done with the increase in the school roll and new initiatives. The school gives good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The inspection focused on pupils' personal, social and emotional development. In the other areas of learning there was insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. Overall judgement on provision for these areas is based on the activities seen and work completed by pupils.

There are two common strengths, namely the very good breadth of learning experiences offered and the very good quality of leadership and management. The very good teaching occurred in all areas. There are a number of significant strengths in the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage. A detailed analysis of the performance of pupils on entry to the school has been carried out. This has identified below-average personal, social and emotional skills and a high proportion of summer-born pupils as crucial barriers to progress in learning. Strategies to tackle these issues are resulting in good achievement. This weakness also limits achievement in the other areas of learning and overall attainment is below that expected. In addition to decisive and effective action brought, the process has been managed very efficiently so that all staff know what they have to do and why. The very good breadth of learning activities is the result of detailed, imaginative planning that balances the needs of individual pupils with a thorough knowledge of the stages of development in all areas of learning. All pupils have ready access to the activities regardless of capability or background. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected goals by the end of reception in each area of learning is likely to be below average.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and is producing good gains by all pupils.
- The immaturity of many pupils and low level of skills on entry mean that the learning skills displayed are still only satisfactory.
- Pupils are developing good attitudes and behaviour.

Commentary

45. Despite the good systems set up in class for developing pupils' social skills, such as a sticker system that pupils use themselves when they want to go to the toilet, a few pupils still show anti-social behaviour when they want particular equipment; for example, arguing over a toy screwdriver in the playhouse. The teaching clearly focuses on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and the staff provide very good examples of patient, caring, purposeful relationships. As a consequence, pupils are making good progress in learning positive behaviour patterns, looking to the needs of others as well as themselves. They achieve well.
46. The wide variety of interesting activities prepared for pupils encourages them to select and use activities and resources independently. Some of the youngest pupils still tend either to watch rather than join in or always go to the same activity; for example, two of the youngest boys just watched others finding treasure in the sand tray without getting involved themselves.
47. There is a wide spread of performance among pupils. A number have low levels of concentration and exhibit traits of low self-esteem. Others are shining examples of purposeful, creative learners who not only achieve well themselves but also bring the best out of those around them. Staff have created a secure environment where pupils can be themselves and

develop quickly. This is evident in the way two pupils who have found separation from parents initially difficult have learnt to show trust and share their experiences as they become settled.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY, MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT, KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong focus on the development of speaking and listening skills.
- There is plenty of opportunity for emergent writing experiences and good teaching of letter-formation.
- There is a 'book culture' that is being caught by many pupils.
- There is a strong emphasis on the development of numeracy in practical situations.
- Practical activities cover a broad range of mathematical skills.
- New technologies are well used.
- Good use is made of everyday experiences to develop pupils' understanding.
- Varied, purposeful opportunities abound for pupils to handle tools, objects and construction and malleable materials with increasing control.
- Pupils are becoming increasingly aware of their own and others' space both in the classroom and through outdoor play.
- Good use of songs develops pupils' awareness and enjoyment of music.
- Valuable help is given to pupils as they develop drawing skills.
- Many activities are available that lend themselves to creativity.

Commentary

48. Speaking and listening skills are being skilfully developed by staff, such as in a storytelling session where the teacher drew a very enthusiastic response from pupils, getting them to identify and name the characters and give simple descriptions. Pupils write easily such as when writing pretend letters. The availability of stimulating books often draws pupils into sitting quietly and looking through them.
49. Many opportunities are used to develop pupils' understanding of number, from class counting games to a dice game, involving passing on objects from a tray. All mathematical work is firmly based in practical activity and is imaginative, such as pouring cups of milkshakes using coloured water.
50. Pupils observed were confident in using a mouse on the computer and produced good results, such as the creation of a pattern using an art package. Knowledge is developed well from the pupils' existing understanding, such as an instructive discussion on how cats are different from dogs and the charting of the daily weather.
51. Routines and classroom organisation make pupils increasingly aware of the flow of people in a busy environment and their need to be aware of the presence of others. Good ride-on toys further develop these skills. Classroom activities consistently develop co-ordination through experiences such as cutting, rolling 'play-dough', measuring out drinks and building models.
52. Songs are used in many areas of learning, such as a counting game where pupils showed a good sense of rhythm and a lot of enthusiasm as they joined in with a song well sung by the teacher. Numerous activities result in creative output, such as the devising of menus in the playhouse. Where possible, staff step in astutely to make helpful suggestions that stimulate pupils.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND FRENCH

Insufficient evidence was seen to make overall judgements about French; one Year 4 lesson was observed, discussions were held with Year 2 pupils and the specialist teacher and displays were examined in classrooms and the central work area.

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils, regardless of their background or capabilities, achieve well.
- Standards in speaking and listening are above average, but handwriting is unsatisfactory.
- Overall teaching is good, with pupils set high expectations.
- Literacy skills are used well to support pupils' learning in all subjects.
- Frequent checks on pupils' performance help develop teaching and learning.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

53. Developing pupils' talking and listening has been a cornerstone of the school's successful drive to improve writing. In all lessons, discussion is seen as the most important way of encouraging pupils to think and develop their learning. As a result, standards in speaking and listening in Year 2 and Year 6 are above the national average. Seven year-olds are eager to communicate and respond enthusiastically to questions. By the time they are 11, nearly all have become responsive listeners and very confident speakers. During a discussion on the pros and cons of being the oldest in the school, an impromptu debate developed in which different speakers took account of opposing views in presenting their case.
54. Writing was identified by the school as needing attention following an examination of pupils' national test results. While pupils were acquiring the basic skills of correct spelling, punctuation and grammar, they were not writing fluently. It was decided to introduce more interesting activities based on pupils' direct experience, linking their work to topics being studied in other subjects. A further initiative was to encourage pupils to tell and act out stories. Inspection findings confirm that these approaches have been effective as nearly all pupils are now keen to put their thoughts down in writing. In Year 2 they eagerly wrote down the rules for a game of 'boules' following a French lesson in which they had actually learnt how to play using authentic heavy metal balls. As a result, standards in writing are now around the national average, a significant improvement on previous years. Similarly, in Year 6 pupils quickly wrote down the characteristics of the evil, rich 'Zormando' after they had been involved in a role-play drama initiated when a parcel containing a drugged rare monkey and letter were delivered to the classroom. Here, too, there has been an improvement in writing standards, which are now also around the national average. However, in the drive to improve the quality of writing, handwriting is not as good as it could be. Too many junior pupils do not write smoothly using a joined style.
55. Standards of reading for seven and 11 year olds are around the national average. From when pupils start school, they are given regular and frequent practice using a good range of books. Most pupils' early reading skills are reinforced by parents hearing them read at home. In the juniors, reading is given a high profile and pupils have daily opportunities to read in small groups and on their own. While the school has been encouraging older pupils to develop their library skills to locate information in books, many are still finding this difficult.

56. Teaching and learning are good overall. Of the eight lessons seen the teaching in two was very good, in four good and in the rest satisfactory. In the best lessons teachers are very good at gaining and keeping pupils' attention. They have high expectations of what pupils can do and keep encouraging them to do their best. Lessons have variety and pace and are very well managed. As a result pupils work hard and achieve well, regardless of their background and capabilities. In addition pupils with special educational needs and the more able are given individual attention to make sure their work is suitable. Teachers are very good at helping pupils check their performance and identify what they need to do to improve. Very good use is made of test results to agree and set targets for individuals, the class and school.
57. Leadership and management are very good. Teaching and learning are regularly checked through classroom observation and professional discussions are held to decide how to raise standards higher, as has been done successfully with writing. New technologies are used well in English lessons. Overall, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. The school's drive to improve writing by developing pupils' speaking and listening skills has been extended to all subject lessons. This has been particularly effective in making sure that pupils have interesting things to talk and write about. In addition, their reading skills are improving as they are being encouraged to carry out more independent research using books and the Internet.

French

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all ages enjoy learning a new language.
- Learning French is helping pupils prepare for transfer to the local secondary school, which is seeking modern-language specialist status.
- Attractive and well placed displays emphasise the importance of this new initiative.

Commentary

59. The school has successfully introduced French to all pupils in Years 1 to 6 from this September. This is part of a local initiative to help prepare pupils for when they transfer to the local secondary school, which is seeking modern-language specialist status. The deputy headteacher teaches short sessions to all classes using very good resources to help pupils understand aspects of French life as well as learn and use simple words and phrases. In most classrooms and in the main central work area there are attractive displays showing the words being taught with posters, books, photographs, maps and examples of typical French items.
60. In a Year 4 lessons, pupils enthusiastically responded to their names with 'oui', 'bonjour', 'salut' and 'ca va', showing appropriate pronunciation and accent. They played games involving counting in French and nearly all could remember and use numbers up to eight confidently. Year 2 pupils were very pleased they could recall over ten French words, say them correctly and explain their meaning. A boy of Moroccan background was proud to recount that his parents were fluent French speakers and also was able to say a few phrases with a good accent.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school as a result of good teaching and learning. This applies to boys and girls whatever their ability or ethnic background.
- Pupils respond very well to lessons, showing a very positive attitude and infectious enthusiasm.
- There are thorough, effective systems for checking how well pupils are doing that track individuals as well as giving a picture of a cohort or of the whole school.
- Dynamic, well-focused leadership has improved the quality of provision since the last inspection.
- Whilst some mathematics skills are used in other subjects, this is not extensively so.

Commentary

60. The leadership has astutely centred improvement on the content and quality of teaching and improving the learning experiences of pupils. Thorough training has been organised and classrooms are equipped with necessary resources. The impact of these initiatives on pupil performance has been carefully tracked. As a consequence of the very good leadership and management of change, the National Numeracy Strategy is effectively implemented throughout the school.
61. The teaching was good in two of the five sessions observed and satisfactory in the other three. However, pupils' written and oral work indicates that overall the quality of teaching is good. Particular strengths are: different activities are planned for pupils of different capabilities; pupils are given stimulating examples and tasks; and teachers use questioning well to draw out pupils' understanding. The pupils have good relationships with the staff and make the most of this teaching. Those with special educational needs receive skilled support from classroom assistants and the more able are challenged to extend their thinking. As a result the quality of learning is good. Pupils listen attentively to class teaching and work hard. They love to make a contribution to the lesson and their enthusiasm is contagious.
62. Good achievement flows from the quality of the teaching and learning and applies to all pupils regardless of their backgrounds and capabilities. Pupils at the start of Year 1 are already learning and using the names of common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Year 2 pupils are readily recognising number sequences, with an appreciation of odd and even numbers. The standards for seven-year-olds are average overall and no higher because of the large number of summer-born pupils, who have taken longer to acquire good learning habits. However, nearly all pupils reaching the age of seven can use the idea that subtraction is the inverse of addition when they are calculating. They understand how to use decision trees to sort information and can solve simple problems using their knowledge of number.
63. The good progress made by pupils continues through the junior years. Three quarters of the pupils in Year 3 can already multiply in tens mentally. Year 4 pupils are making good gains in understanding co-ordinates and extending their understanding of number beyond 1,000. Year 5 pupils are progressing well in understanding equivalent fractions and Year 6 pupils are mastering the language of probability. The standards overall for Year 6 pupils are average. These pupils can add and subtract numbers to two decimal places, interpret line graphs and multiply whole numbers by ten and 100. The overall standard in Year 6 has been brought down by the large number of pupils with weaknesses in mathematics entering the school. The leadership is well aware of this issue. The good progress made by pupils who go right through the school has been tracked and the particular needs of many of those entering have been identified and tackled. The overall quality of work is an improvement since the last inspection, when some unsatisfactory work was seen.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. The good achievement in the development of skills in mathematics has not resulted in extensive use of these skills in other subjects. There are some good examples, such as in a

Year 5 science lesson where pupils showed the rate of flow of a liquid very effectively, using a graph. The leadership has recognised the need to develop this aspect of the pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

Overall the provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well as they learn, mostly through investigation and practical experience.
- Junior pupils can explain scientific investigations and make predictions thoughtfully.
- The way pupils record their work is sometimes too rigid.
- Pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve.
- Leadership and management of science are good.

Commentary

65. Standards in Year 2 are about the national average, as they were last year. Pupils find the variety of practical activities interesting and relevant to themselves. So, for example, they are able to explain the importance of looking after their bodies and have written instructions on how to clean their teeth properly. They joined in enthusiastically in a visit to the dentist as part of their creative play, which gave them the opportunity to extend and reinforce their learning.
66. Standards in Year 6 are also around the national average, showing a steady improvement over the past few years. Overall, pupils have a good foundation of scientific knowledge and understanding and are quite adept at using this when solving problems. They talk enthusiastically about investigations, construct fair tests and make sensible predications, which they then compare with their findings. For instance, they can explain the effects of different types of electrical circuits, using symbols and appropriate vocabulary accurately.
67. Pupils with special educational needs are frequently supported by teaching assistants, who ask well thought out questions to help individuals focus on what is important. As a result they take part fully in lessons and make good progress. More-able pupils are encouraged to develop their ideas by being given additional problems to solve. Pupils from different backgrounds achieve as well as others with similar capabilities.
68. The teaching and learning were satisfactory in two of the three lessons observed and good in the other. However, pupils' recorded work and the confident way they explain how they tackle investigations indicate that, overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is well planned and pupils benefit from specialist teaching in one lesson a week, which is followed up by the class teacher later. Much of their work is recorded in printed form, rather than in their own words. Whilst this enables pupils to concentrate on the separate stages of an investigation, it reduces opportunities to develop their own lines of enquiry, for when they do write, records are accurate, clear and often supported by diagrams, showing initiative and understanding. Although teachers are marking pupils' work regularly, they do not always indicate what they can do to improve.
69. Leadership and management are good. Checking and developing teaching and the curriculum take place regularly and help improve pupils' learning. Their experience is broadened further through organised visits, visiting speakers and the use of new technologies. Since the last inspection the school has shown good improvement

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average for both Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and highly motivated, gaining a great sense of achievement from their work and using their skills effectively to support learning in other subjects.
- The subject has been very well led and managed, ensuring that the school is very well equipped and that staff have been well trained.
- The learning opportunities are rich, varied and readily available to all pupils.

Commentary

70. Leadership has been very effective in creating an environment where new technology skills can develop freely, with all pupils having easy access to high-quality equipment. This is because of the foresight shown in purchasing and renewing resources gradually as funds became available. Good management of the training required also means that staff are competent in showing pupils what to do and providing them with a variety of interesting and appropriate activities.
71. As a consequence pupils in the infants make good progress in developing a wide range of important skills. Year 1 pupils are successfully learning to 'log on' to a computer and control a mouse to select the required programme from a menu, printing out work at the end of the task. As they reach the age of seven, standards overall are above average. Almost all Year 2 pupils can create pictures using clip art and mix these images with text. They can successfully give instructions to move a programmable toy along a prescribed path, create a pictogram to show information and make designs using an art program.
72. This good achievement continues through the juniors for the same reasons. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are increasingly adept at using the Internet, downloading useful images when necessary, designing decision-tree diagrams to sort information and devising and creating questionnaire forms. By Year 5, pupils can write text in the format of a script for a play and program two sets of traffic lights at a junction. On reaching the age of 11, pupils' standards are also above average. Those questioned have a mature, informed view of the advantages and dangers to society of modern technology. Pupils have learnt to use a digital camera and can animate an image. They have a good understanding of the way questions need to be framed for entry on a computer database.
73. The positive attitude shown by pupils plays an important part in the good progress they make. Although little direct teaching was observed, the good subject knowledge of staff and the very good capacity of pupils to work on their own and with others, as well as their good achievement, indicate that, overall, teaching and learning are good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. There are numerous examples of new technology skills being used very well in other subjects. These include designing Joseph's coat as part of religious education in Year 2, researching and producing a report on Tudor life in Year 4 and designing a spreadsheet to calculate average height, mass and reach in Year 6.

HUMANITIES

Insufficient evidence was seen to make overall judgements about geography, history and religious education: inspectors observed one Year 5 geography lesson, no history lessons and three religious education lessons, discussions were held with Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, and teachers' plans and displays were examined in classrooms and the central work area.

Geography

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy finding out about different places and comparing their findings with their own experiences at home or when travelling in this country and abroad.
- Field trips, videos and the Internet extend and enrich pupils' learning.

Commentary

75. The school has continued to make sure that pupils have as much first-hand experience as possible in geography. Topics are based on national guidance, but activities involve pupils in finding out about their own locality and then comparing their findings with studies of places further away. In Year 2, good use is made of the travels of Jeremy Bear, with pupils, staff, families and friends sending postcards back from various destinations and plotting these journeys on a large map of the world displayed in the classroom. Their holiday experiences are also made good use of through sharing accounts and photographs.
76. In the Year 5 lesson, learning gained from a visit to the local sewage-treatment works earlier in the term was built on successfully by watching and discussing the issues raised by a video on water-aid in a drought area of Africa. Pupils quickly grasped the implications of limited rainfall and a lack of appropriate technology on people's lives, health and education. All classes use the Internet and library to follow up class topics individually and in small groups.

History

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic about comparing their own lives with those of people living in the past.
- Good use is made of visits, visitors, displays and the Internet to bring history to life.

Commentary

77. History is taught in blocks of units that cover topics suggested by national guidance. However, careful consideration has been given to making sure that links are made with other subject areas wherever possible to give pupils a richer experience. In Year 2 a comparison of summer seaside holidays now and in Victorian times also gave pupils the opportunity to develop their learning, in geography through using maps, in design and technology by looking at early vacuum cleaners and in art by considering how postcards have changed.
78. Visits, visitors and residential trips are particularly effective in helping pupils gain a feel for what it might have been like to live in the past. Year 6 were able to take part in the construction of a life-size iron age hut as well as visiting Corfe and Pembroke castles during the year.
79. A feature of classrooms when history topics are being studied is the attractive displays, bringing together published illustrations, books, artefacts and pupils' work. Increasingly, pupils are being helped to develop independent research skills by using the Internet and resource books in the library.

Religious education

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' positive attitudes shine through as they talk about their work.
- The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social, moral and spiritual development.
- Effective use is made of local guidance, but Judaism and Islam are not covered as thoroughly as Christianity.

Commentary

80. Leadership has made sure that the new local guidance has been adapted well to interest pupils. This has been used effectively by teachers for covering Christianity. Pupils not only have a grasp of significant themes, events and practices central to the Christian faith, but can also apply them to daily life with increasing understanding and sensitivity. For example, Year 2 pupils not only know the parable of the talents, but also relate it to their own lives in terms of using the gifts they have. Year 5 pupils not only know facts about the lives of Moses and Jacob but also enter into and can describe what they think are the feelings of these men during major life experiences. In this respect the subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' appreciation of important spiritual, social and moral issues. This aspect was a strength of the teaching observed.
81. Coverage of the required work on Judaism and Islam is not as effective. The infants' knowledge of Judaism is patchy and older pupils do not appreciate connections between Judaism and Christianity. By Year 6, junior pupils have gained some knowledge of the practices of Islam, but these tend to be isolated facts without application to everyday life. Leadership is aware that this is an area for further development and is already exploring ways to tackle the issue.
82. The achievement of pupils is enhanced by their positive attitude to the subject. For example, Year 3 pupils are keen to talk about what they have learnt and consider important. Year 6 pupils ask searching questions about who God is and what he is like, listening well to each other and taking each other seriously.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Insufficient evidence was seen to make overall judgements about design and technology, music and physical education: inspectors observed no design and technology lessons, one of music and two of physical education, discussions were held with Year 2 and Year 6 pupils and teachers' plans and displays were examined in classrooms and the central work area.

Art and design

Provision in art is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average, but there are shortcomings in pupils' observational drawing skills.
- Pupils enjoy art and design and achieve well.
- Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own work and think how to improve it.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

83. Standards in art are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make good progress, achieve well and develop a strong sense of being an artist.
84. Throughout the school there are examples of painting and collage that are of high quality, particularly those produced in the style of well-known artists. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils describe their experiences confidently and knowledgeably. Older pupils are keen to explain how they are developing ways of showing movement, particularly that of the body. Year 2 pupils described how they had looked at the spirals of snail shells and then drew or stitched them. They were fascinated by Matisse's 'Snail' and had enjoyed making their own colourful cut paper pictures of spirals.

85. In a Year 4 lesson the teacher began by encouraging the class to look critically at the paintings produced the week before. They listened attentively and gained much from discussing the composition and techniques and what worked well and why. In another lesson Year 5 pupils were enthusiastic about Picasso's 'Weeping Woman' and worked hard to copy his style. The teacher kept a watchful eye on their progress, making very good teaching points to help them refine their skills and become more self-reliant.
86. Junior pupils are encouraged to undertake preparatory work in their sketchbooks to increase their understanding and help their planning, but the quality of their observational line drawing is not high enough.
87. The two co-ordinators are successful in helping teachers develop their skills and show, by their own teaching, the high quality of work pupils are capable of producing. Pupils are offered additional opportunities through an art club and other out-of-school events and activities. Resources are good and art and design is linked increasingly to other subjects, helping give greater meaning and value to pupils' work. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Design and technology

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- Pupils are given a wide range of interesting design-and-make activities.
- Pupils' craft skills are developed well.
- Design and evaluation are seen as important stages in the making process.
- Good use is made of new technologies.

Commentary

88. The standard of the work seen was above average. Pupils 'design, make and evaluate' from an early age. Discussion before and after the practical work is seen as very important. There is a good balance between using everyday materials and well-designed modelling kits. As a result, pupils quickly learn the limitations of materials and become adept at making reasoned choices when planning what to do. There are also opportunities for all pupils to engage with food technology. Particular importance is given to making sure that pupils are aware of appropriate health-and-safety procedures.
89. Pupils in Year 1 had made 'pop up' books in which each page had a different moving part, some semi-automatic. These showed variety and imagination and pupils could explain in detail how they were made and worked. Year 3 pupils had produced decorated picture frames, taking great care to make sure the corners were fixed firmly at right angles, demonstrating well-developed craft skills. In Year 5, to convert circular motion into linear motion, pupils had used cams that were made to a high degree of accuracy. They had made wood and cardboard constructions based on models produced earlier from commercial kits. They also made good use of computer skills to record their evaluations, which were thoughtful and showed a good understanding of the processes involved. The school benefits from very good facilities and resources for practical activities.

Music

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy singing and listening to music.
- The annual school production involves all pupils.
- Facilities and resources are very good.

Commentary

90. The standard of work seen was in line with national expectations. Pupils sing well in morning assemblies, enjoy listening to music and can identify the sound of individual instruments. Lessons are well planned and resourced. Pupils can have instrumental lessons if they are prepared to pay and there is a good take up. Generally the school provides an appropriate range of opportunities for pupils to perform and celebrate their musical achievements both during the school day and at special events. The annual school production is very much appreciated by pupils and parents. The whole school takes part. Such is the enjoyment that any child spoken to is eager to relate his or her role and how much the occasion was enjoyed.

Physical education

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils enjoy gymnastics and dance very much.
- Facilities are excellent.

Commentary

91. In the two lessons seen, pupils worked hard and were successfully helped by the teachers to improve their performance. As a result, all pupils achieved well.
92. In the Year 4 dance lesson the class had reached the end of a unit in which they built up a sequence to a recording of African drums. They looked at a video clip of their performance during a previous lesson. With the effective help of the teacher, nearly all pupils were able to identify what they, individually and as a team, could do to refine their movements. They rehearsed their parts and then, very enthusiastically and with much enjoyment, showed how well they had learnt to work in groups and as a large team.
93. Year 5 pupils also improved their gymnastic skills by being helped to focus on aspects of their body movements by the very good questioning from the teacher. They worked very well on their own and with a partner, putting together a short sequence of balancing and transferring their body weights at different heights and speed.
94. The school benefits from excellent facilities for both inside and outside physical activities. The hall is spacious and well equipped and there are ample paved and grassed areas in the surrounding grounds.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils confidently express their views and feelings.
- Great importance is placed on personal development.
- A highly innovative project helps isolated pupils to socialise.

Commentary

95. Pupils gain much from personal, social and health education, but their personal development is also fostered effectively through all activities in the school. There is a well thought out programme that reflects the age, maturity and capabilities of pupils and each class has at least one session a week. Pupils feel secure and confidently talk about a range of sensitive issues sensibly. Staff know pupils very well and are able to make sure that confidentiality and trust are not broken.
96. The school is always looking for better ways to help individual pupils with their personal development and has been extremely successful with a particular project:

EXAMPLE OF OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

Nurture groups to help isolated pupils with poor self-esteem and challenging behaviour.

When staff at Staverton Primary School identified a number of isolated youngsters, they came up with an imaginative and highly successful way of improving the children's social skills. Once a week, two pupils of different ages spend an hour together with a teaching assistant, taking part in a range of interesting practical activities. They are encouraged to co-operate and talk about what they are doing, as they did when planting bulbs in the school garden. The assistant helps individuals express their ideas, talk about feelings and resolve disagreements peacefully. A Year 4 boy's instinctive impulse to grab a gardening tool and criticise the digging of his Year 1 partner was very sensitively handled by the assistant. She has excellent relationships with the boys and her gentle but consistent appeal to their better nature, accompanied by praise and appreciation, resulted in an immediate improvement in their behaviour. These nurture groups resulted from a trial last year when five out of six pupils made considerable gains in self-esteem and their ability to get on with others. As part of this project the school's special educational needs co-ordinator has developed simple procedures to measure and check the progress pupils make in their personal development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

