

INSPECTION REPORT

WOOLDEN HILL COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Anstey, Leicester

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 120048

Headteacher: Mrs C Shepherd

Lead inspector: Mr M Capper

Dates of inspection: 24th – 26th May 2004

Inspection number: 258504

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 192

School address: Netherfield Road
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Leicester
Leicestershire

Postcode: LE7 7ES

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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs D Williams

Date of previous 7th December 1998
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average-sized community primary school which admits pupils between the ages of four and 11. There are 192 pupils on roll, taught in seven single-age classes. They come from a wide variety of home backgrounds, including some from families that have low incomes. The numbers eligible for free school meals are below average. Pupils' mobility has been average over the last year. There are 19 pupils on the register of special educational needs. This is similar to the percentage found nationally. However, they are not distributed evenly from class to class. Most are identified as having moderate learning difficulties. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational need. This is below the number normally found in schools of this size. When they start school in the Reception class, children's attainment is broadly average. Most pupils are of white British origin and none has English as an additional language.

In 2000 the school received 'Investors in People' status. At the time of the inspection two teachers were on maternity leave and their classes (the Reception class and the Year 2 class) were being taught by temporary teachers.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23239	Mr M Capper	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology (ICT) Personal, social and health education (PSHE) Religious education Special educational needs
9545	Mr P Oldfield	Lay inspector	
23609	Mrs A Cartlidge	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology Music
23658	Mr A Miller	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school. Pupils have good attitudes and behaviour and are happy at school. Teaching is **satisfactory**, enabling pupils to make sound progress over time, although there are variations in overall attainment from year to year. Leadership and management are **satisfactory**, and the school provides sound value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher has established a supportive, caring ethos where members of staff and pupils feel valued and work well as a team.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal development.
- Pupils' attainment is too low in writing.
- Teachers' expectations are not always high enough, slowing the progress of more-able pupils in particular.
- The school has good links with parents, the community and other local schools.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Insufficient use is made of data from monitoring and evaluation to inform development planning and track the progress of individual pupils.
- The school successfully extends the curriculum through a wide-ranging programme of clubs, visitors and special events.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in 1998. Many of the key weaknesses from that time have been addressed and teaching and learning have improved. However, pupils continue to underachieve in writing despite extensive support from the local authority in the last two years.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although standards of attainment vary from year to year according to the number of pupils with special educational needs in a year group.

In the Reception class, children's achievement is good in personal, social and emotional development and satisfactory overall in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are on target to achieve the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year in these areas of learning.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. The current Year 2 has a large number of pupils with special educational needs and attainment is in line with nationally expected levels in mathematics, science and reading and below them in writing. In contrast

there are few pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 and attainment is higher than in 2003. It is in line with the level expected nationally in mathematics and science. In English, reading is stronger than writing. Pupils make sound progress in Years 3 to 6 in developing reading skills and in the current Year 6 attainment is in line with nationally expected levels. However, standards of attainment in writing are too low and pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Test results show that boys do not achieve as well as girls in writing.

Throughout the school there is a lack of challenge for potentially higher-attaining pupils and this limits their achievement, especially in writing and in science. In contrast, pupils with special educational needs achieve well in literacy and numeracy, especially when working with teaching assistants who give good support.

Pupils' personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. The school places a strong emphasis on teaching pupils good attitudes to learning and to understand the need to behave well. These aims are largely achieved, with pupils responding well to the high expectations of members of staff. Pupils develop confidence and self-esteem and take responsibility well. Attendance is **good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most good teaching occurs in Years 1 and 5, where there is a good pace to learning, work more closely reflects pupils' needs and interesting activities engage them. However, in too many lessons in other classes learning is comfortable rather than challenging and teachers do not expect enough from their pupils. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory, but teachers do not make effective use of the information collected to plan suitable work and pupils often complete similar tasks.

The curriculum is satisfactory, although there are inconsistencies in the breadth and balance across the year groups, especially in subjects such as religious education, history and geography. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but the open-plan design of the classrooms sometimes hinders pupils' concentration. High-quality displays encourage pupils to take pride in their achievements.

Levels of care, welfare, health and safety are **good**. There is a good partnership with parents and good links with the local community and other schools. There are **very good** procedures for taking pupils' views into account.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is well respected by the parents, governors and members of staff and, together with subject co-ordinators, has identified where improvement is needed. Members of staff are given good support, guidance and relevant training. However, insufficient use is made of test data to set targets or to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's work. The school development plan does not set measurable targets for improvements or explain clearly the strategies that are to be used to ensure improvement. Governance is satisfactory and statutory requirements are met in full. Good use is made of governors' specific skills, especially in the areas of buildings and finance management. Care is taken to ensure that funding is used appropriately. Nevertheless, the school is operating in a period of financial uncertainty due to changes in funding from the local authority. This makes long-term planning difficult and is an important barrier to raising achievement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are largely positive about the work of the school. Parents are pleased with support given to pupils with special educational needs and feel well informed. Pupils like school. They appreciate the way that the headteacher and staff listen to their views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise attainment in writing, especially of boys.
- Ensure that there is consistently high challenge for more-able pupils in lessons.
- Improve the effectiveness of evaluation, monitoring and development planning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although standards of attainment vary from year to year according to the number of pupils with special educational needs in a year group. Boys achieve less well than girls in writing. There are no other differences between the attainment of boys or girls or between pupils from different backgrounds.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of writing are too low.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in literacy and numeracy, especially when supported by teaching assistants.
- Pupils make good progress in improving their listening skills in Years 5 and 6.
- In some lessons more-able pupils do not do as well as they should.

Commentary

Foundation Stage (Reception class)

1. Children's achievement is good in personal, social and emotional development and satisfactory overall in communication, language, literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are on target to achieve the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year in these areas of learning. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about attainment and achievement in creative and physical development because these areas were not a focus for the inspection.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.7 (14.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.5 (13.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.5 (16.6)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. Test results at the end of Year 2 have been improving over the last four years at a rate better than that found nationally. Test results in 2003 indicated that attainment was:
 - in reading, in line with the national average and well below that for similar schools;
 - in writing, above the national average and in line with that for similar schools; and
 - in mathematics, well above the national average and in line with that for similar schools*.

**Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

3. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. However, there are significant variations from year to year according to the number of pupils with special educational needs. The current Year 2 has a large number of pupils with special educational needs and inspection findings, based on work seen show that pupils'

attainment is in line with nationally expected levels in mathematics, science and reading and below them in writing. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in reading and mathematics. However, in writing there is not enough challenge for more-able pupils and skills do not develop as quickly as they should, leading to some underachievement.

4. In science, teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2003 show that attainment was well above the average for all schools and for similar schools. Inspection findings show that whilst most pupils in the current Year 2 are achieving satisfactorily and are on target to achieve the level expected for their age (Level 2), a lack of challenge in lessons means that few are working at the higher Level 3. This restricts the achievement of potentially higher-attaining pupils.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.3 (26.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.5 (26.2)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.2 (25.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. The overall trend in test results at the end of Year 6 is improving at a rate similar to that found nationally. In 2003, test scores indicated that attainment was:
 - in English, well below the national average and in line with that for similar schools;
 - in mathematics in line with the national average and well above that of similar schools; and
 - in science, below the national average and above that for similar schools*.

** Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

6. Inspection findings confirm that in the current Year 6, which has only a small number of pupils with special educational needs, attainment is higher than in 2003. It is in line with the levels expected nationally in mathematics and science. In English, reading is stronger than writing. Pupils make sound progress in Years 3 to 6 in developing reading skills and in the current Year 6 attainment is in line with nationally expected levels. In contrast, standards of attainment in writing are too low and pupils do not achieve as well as they should. There is sometimes a lack of challenge in lessons for potentially higher-attaining pupils and this limits their achievement, especially in writing and in science. The other key factor in the less secure achievement in writing is the limited number of opportunities that pupils get to write purposefully across the curriculum.

Whole school (Years 1 to 6)

7. Test results show that boys do not achieve as well as girls in writing. This is confirmed by inspection findings. Boys are less well motivated than girls when given written work, writing more slowly than girls and achieving less in the time available. There is no difference between the attainment and progress of boys and girls or between those of pupils from differing backgrounds in other subjects.

8. Pupils have sound numeracy skills and apply them appropriately when given the opportunity. However, links between mathematics and other subjects are not clearly established and this means that opportunities are being missed to give pupils purposeful mathematical activities.
9. By the end of Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with the levels expected nationally. Listening skills improve significantly in Years 5 and 6 because teachers engage pupils well and have clear expectations. Older pupils respond maturely to the problems posed by the open-plan nature of classrooms. In contrast, pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 do not listen as well. They are sometimes easily distracted by activities in other parts of the classrooms and have a tendency to 'switch-off' in their own lessons. The limitations of the accommodation are a barrier to improving listening skills that is beyond the control of the school.
10. In ICT, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, with attainment in line with national expectations. By Year 6, pupils are confident about using the Internet to carry out research and they use word-processing skills competently to produce posters and written work. However, not enough use is made of the ICT resources that are available in the classrooms and this slows the progress of pupils.
11. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. By Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of Christianity, though there are gaps in their knowledge of other faiths.

Pupils with special educational needs

12. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Most literacy and numeracy lessons include good provision for the needs of pupils with special educational needs, with good support from teaching assistants ensuring that they achieve well. Provision in literacy and numeracy is carefully planned, being successfully linked to individual education plans. However, there are occasions in other subjects, especially when there is no support from teaching assistants, where work is not matched closely enough to needs and is unfinished because it is too hard.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall. Pupils develop good attitudes and values and behave well. Attendance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is good in and around school, though there are occasions when pupils are distracted by activities taking place in other parts of the open-plan classrooms.
- Pupils are happy at school, get on well together and have good attitudes towards learning.
- Pupils develop good confidence and self-esteem and take responsibility well.
- There is good provision for pupils' moral and social development.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about the rich cultural heritage of the local area.
- Rates of attendance are above the national average.

Commentary

13. As at the time of the last inspection, the school places a strong emphasis on teaching pupils good attitudes to learning and to understand the need to behave well. These aims are largely achieved, with pupils responding well to the high expectations of members of staff. Pupils say that they are happy at school and feel valued. They feel behaviour is generally good and are happy with the way that staff deal with problems.
14. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behaviour is good. There is a well-understood 'code of behaviour' that is displayed around the school. Pupils behave sensibly in the playground and around the school and co-operate well in lessons. They are polite to visitors. In the Reception class, children's achievement in personal, social and emotional development is good; children learn school routines quickly because members of staff and older children lead by example and ensure a calm working atmosphere during most of the day. An interesting range of activities enable children to become independent in making choices and encourage them to be inquisitive and explore their environment.
15. Throughout the school, pupils happily help each other. There is a calm and happy atmosphere at playtimes and when pupils are eating lunch. However, there are occasions when the open-plan classrooms lead to pupils being distracted by things that are happening in other parts of the school. On these occasions they do not listen as well as they should and the pace of learning slows. In general, older pupils cope better with the problems caused by the accommodation; in Years 5 and 6, teachers are especially successful at holding pupils' interest and engaging them in their learning. As a result, listening skills quickly improve.
16. The school very effectively promotes good relationships amongst all parts of the school community. This is a significant factor in the good levels of confidence and self-esteem shown by pupils, who are not worried about '*having a go*' at something because they feel happy and secure. This has a good impact on learning.
17. Pupils are given good opportunities to take responsibility. The very active school council is very well supported by the school and gives pupils very good opportunities to express their opinions. These activities help them to develop an understanding of the responsibilities of living in a community. Pupils report that they find this valuable and feel that members of staff listen carefully to their views.
18. Parents are rightly very pleased with the school's successful promotion of moral and social skills. Pupils are taught to appreciate that there are many children less fortunate than themselves and they support a wide range of charities to help them. There are a good number of visits and visitors. Pupils are keen to participate in the good range of clubs offered by the school and are able to contribute to the running of the school in various ways.
19. Spiritual development is supported appropriately through a range of activities, including thoughtful assemblies and regular opportunities for prayer and reflection. Pupils are able to learn about their own cultures, but there are fewer opportunities for them to celebrate the cultural diversity of society through lessons or visits. The school has rightly identified this as an area for development.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	0.4

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

20. Pupils are keen to come to school and most arrive punctually. Rates of attendance are above the national average. There are good procedures for monitoring attendance and absences are quickly followed up. Parents support the school well by ensuring that their children are not absent without good reason.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	146	3	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0

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

21. There were a large number of exclusions in 2002-2003 as the headteacher addressed serious incidents of poor behaviour from a small number of pupils. Inspection findings confirm that proper procedures were followed. There have been no exclusions in the current year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are good levels of care, welfare, health and safety and pupils are given satisfactory support and guidance. There is a good partnership with parents and the school has good links with the local community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Whilst assessment procedures are satisfactory, information is not always used well when work is being planned.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's personal needs are met well in the Reception class; there are thorough assessment procedures and resources are used successfully to make learning interesting.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively in most lessons.
- Throughout the school, teaching assistants are used well to support lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Most good teaching occurs in Years 1 and 5.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations or use assessment information to plan challenging work.
- There are weaknesses in the teaching of writing.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	0 (0%)	16 (43%)	20 (54%)	1 (3%)	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.

22. Teaching and learning have improved since the time of the last inspection, when there was a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching and only one in five lessons was good. Unsatisfactory teaching has reduced to a very small proportion and there is more good teaching. Teaching in the Reception class has improved and children are now given a wide range of experiences. Ninety-three per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire were pleased with the quality of teaching and most pupils like their teachers and think they encourage them to work hard.
23. Teaching and learning in the Reception class are satisfactory overall. They are never less than satisfactory and good in half the lessons. As at the time of the last inspection, the experienced nursery nurse and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to children's learning and support groups competently. Members of staff are especially skilled at supporting children's personal development by establishing clear routines and giving clear instructions. They use resources well to gain children's attention at the start of lessons and plan interesting activities. Assessment arrangements are detailed and provide worthwhile information that is used appropriately to support children's learning. However, time is not always used effectively, with some lessons being far too long, resulting in less mature and younger children becoming tired and losing interest. This has a negative impact on learning.
24. Throughout the school, teachers and other members of staff are generally good at managing pupils' behaviour. As at the time of the last inspection, they are friendly and form supportive relationships with the pupils. There are now clear procedures for managing potentially challenging behaviour which are applied firmly but fairly, though the one example of unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection occurred when behaviour was not managed successfully. Nevertheless, in most lessons pupils' positive behaviour is consistently praised and overall behaviour management is more successful than at the time of the last inspection, when there were some weaknesses in Years 3 to 6. The purpose of each lesson is explained carefully to the pupils. They are encouraged to try hard and are becoming involved in setting their own targets. Most pupils like their teachers and present their work well.
25. Teaching assistants are used well and provide skilful support for groups of pupils and individuals. Their support has a good impact on learning, especially in literacy and numeracy. Parents are especially pleased with the support given to children with special educational needs. The effectiveness of teaching assistants has improved since the time of the last inspection, when they were unclear about what they should do.
26. Most good teaching occurs in Years 1 and 5, where there is a better pace to learning, work more closely reflects pupils' needs and interesting activities engage the pupils' interest. However, in too many lessons in other classes the pace is comfortable rather than challenging and teachers do not expect enough from their pupils. Whilst the arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment have improved and are now satisfactory, teachers do not make effective use of the information collected to plan suitable work and pupils often complete similar tasks. This disadvantages potentially-higher-attaining pupils in particular, who are often not challenged enough. This was also found to be a weakness at the time of the last inspection.

27. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall. Standards in reading are better than in writing because skills are taught more systematically, with commercial reading schemes giving a secure structure to teaching. However, there are important weaknesses in teaching that restrict achievement in writing:
- expectations are too low and work is not always sufficiently adjusted to the needs of different ability groups; and
 - pupils are not given enough opportunities to do corrections or follow-up work after marking, in English or in other subjects and so their mistakes are repeated and reinforced.
28. The school has identified correctly the need to make greater use of ICT to support learning in other subjects, though lessons in the ICT suite are well organised and learning is made purposeful.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but there are inconsistencies in the breadth and balance between year groups. There are good additional opportunities for pupils to learn. Staffing levels, accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are inconsistencies in the breadth and balance from class to class that have an impact on learning.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, but the needs of more-able pupils are met less effectively.
- The school supports pupils' personal, social and health education effectively.
- Enrichment of the curriculum is good.
- Although accommodation is satisfactory overall, there are weaknesses.

Commentary

29. There is a satisfactory curriculum that includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, there are inconsistencies in the breadth and balance across the year groups which have a detrimental impact on learning, especially in subjects such as RE, history and geography. In the Reception Year some sessions are too long and children's interest understandably flags towards the end.
30. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs and strives to be inclusive. Procedures are in place to create effective individual education plans for these pupils. The plans help teachers provide targeted support for these pupils, including deploying teaching assistants effectively to help them meet their identified targets. Teachers' planning, though, does not always take into account the needs of the more able pupils. For these, the curriculum is not offering the challenges it should and therefore their learning is not as good as it could be. This was also a finding of the previous inspection.
31. A particularly effective feature of the school's curriculum is the support it gives to pupils' personal, social and health education. This is because there are good opportunities for pupils to extend learning through a range of activities, including lessons, visits and visitors that together make up good provision. There is good coverage of sex and relationships education and issues relating to substance abuse. As a result, pupils learn a good deal about themselves and about becoming good citizens. Provision has improved since the last inspection, when it was identified as an area for development.

32. The school works hard to extend the curriculum beyond everyday lessons. Visitors to the school and the good range of extra-curricular activities provide good curriculum enrichment. These activities are used effectively to stimulate pupils' interest and widen their experience. For example, visitors include people connected with local sporting associations who provide additional expertise in PE lessons. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the good range of clubs that the school provides, including musical, sporting and art activities.

33. The school has satisfactory resources, though the number of books in the school library is insufficient for a school of this size. There are good computing facilities within the ICT suite, but the lack of ventilation means that it can become uncomfortable on hot days. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, but the open-plan design of the classrooms sometimes hinders pupils' concentration, impinging on their learning. There are attractive school grounds that are used well to support learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school effectively promotes the pupils' welfare in a secure and caring environment. Their personal development is well supported, but academic guidance is less secure. The school is very good at taking pupils' ideas and opinions into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff ensure that pupils work in a safe environment where levels of care are good.
- There are good induction procedures for children in Reception class.
- Pupils are given very good opportunities to make their views known.

Commentary

34. As at the time of the last inspection, the school provides good care and ensures that pupils work in a safe environment. Teachers and other adults in the school know the pupils well and provide good personal support, based on a good understanding of individual needs. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of pupils are clearly established and carefully followed. This means that pupils feel secure and can concentrate on their learning. However, academic support is less well developed; the school does not have sufficiently well established assessment procedures to ensure that all pupils get appropriate challenges. Nevertheless, pupils generally feel well cared for and able to express their views, particularly through the school council.
35. The school has appropriate systems in place to offer support and guidance for those pupils with special educational needs and appropriate liaison is maintained with support services. This means that differing needs are met well. Parents are very appreciative of the way that pupils with special educational needs are integrated into school life.
36. Induction arrangements when children start school are good. There is good liaison between the school and home at this time. Parents are welcomed into school at any time to discuss concerns and new children spend time in the class before they are due to start. These activities help them to settle into school quickly, so that they are soon ready to learn.
37. The school values and encourages pupils' views very well. The elected school council representatives share pupils' ideas and present a forum for debate. Pupils find the school council valuable and they are pleased that the headteacher and members of staff listen to their views. The current project of designing a garden area has been much enjoyed by pupils and has had a good impact on social development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good partnership between home and school.
- The school works closely with the local community.
- There are effective links with other schools.

Commentary

38. The school continues to ensure that there is a good partnership with parents. Parents like the school and are pleased with the way the headteacher greets them at the school entrance each morning. This means that minor concerns can be dealt with speedily. Parents are given good information about the school and there are appropriate opportunities for them to discuss their children's work and progress. They are provided with regular information about the curriculum and are kept well informed about their children's progress. End-of-year reports give parents a clear picture of how well their children are doing and set suitable targets for improvement. The school brochure and governing body's annual report are well presented and give a detailed record of the life and work of the school.
39. The school welcomes parents' views and ideas for improvements. The 'parents' association' gives generous support to the school and organises social and fund-raising activities. The positive contribution of the parents' association can be seen in their financial support for the provision of the ICT suite which has contributed well to pupils' learning.
40. The school is at the heart of the community. Parents and other members of the local community help the school in a number of ways by assisting with clubs, hearing readers and supervising children on visits. For example, a plea to encourage grandparents to support children with reading was very well supported, even by adults who are not directly linked to the school. There are good links with the local churches and the school encourages a range of local professionals such as artists and sports coaches to share their skills with the pupils. These activities make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
41. The school has established good links with other local schools. There is a supportive group of local schools which work together closely. The well-developed link with the local secondary school provides opportunities for professional development and governor training as well as good arrangements for the transfer of pupils. A 'bridging' project for pupils in Year 6 involves them working on a project that will be continued when they move to the local secondary school. They understand the purpose of this work and feel that it is helping them to get ready for the transfer by successfully adding another dimension to their learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher and other key staff provide sound leadership and management. A supportive and enthusiastic governing body ensures that governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has established a supportive caring ethos in the school.
- Insufficient use is made of data from monitoring and evaluation procedures to help inform development planning and to track the progress of individual pupils and to set measurable targets.
- Co-ordinators are good role models in their subjects.
- There is good management of SEN; the school provides successfully for pupils who have difficulty in learning.

- Day-to-day organisation of the school is good; members of staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and are given good support, guidance and relevant training.

Commentary

42. As at the time of the last inspection, leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has established a caring ethos for the work of the school and provides good pastoral care for members of staff. She is well respected by the parents, governors and members of staff and, together with subject co-ordinators, has identified where improvement is needed. There is a strong sense of teamwork amongst members of staff. They support each other well and are encouraged by the headteacher to be involved in all aspects of school life. As a result, members of staff feel valued and share the headteacher's commitment to raising standards.
43. There are important weaknesses in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work. Although teachers have been observed at work in the classroom, procedures lack rigour and have not been helpful in addressing weaknesses. The analysis of test results is at the early stages of development. Insufficient use is made of test data to set targets or to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision. This means that the school has not been well placed to address weaknesses as they arise, with development planning lacking focus. The school development plan does not set measurable targets for improvements or explain the strategies that are to be used to ensure improvement.
44. The leadership and management of subject leaders are satisfactory. They are good role models in their own teaching, setting high standards and showing how provision can be developed. They are hard-working and committed and are beginning to take a lead in improving their subjects across the school. In many subjects, such as English and science, they have a good understanding of where improvement is needed, based on observations of lessons and sampling pupils' work. However, not enough use is made of test data and other assessments to track progress throughout the school so that strengths and weaknesses in the progress of different pupils can be quickly identified and, where necessary, action taken. As a result, subject leaders' action plans are not specific enough about what is expected, how it is to be achieved and how success will be measured.
45. The headteacher and governors have a strong commitment to providing an all-inclusive school and members of staff work hard to provide for pupils who have learning difficulties. Provision for special educational needs is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. Recommended procedures are carefully followed and record keeping is systematic. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is spent appropriately for their benefit.
46. Governance is satisfactory and statutory requirements are met in full. The governing body is supportive of the school's work and committed to developing the school further. Good use is made of governors' specific skills, especially in the areas of buildings and finance management. There are several committees that meet regularly and perform useful roles. Governors are given helpful feedback on test results and are beginning to use this data to gain an understanding of what could be improved. Individual governors also have responsibility for curriculum areas such as literacy. This is helpful giving them a wider perspective on the school's work. As a result they have a sound understanding of the weaknesses in writing and have set targets for the headteacher that reflect this concern.

47. The headteacher is well organised and day-to-day management is efficient. This means that the school runs smoothly. Members of staff are given good support, guidance and relevant training. There has been a good focus on using in-service training to develop the skills of members of staff. This has had a good impact on learning in subjects such as ICT and mathematics, where teachers are more confident about teaching. The commitment to professional development involves all members of staff. For example, the very-recently-appointed caretaker has received good training before taking up his post.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	390,697
Total expenditure	396,240
Expenditure per pupil	2,055

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	21,407
Balance carried forward to the next	15,864

48. The quality of financial planning is sound. Spending is rightly targeted on raising standards and governors work hard to ensure that the principles of best value are applied in all of their spending. The school uses specific grants appropriately and parents also make a significant contribution to the financial security of the school. Nevertheless the school is operating in a period of financial uncertainty due to changes in funding from the local authority, especially in the area of special educational needs. This makes long-term planning difficult and is an important barrier to raising achievement.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

49. Provision for children in the Reception class has improved since the time of the last inspection and is satisfactory overall. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average for the children's age, though they come from a wide range of backgrounds and have different pre-school experiences. The school admits children at the age of four on a part-time basis for the first term. At the time of the inspection there were 30 full-time and 14 part-time children in the class.
50. Children's achievement is good in personal, social and emotional development and satisfactory overall in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are on target to achieve the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year in these areas of learning. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about attainment and achievement in creative and physical development because these areas were not a focus for the inspection. Attainment and achievement are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
51. Most children enjoy school and have good attitudes towards learning. As at the time of the last inspection, behaviour is mostly good and children are polite and work together well. Good provision is made for their personal development.
52. Teaching and learning have improved since the time of the last inspection, when one in five lessons was unsatisfactory. Teaching is now satisfactory overall, with one in two lessons good. There is no longer any unsatisfactory teaching. The dedicated nursery nurse, teaching assistant and experienced voluntary helpers make a valuable contribution

to children's learning and support groups and individuals competently. Members of staff have good relationships with each other and the children. They carry out careful evaluations of their work to find ways of improving provision. Assessment arrangements are thorough and information is now used appropriately to support children's learning in ability groups.

53. As at the time of the last inspection, the curriculum is satisfactory overall and weaknesses in planning have been rectified. However, some sessions are too long and children's interest understandably flags towards the end. Whilst satisfactory use is made of the secure outdoor area, the school is aware of the need to expand this provision. Provision for children with special educational needs is good.
54. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. The classroom is made bright and cheerful and there is a safe outdoor area. Children's work is displayed attractively, making the room bright and cheerful. However, there is only limited space for group discussions when all the children are working indoors. Induction arrangements are good. A good information pack and home visits enable members of staff, children and their parents to become acquainted.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and are eager to take part in activities.
- Members of staff provide good role models and establish clear routines.

Commentary

55. Children's achievement is good and most are on target to meet expectations by the end of the year. They learn school routines quickly because members of staff and older children lead by example and ensure a calm working atmosphere during most of the day. Instructions are kept clear and simple so that children, including those with special educational needs, understand what is being asked of them. For example, an activity board is used well to share with them the order of tasks for the day. An interesting range of activities enable them to become independent in making choices and encourage them to be inquisitive and explore their environment. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when they had too few opportunities for taking the initiative.
56. Teaching and learning are good. Staff are successful in encouraging good behaviour by gently but firmly reminding children of how to behave and by using praise consistently to raise self-esteem. Children are given good opportunities for taking responsibility for various tasks when they are 'Star of the Day' and rewards are given for good work or effort. Close links have been established with the Year 1 class and there are several shared sessions, especially when children first transfer into this class. These strong links prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy sharing books but are relatively weak at identifying the sounds different letters make.
- Some lessons are too long and children lose concentration.

Commentary

57. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall and they are on target to reach the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year. They are confident speakers despite a number, particularly boys, having immature speech. The role-play area provides good opportunities for children to extend their conversations whilst serving customers and preparing pretend food. Whilst most children listen carefully in smaller groups, some become inattentive when taught as a whole class. Older reception children talk about the characters in their stories and many are starting to read simple words in a sentence. However, several remember few letter sounds, despite completing a number of worksheets over the year, which suggests that these have been of limited value.
58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Some interesting practical activities support learning well. For example, younger children enjoyed shaping letters in the sand and out of play dough and making finger puppets of goats to help them learn the letter 'g'. However, the less mature and those with special educational needs find it difficult to listen and are easily distracted when being taught as a whole class. Towards the end of the long lessons their interest wanes and they are unable to concentrate in their groups when working without adult support. This slows the pace of learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are good at number work.
- Teachers plan interesting practical activities that support learning well.
- At the end of sessions, there is not always enough time to reinforce learning or assess children's progress.

Commentary

59. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall and most are on target to meet the expectations for the end of the Reception Year. Children have good counting skills and most of the older ones are adding and subtracting small numbers.
60. Teaching and learning in the lesson observed were good. Members of staff made learning fun and children were keen to take part in the interesting activities provided. Resources were used well to support learning as children counted back from a given number and members of staff encouraged them to explain how they had found the answer. The nursery nurse used a puppet and sweets well to maintain the attention of a group of lower-attaining children, including those with special educational needs. The outdoor area was used well to reinforce counting back on a number track and the Chinese restaurant provided good opportunities for children to discuss prices. However, insufficient time is allowed at the end of a lesson to share and reinforce what children have learned.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- ICT is taught well.
- Teachers plan interesting practical activities that support learning well.
- Younger children sometimes become restless in whole class sessions.

Commentary

61. Children's achievement is satisfactory and most are on target to attain the levels expected at the end of the Reception Year. They can name common fruits and vegetables, although they have limited experience of the wider range now available.
62. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with a good lesson in ICT being observed. At the time of the last inspection there was insufficient guidance given on using ICT. Now children are taught specific skills in the ICT suite and this has made a good impact on their attainment.
63. Members of staff use resources well to add interest to lessons. For example, when children were learning about the culture and diet of a child in an African village, clothing

and fruits were brought in for them to see. Good questions were asked to encourage them to compare life in Africa with their own lives. Children with special educational needs were included well by being asked questions that related to their own experiences. However, the whole-class introduction was less effective than the group activities because the younger and less mature children found it hard to concentrate and became slightly restless. Once children were working on a range of practical tasks their interest was soon restored as they used magnifiers to examine the fruits, dressed up in African traditional dress, made fresh fruit salad and made careful prints from various fruits.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

64. This was not an area of focus for the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to form judgements on provision and standards. Nevertheless, children have daily opportunities to develop physical skills on both a small and large scale. For example, they manipulated plastic knives safely when chopping up fruit. A short outdoor session was observed during the inspection in which children found different ways of using a hoop to extend skills in rolling, jumping, skipping and catching. Clear instructions and good use of praise encouraged them to maintain a good pace and exercise well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

65. This was not an area of focus for the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on provision or standards. As at the time of the last inspection, there is some unnecessary use of templates to generate artwork, limiting individuality, though there are also opportunities for children to use their imaginations and develop their own ideas. For example, they painted some delightful tigers with clear facial features after sharing a well-loved story. Children have the opportunity to experiment with colour when making their own collage pictures and use modelling materials to make a range of interesting mini-beasts.
66. Children join in tunefully and enthusiastically when singing well-known songs and maintain pitch well when singing 'Oh dear! He's/she's not here' during registration. The provision for role-play has improved since the time of the last inspection and an interesting "Chinese restaurant" was used well during the inspection.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are too low in writing, especially for boys.
- Pupils are interested in reading and have good attitudes in lessons.
- Teaching assistants give good support, enabling pupils with special educational needs to improve their literacy skills.
- The headteacher and subject leader have a clear understanding of where improvement is needed, but insufficient use is made of test data to monitor provision.

Commentary

67. There are significant annual variations in test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 according to the number of pupils with special educational needs in a year group. In 2003, test results at the end of Year 2 were:
- in reading, in line with the national average and well below that for similar schools; and
 - in writing, above the national average and in line with that for similar schools.
68. The current Year 2 has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs and inspection findings, based on work seen, show that pupils' attainment is in line with nationally expected levels in reading and below them in writing.
69. Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were well below the national average, though a comparison of results at the end of Year 6 with results at the end of Year 2 shows that, overall, pupils had made satisfactory progress. In the current Year 6, which has only a small number of pupils with special educational needs, attainment is higher than in 2003. It is in line with the nationally expected levels in reading and below them in writing.
70. Progress since the last inspection has been broadly satisfactory, with standards of attainment very similar to those found at that time. However, despite intensive support from the local authority and some recent improvements, pupils' attainment in writing remains too low and their achievement over time is unsatisfactory. This is because they are not given enough opportunities to write at length about their own ideas, or to plan and rewrite their work. The focus on any one kind of writing is not sustained for long enough to develop secure skills. Spelling and handwriting are generally satisfactory, though pupils do not regularly use a dictionary or thesaurus to check accuracy and extend vocabulary. They are not given enough opportunities to write purposefully across the curriculum and the expectations of teachers are not always high enough. As a result, there is insufficient focus on improving the quality of work, with more-able pupils not being challenged enough to extend their learning beyond that of the average or lower-attaining pupils.
71. Writing is a significant weakness that affects pupils' performance in other subjects. The school has noted that boys do not perform as well as girls. This is confirmed by inspection findings. They are less well motivated than girls when given written work, writing more slowly than girls and achieving less in the time available.
72. Achievement in reading is satisfactory. Standards in reading are better than in writing because skills are taught more systematically, with commercial reading schemes giving a secure structure to teaching. Parents support their children well in reading by hearing them read regularly at home. Guided reading sessions are well managed and make a good contribution to learning because teachers are able to respond to individual needs as they arise. At these times, questioning is used effectively to develop skills. Pupils across the school are interested in reading. Pupils in Year 2 are able to sound out unfamiliar words and to read aloud accurately when texts match their level of achievement. Progress through the school is sustained because books are graded for difficulty and by Year 6 pupils are reading confidently from a range of texts, despite limitations in the range of books available in the school library.
73. By the end of Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with the nationally expected levels. Listening skills improve significantly in Years 5 and 6, because teachers engage pupils well and have clear expectations. Older pupils respond maturely to the problems posed by the open-plan nature of classrooms. In contrast, those in Years 2, 3 and 4 do not listen as well. They are sometimes easily distracted by activities in other parts of the classrooms and have a tendency to 'switch-off' in their own lessons.

74. Teaching is satisfactory overall. There is a positive atmosphere in most lessons and pupils generally want to succeed, showing good attitudes towards learning. Explanations at the start of lessons are clear and teachers have good expectations of behaviour. There are high-quality displays which show pupils' best work to advantage, encouraging them to take pride in their achievements. Teaching was most successful when there was a good pace to learning with differing needs met well.
75. However, there are important weaknesses in teaching that restrict achievement in writing:
- teaching, tasks and expectations are not always sufficiently adjusted to the needs of different ability groups and pupils underachieve as a result;
 - pupils are not given enough opportunities to do corrections or follow-up work after marking, in English or in other subjects and so their mistakes are repeated and reinforced; and
 - assessment information is recorded systematically but not used with enough rigour to tackle pupils' weaknesses.
76. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together, helping groups with set tasks. Teaching assistants are well trained, involved in lesson planning and supported well as a team, giving them a strong sense of purpose. Their work with pupils with special educational needs is good and has a good impact on learning. Teaching assistants manage group sessions well and respond sensitively to individual needs. As a result, pupils with special educational needs achieve well in literacy.
77. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The subject leader is a good role model in her own teaching and has a clear understanding of where there are weaknesses, based on observations of lessons and sampling pupils' work. Both the headteacher and co-ordinator are determined to ensure that provision is improved and there have been many recent initiatives. These include making more use of individual pupil targets, allocating more time for the teaching of speaking and listening and introducing extended writing sessions. None of these initiatives have been in place long enough to have had a significant impact on standards. Nevertheless, they are appropriate responses to the weaknesses in provision, though the school does not yet make enough use of test data for different year groups to set targets, to track progress from year to year or to identify groups of pupils who are achieving particularly well or particularly badly.
78. ICT is beginning to be used effectively to extend learning, especially when pupils are working in the ICT suite. For example, pupils word-process work and use research skills when searching the Internet. However, pupils rarely use available computers when working in classrooms.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

79. The use of literacy is improving, especially in Year 1 where the co-ordinator is trialling a project that focuses on cross-curricular links. This is having a good impact on writing in this year group. In other classes pupils are encouraged to read for a variety of purposes across the curriculum and there are good opportunities for speaking and listening in lessons. However, progress in writing is restricted by the lack of opportunity to write purposefully in subjects other than English. Displays of work show that when this does happen both boys and girls are capable of producing good work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1, 5 and 6 due to good teaching.
- Teachers make good use of teaching assistants to support learning.
- Many teachers have had the opportunity to attend training in the teaching of mathematics.
- Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics.
- Opportunities are being missed to develop mathematics in other curricular areas.

Commentary

80. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and the overall trend in pupils' attainment is one of gradual improvement, especially in test results at the end of Year 2. However, there is a variation between the attainment of year groups in the school, with the proportion of pupils with special educational needs not distributed evenly. There is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys.
81. National test results at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were well above the national average and in line with the results of similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that for 2004 there will be a drop in results as there are more children with special educational needs in this group, some of whom are unlikely to reach the expected level (Level 2). As a result overall attainment in the current Year 2 is in line with that expected nationally and achievement is satisfactory. There are fewer current Year 1 pupils, but they have teaching that is demanding and challenging. They also benefit from additional, well-directed support from other adults. As a result, they are all achieving well, including those with significant learning needs.
82. National test results by the end of Year 6 in 2003 were in line with the national average. However, a comparison of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 with their test results at the end of Year 6 shows that overall progress had been well above average.
83. Overall pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 are benefiting from consistently good teaching. Pupils' attainment in the present Year 6, where there are few identified as having special educational needs, is set to be broadly in line with national averages and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 5 are on target to exceed national averages by the end of Year 6 and are achieving well. They confidently work well in all aspects of mathematics and if they do experience difficulties the teacher ensures that additional support is given. The achievement of pupils in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory.
84. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Throughout the school, teachers manage behaviour well and ensure that teaching assistants are suitably briefed to support children with special educational needs. As a result, teaching assistants are clear about their role and these children achieve well, making good progress towards their targets in mathematics.
85. Where good teaching was observed it was characterised by teachers ensuring that all children were given the appropriate challenge and were maintaining a lively and stimulating pace throughout the lesson. Teachers have placed an appropriate emphasis on developing numeracy skills and are trying to develop children's capacity to work with mental calculations. Not enough opportunities, though, were observed for pupils to explain their method of reaching a particular answer. An important contribution to the development of mathematics in the school has been the opportunities most teaching staff have had to attend additional training in the teaching of mathematics. This has improved their confidence.

86. Children have good attitudes to their mathematics work and it is generally neatly presented. They are being involved with setting targets to improve their performance. There are, though, insufficient opportunities to use ICT during mathematics lessons, although some useful links are made when pupils work in the ICT suite.
87. At the time of the inspection the subject leader was on maternity leave. The headteacher is currently undertaking this role on a temporary basis. The substantive post holder has carefully assessed the outcomes of national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 in order to indicate where further improvements in the teaching of mathematics might be made. The school's development plan and review procedures take some account of this analysis, but effective criteria for checking whether aims have been achieved have not been clearly established, making it difficult to monitor the impact of developments.

Mathematics across the curriculum

88. Pupils are given some opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in other aspects of the curriculum. This was seen to good effect in Year 4, where pupils have produced graphs as part of their work in geography. However, other opportunities to develop mathematics work are being missed. For example, careful measurements are not being made in designs for design and technology and, graph work across the curriculum tends to be limited to bar charts, reducing children's experience and understanding of different forms of graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' investigative skills are improving.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information to plan work that challenges more-able pupils.
- The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides a good role model.

Commentary

89. Inspection findings show that pupils' attainment is in line with nationally expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. National tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 indicated that attainment was below the national average, though pupils had achieved well from the time they were assessed at the end of Year 2. National test results have been rising overall over the last few years. In the current Years 2 and 6, whilst most pupils are working at the expected levels, there are few working consistently at the higher levels (Level 3 or Level 5). In Years 1 and 2 there is limited evidence of written work and the more able have too few opportunities to carry out research or to use various ways of recording their findings. Throughout the school, pupils make careful observations and sensible predictions. However, other than in Year 6, they have too few opportunities to consider what their findings show. Pupils' achievement, including of those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall, though the more able are not consistently challenged. Pupils' attainment and achievement are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
90. Most pupils are keen to learn about science and participate particularly well in practical activities such as dissecting a flowering plant in Year 5. Behaviour is managed well in most lessons, enabling pupils to concentrate hard. The quality of pupils' written work has improved since the time of the last inspection, with most taking care to present their work neatly.

91. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with an example of good teaching in Year 5. As at the time of the last inspection, teachers provide clear explanations, promote the correct scientific vocabulary and ask some good questions at the start of lessons to encourage pupils to discuss what they already know. Resources are used well to make learning interesting. For example, in a lesson in Year 2 the teacher shared colourful photographs of camouflaged animals and in Year 5 real flowers and posters were used well to explain plant reproduction. However, at the start of some lessons the pace of learning is rather slow and pupils become distracted easily because of noise from other teaching areas. Too often pupils of differing prior attainment are expected to complete the same written task, so that more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Whilst attainment is assessed at the end of topics and teachers write helpful comments on pupils' work, they do not encourage pupils to respond to these comments or use assessment information to help them plan suitable work for more-able pupils. Consequently, some pupils are not reaching their full potential.
92. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. Good training opportunities are planned and regular monitoring of teaching and learning is beginning to raise standards. Satisfactory provision has been maintained since the time of the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator provides a good role model in her own teaching and has a clear understanding of how provision in the subject needs to be improved further. Test results are analysed appropriately, but information on individuals and year groups is not used to track progress through the school, meaning that it is difficult to measure the progress of different groups of pupils.
93. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Short lessons are used well in Years 5 and 6 to teach specific skills to support learning in the main lesson later in the week. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to take part in investigations and to use their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, pupils in Year 6 measure force in Newtons and distances in centimetres, and pupils in Year 5 put forward persuasive arguments against space travel.
94. There are weaknesses in the use of ICT to support learning. Although some good cross-curricular links are made when pupils work in the ICT suite, little use is made of ICT during science lessons, for example by using data-handling programs to present their work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of the ICT suite and plan interesting activities that engage pupils.
- There are missed opportunities to extend the learning of more-able pupils and to make use of ICT in lessons outside the ICT suite.

Commentary

95. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, with teachers more confident about teaching the subject and resources significantly improved. There is now a well-

resourced ICT suite, which is used regularly to support learning. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. In Year 2, pupils successfully use art and word-processing programs to record their work. By Year 6, pupils confidently access the Internet to carry out research. They understand how spreadsheets can be used to present data and use a range of desktop publishing techniques to produce newsletters and posters.

96. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Satisfactory teaching throughout the school helps all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make sound progress. Achievement is best in the lessons where there are good levels of challenge for pupils of differing prior attainment. However, in some lessons there are missed opportunities to extend the learning of more-able pupils, limiting their achievement over time. This is because most lessons have the same starting point, with more-able pupils often only getting on to 'challenge' activities toward the end of a session.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

97. Teachers are well organised when they work in the ICT suite and they plan interesting and purposeful activities that, at these times, are linked well to other areas of the curriculum. For example, in a Year 6 lesson there were good links with pupils' work in religious education as they used the Internet to explore the features of churches. Similarly, in a Year 5 lesson there were good links with numeracy as pupils used spreadsheets to carry out various calculations. These cross-curricular links help to make learning purposeful, with pupils responding well and showing positive attitudes towards the work that they have been given. However, though every classroom has a computer, these were rarely used during the inspection. As a result, there are missed opportunities to practise and consolidate ICT skills in lessons that take place outside the ICT suite.

HUMANITIES

Geography and History

98. These subjects were not an area of focus for the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to form overall judgements on standards and provision.
99. Two **geography** and one **history** lessons were observed during the inspection and a scrutiny of children's work and teachers' planning was undertaken. Discussions with co-ordinators were held. Teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory, with pupils having good attitudes towards learning. However, more-able pupils are not always given work that sufficiently challenges them and teachers do not always identify clearly enough what they want them to learn. As a result, teachers are not sufficiently clear about the gains in knowledge or skills they are expecting the children to achieve by the end of the lesson. The previous inspection report identified similar weaknesses in these subjects.
100. Pupils enjoy their work. For example, children in Year 3 talk with interest about the ancient Egyptians' approach to the after-life and children in Year 1 have made sensible suggestions about how they could develop the school environment. However, there is an imbalance in the amount of time dedicated to these subjects across the year groups and some areas of study lead only to superficial work. This has a negative effect on the progress pupils make in the development of geographical and historical investigative skills.
101. Work in both history and geography is enriched by using the school grounds and the local environment as resources in lessons. A good range of visitors supports the curriculum

and visits are used to give pupils first-hand experiences. For example, pupils talked very positively about a history day when they dressed up as Victorians.

102. The two subject leaders support teachers in their planning and with ideas for teaching. For example, the geography co-ordinator identifies good ICT links for staff. However, these subjects have not been an area of recent focus in the school and, as a result, insufficient monitoring of outcomes has been undertaken to raise standards and secure improvement.

Religious education

Provision for religious education (RE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In some classes there is little recorded work.
- Pupils have only a limited understanding of what it means to belong to a non-Christian faith.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning.

COMMENTARY

103. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 accurately retell stories from the Bible and recall the names of various Christian festivals. By Year 6, pupils have extended their knowledge of the Christian faith and are beginning to develop knowledge of other religions. For example, they can explain some of the basic features of Islam. However, much of the work they have covered has focused on developing a factual knowledge about faiths other than Christianity, rather than considering the impact of religious beliefs on the daily life of a believer. As a result this aspect of pupils' understanding is underdeveloped.
104. Coverage of the curriculum is satisfactory, but the quality and quantity of work vary from year to year and in some classes there is little recorded work to show what has been achieved. This means that, whilst pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, older pupils do not remember previous work.
105. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of ICT to give pupils opportunities to carry out individual research when they are working in the ICT suite. Introductions to lessons are clear and teachers have good expectations of behaviour. They give pupils good opportunities to share their ideas and questioning is used well to help extend learning. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and participate well in activities. However, a scrutiny of their work shows that pupils across the range of ability are often set the same task. This has a negative impact on two groups of pupils in particular. Those with the potential for higher attainment are not always sufficiently challenged and there are occasions when pupils with special educational needs do not complete their work because it is too hard.
106. There are good links with the local Church of England and good use is made of this resource to extend learning. The local vicar takes a very active part in school life and

pupils regularly visit the church. However, they do not get opportunities to visit other places of worship. The school has identified this as a priority in order to extend pupils' understanding of the rich and diverse nature of the local culture.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

107. This curriculum area was not an area of focus for the inspection. There is insufficient evidence to form an overall judgement on provision or standards.
108. One good **art and design** lesson was observed in Year 6 and attractive displays of work and sketchbooks were sampled. In the good lesson pupils were given a challenging task, concentrated well and showed good sketching skills as they enlarged pictures using a grid. Pupils enjoy art and take great care with their work. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection, when older pupils lacked enthusiasm and standards were below national expectations. Pupils in Year 2 made some interesting collages from seeds and pasta as part of a topic on growth and pupils in Year 6 made some good pictures of action figures using pastels. ICT makes a sound contribution to the subject. For example, pupils in Year 1 used an art program to make some attractive flower drawings. As at the time of the last inspection, there are no agreed assessment procedures for checking how pupils are doing.
109. In **design and technology** photographs and samples of work were scrutinised. They show that provision has improved since the time of the last inspection, when standards were too low. Pupils in the current Year 6 take care when producing some attractive slippers and Year 4 use the Internet to look for interesting chair designs. Pupils make satisfactory designs for products and consider which materials are suitable for a given task. However, their plans do not show the intended dimensions of models. A joint home/school project at Easter provides pupils with a good opportunity to design and make a vehicle to carry an egg across the hall floor.
110. In **music**, good teaching was seen in lessons in Years 1 and 3. In the good lesson in Year 3, pupils made good progress in learning a two-part song in preparation for a performance in a class assembly. The teacher's enthusiasm and good example enabled pupils to learn quickly and to sing tunefully and in time with the music. The quality of singing has improved since the time of the last inspection.
111. Three **physical education** lessons were seen during the inspection. A discussion with one of the joint co-ordinators and a scrutiny of the school's planning for PE also took place. The quality of teaching in lessons seen ranged from satisfactory to good. All were characterized by an appropriate warm-up session and a good emphasis on health and safety. Teachers explain tasks carefully to ensure that pupils of all abilities are catered for, including those with special educational needs. Teacher demonstrations were good, as when the Year 4 teacher showed pupils how to hold a cricket bat. The pace of lessons, though, slows when equipment is distributed or collected, as teachers have not developed efficient methods for doing this. Sometimes the size of the group is too big. Both of these factors limit the time children have to practise their skills.
112. Curriculum documentation shows that the full range of activities in **physical education** is planned for. A good range of extra-curricular sport takes place in school and there are opportunities to participate in some inter-school sporting events such as cross-country racing and athletics.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good curriculum for PSHE and citizenship.
- Pupils respond in a very mature way to the good opportunities provided for taking part in decision making.
- The subject is well led and managed and members of staff provide good role models for being responsible citizens.

Commentary

113. Pupils of all ages achieve well and show a good awareness of how to behave in a community. This is because there are good opportunities for them to develop personal and social skills through a range of activities, including lessons, visits and visitors that together make up a good curriculum. There is good coverage of sex education and relationships education and issues relating to substance abuse.
114. Teaching is good overall, though there was one example of unsatisfactory teaching when behaviour was not managed effectively. Teachers constantly reinforce personal and social skills in the way that they deal with problems and give pupils opportunities to talk about issues that concern them and to share their views. Members of staff are good role models, treating all pupils and each other with care and respect. Good links are made between different subjects; teachers successfully integrate discussions on social and moral issues into citizenship as well as other lessons. For example, pupils used their literacy skills to write letters to the local community police officer following a visit. Discussions are well managed and pupils feel comfortable about contributing their own ideas. They work together very well in a supportive and caring way and have good attitudes towards learning. Good displays around school help pupils to understand that their views are valued and to develop an understanding of topical events.
115. The well-organised school council meets regularly and is effective in teaching pupils from all year groups about the workings of a democratic organisation. Councillors understand that their role is to *'meet and share ideas'* and they feel that this gives them a voice in the school community. Pupils take the other responsibilities that they are given very seriously. They are keen not to *'let anyone down'* and they show good attitudes when taking part in school-based activities.
116. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Development of provision has been carefully planned and aspirations are high. There is a good focus on encouraging pupils to think about issues that they will experience in their lives. The school is working to become a 'Healthy School', reflecting its emphasis on ensuring that pupils develop good values and leave well prepared for life.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
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	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
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	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
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).