

INSPECTION REPORT

MEADOW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Great Sutton, Ellesmere Port

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111235

Headteacher: Mr Alan Furber

Lead inspector: Mr Stuart Dobson

Dates of inspection: 13 - 16 October 2003

Inspection number: 260658

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	381
School address:	Dolphin Crescent Great Sutton Ellesmere Port
Postcode:	CH66 4SZ
Telephone number:	0151 339 4361
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jen Gooderham
Date of previous inspection:	28 September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Attainment on entry to Meadow Community Primary School is about average and most of the children have communication and social skills expected for their age. The school has a slightly below average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, mainly with general learning difficulties. There are very few pupils with backgrounds other than white British and no pupils need support because they have English as an additional language.

The school was formed from an infant and junior school and the schools are still in separate buildings on the same site. Pupil mobility is relatively low but pupil numbers are falling. Pupils come from a typical range of backgrounds; few come from homes where there is very significant social or economic deprivation or from privileged backgrounds.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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11392	Terry Heppenstall	Lay inspector	
18393	Joy Donovan	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school which gives very good value for money because the pupils achieve well and reach above and often well above average standards in core subjects¹. The educational provision is good overall. Teaching is consistently good in Years 1 to 6; teachers plan very well to meet the needs of pupils in all classes and work hard to compensate for the lack of teaching assistance. The income per pupil is very low. Leadership and management are good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils achieve good standards particularly in English, mathematics and science and information and communication technology as a result of consistently good and often very good teaching in Years 1 to 6.
- The school is well led and the day-to-day management of the school is good but the school improvement plan is not currently organised in such a way as to be most helpful for staff and governors.
- Coordinators lead their subjects well but have few opportunities to check up on the quality of teaching and learning.
- There is a very positive working atmosphere and pupils behave well.
- The provision for the children in the reception class needs to be improved to help the children to achieve the best standards of which they are capable.
- There are some omissions in the governors' annual report to parents.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Provision in Key Stage 1 is now just as good as that in Key Stage 2. Pupils achieve much higher standards in the core subjects and the quality of teaching has improved. Leadership and management are also significantly improved. There has been satisfactory improvement in the provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). There has been some improvement in the effectiveness of subject managers but there is still not enough checking up on how well pupils are learning. There is now a good, secure outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage though this could be used more.

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	A	B	B
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	A	A	A	A

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

Achievement overall is good. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils achieve levels which are higher than those achieved nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve standards which are above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in writing were slightly below the national average in 2003 but the school is already working on improvements in this area of pupils' learning and work seen indicates that standards are rising. Standards in history, religious education, art and design, design and technology, music and physical education standards are similar to the national average and in information and communication technology (ICT) they are above average. Children in the Foundation Stage mostly reach the Early Learning Goals² and this marks satisfactory overall achievement. However their

¹ English, mathematics and science.

² Nationally agreed targets for the end of the reception year.

achievement in their personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world are unsatisfactory.

Pupils' personal development is good. They develop positive attitudes to school, to work and to each other. Behaviour is generally good but in the reception class too many children behave immaturely and fail to concentrate. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. The quality of **teaching is good from Years 1 to 6** and is **satisfactory in the Foundation Stage.** Consistently good teaching in most classes ensures that pupils learn to enjoy learning. The pupils enjoy almost all of the lessons and learn well because they are well planned, lively and interesting. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils, who in turn respond positively in both their behaviour and in the effort they put into their work. The teachers encourage and support the pupils and try to match the work to the pupils' needs. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. In the reception class, teaching is mostly satisfactory but work is not demanding enough and does not support the development of children's independence.

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory and is significantly enriched by a very good range of opportunities to learn outside the classroom. Too much time is spent on English and mathematics to the exclusion of other subjects and as a result, standards in other subjects are not as high as in the English and mathematics. The school is aware of this and has planned to improve the balance. Pupils are cared for and supported well and the school's partnership with parents is strong and supports pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Leadership is effective because the school has been able to improve significantly in a difficult time of falling pupil numbers and very tight financial constraints. The headteacher in particular has kept a very close focus on raising and maintaining high standards. Governors satisfactorily meet statutory requirements and are very supportive. They do not sufficiently shape the direction of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are **very pleased** with almost all aspects of the school and the pupils are similarly impressed. A few parents and pupils have some concerns about bullying though all agree that any harassment is dealt with swiftly and firmly by staff including midday supervisors. There are good procedures in place to deal with any instances of bullying.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Provide more effectively for children in the reception class so that they develop the personal skills to become active and competent learners.
- Refine school development planning so that all staff and governors share a clear understanding of the school's current development targets and work together across the school to bring about improvement.
- Improve the monitoring of teaching and learning to give subject leaders a better overview of standards and quality of provision.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children achieve **satisfactorily** overall in the reception classes in four areas of learning³ but **unsatisfactorily** in their personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. In Years 1 to 6 they make good progress and **achievement is good** in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education. Their **achievement is satisfactory** in all other subjects. There is very little difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils of the same age, in different classes, achieve as well as each other. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in all subjects including English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils start school with average attainment and reach well above average standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- They reach above average standards in English.
- There has been a slight weakness in the pupils' writing in tests but the school is addressing this.
- Pupils achieve well in ICT because the teachers know the subject well and make good use of the school's resources.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.0 (16.3)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	15.3 (15.1)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.8 (18.0)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.6 (28.5)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.5 (28.5)	27.0 (26.7)
Science	30.0 (30.0)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 67 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The school's results indicate that for the last four years, pupils have reached standards which are above and often well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of year 6. This marks good achievement. In 2003, the pupils reached above average standards in English and well above in mathematics and science. Their scores in national tests indicate that writing was a relative weakness and although it was broadly at the standard expected nationally, nevertheless the school has taken action, for example, longer periods of time to develop writing, to bring about improvement. Inspection findings are that target setting and very good planning have already started to make an impact. The good results come about as a result of consistently

³ Personal, Social and Emotional/Communication, Language and Literacy/ Mathematical/ Knowledge and Understanding of the World/Creative/Physical

good teaching in Years 1 to 6 and particularly good planning for teaching and learning which ensures that pupils' skills build progressively.

2. By the age of seven, pupils are already reaching above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This marks good achievement in the two years from the end of the Foundation Stage and is due to consistently good teaching and learning, especially in Year 2. In Year 2, pupils know very clearly what they need to do to improve.
3. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve satisfactorily in most areas of learning but not in the crucial area of their personal, social and emotional development and this means that they do not develop good independent learning skills which would in turn support all areas of development. This is because they are not provided with sufficient opportunities to develop personally. Whilst the teacher requests good standards of behaviour and application, they do not always comply. They are rarely 'naughty'; they simply don't show a great deal of interest in some of the activities and sometimes don't realise that they are being spoken to. Too often adults undertake tasks for children rather than requiring them to try harder. Outcomes of assessment at the end of the reception year indicate that personal and social development is not as good as some other areas.
4. Work in Years 1 and 2 is much more demanding and there are suitably high expectation of behaviour and application to work. The pupils, most of whom have good communication skills, use their language skills competently and reading and writing develop well. They also gain knowledge of subjects, for example, history and science, and begin to record their ideas and findings as their writing skills develop.
5. The good achievement, particularly in English, mathematics, science and ICT continues in Year 3 to 6. The teaching is consistent and mostly good, learning is similarly good and this accounts for pupils' good achievement. Achievement in other subjects, such as history, geography and art is satisfactory and standards are mostly as would be expected nationally. The teaching and learning is just as good as in the core subjects but there is too little time available for some of these subjects and this slows the progress which the pupils make. By contrast, the pupils have a great deal of time for the core subjects, just occasionally spending rather too long undertaking some tasks, such as handwriting, which they do not all need.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided by the school. Their behaviour and attitudes to work are **good**, they care about others and they mature well. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' responses to opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility are very good.
- Relationships in the school are very good.
- The pupils behave well.
- The pupils have good attitudes to their work.
- Attendance is good.
- Pupils are insufficiently prepared for life in a multi-cultural society and too many opportunities for the pupils' spiritual development are missed.

Commentary

6. The pupils like school and they work hard. They persevere well in lessons and there is no shortage of volunteers to answer questions or take part in discussions. The pupils' good attitudes support effective learning and this contributes to the high standards which are achieved.

7. Behaviour is good in classes from Year 1 to 6 and around school. In the Foundation Stage, behaviour is only satisfactory. Pupils are courteous, which is particularly appreciated by the non-teaching staff, and they are trustworthy. There have been no exclusions in the current or last reporting year. No oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection but concern about bullying is an issue amongst some of the pupils. This is due largely to their poor understanding of what bullying means and, in consequence, some have unnecessary concerns. The pupils concede that the staff quickly and effectively deal with any issues.
8. Good behaviour is supported by the good provision for pupils' moral development. The staff provide good role models and there are good arrangements to promote high standards of behaviour. Relationships in school are very good because the pupils and teachers listen well to each other. The pupils develop well socially because they are provided with many opportunities to act independently and to act responsibly at the many school events and performances. As a result, the school works well as a community and this provides a good basis for pupil support.
9. The pupils are sensitive to the needs of others but there are insufficient planned opportunities for the pupils to develop spiritual awareness; opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development are often missed, for example, in assemblies.
10. Attendance is consistently good and there are appropriate procedures to help maintain the standard.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.2
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Throughout Years 1 to 6, teaching and learning are consistently **good** and there is a **good**, significantly enriched curriculum. Pupils are guided and cared for **well**. The provision for the Foundation Stage is **unsatisfactory**. Teaching in the reception class has too many unsatisfactory elements. The curriculum lacks breadth in the reception class.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Teaching is good in Years 1 to 6 and overall satisfactory, though with some weaknesses in the Foundation Stage. This is an improvement since the last inspection in Years 1 to 6 and a decline for the youngest pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In most classes teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good.
- Teachers work well with their pupils; there are very positive working relationships and the pupils feel able to learn.
- All of the staff have appropriately high expectations of the pupils who try to please their teachers and achieve well.
- In the reception class, too little is expected of the pupils, they have too long to complete many of the activities and work at a slow pace. Children do not think for themselves sufficiently and rely too much on adults.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 58 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	13 (23%)	27 (46%)	15 (26%)	2 (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.

11. In the Foundation Stage teaching is satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching and learning suffers in part because of the teaching methods adopted in the reception class and the lack of challenge for many of the children. Too much time is devoted to one area of learning. For example, mathematical learning, when despite many of the pupils having already understood the ideas presented (recognition of shapes) they nevertheless had to spend almost the entire morning on very simple activities. Most activities are set out ready for the pupils with resources to hand and whilst this maybe useful in some circumstances, these pupils rarely have the opportunity to select their own learning materials or extend their thinking.
12. In sharp contrast, teaching is consistently good throughout the remainder of the school and quite often very good. Most of the lessons move at a brisk pace and the pupils are engaged from the minute the lessons start. The staff make good use of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and many of the pupils learn rapidly and well. Occasionally lessons are excellent as in one ICT lesson where Year 2 pupils created intricate designs to illustrate their ideas of Diwali fireworks. The teacher maintained a rapid pace but also knew the subject matter very well and was able to guide and prompt the pupils work. These pupils had clearly been well organised and encouraged to reflect on the quality of their work. The teacher ended the lesson very sensitively and sensibly by getting the pupils to reflect on whether ICT is the best medium for such work.
13. The vast majority of lessons are good because the teachers know the pupils well, because they use assessment information well, and plan to accommodate their needs in a variety of ways. When lessons are satisfactory, this is because the teachers are perhaps over ambitious and lose sight of the learning targets. The teachers had clearly put a great deal of effort into setting up a Victorian 'lesson' which was very enjoyable but which was not seen to significantly improve the pupils' knowledge or understanding of the period.
14. All the staff have very good relationships with pupils and this supports learning. There are very few teaching assistants to support learning.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory**. It is good in Years 1 to 6 but unsatisfactory for reception children. Opportunities for enriching the curriculum through clubs, visits to places of interest and visitors to the school are very good and have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The accommodation is used well to support the curriculum and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for science is very good.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and are able to support their colleagues in developing the subject.
- The match of teaching staff to the curriculum is good overall.
- There are too few support staff in Key Stages 1 and 2 and opportunities for intensive group work are missed.
- Too much time is allocated to literacy and mathematics throughout the school. This limits the time for other subjects.
- Resources are particularly good in mathematics, science and art.

Commentary

15. Pupils with SEN are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum and make satisfactory progress because teachers plan carefully to ensure activities are adapted for them. The amount of support staff time is severely restricted by the amount of finance available and the allocation of half an hour of support staff time each week to each teacher is insufficient to allow them to provide the individual support that might improve pupils' progress. In most cases, staff also provide challenge and support to the more able pupils.
16. The organisation of the timetable results in more time than is necessary being allocated to literacy and mathematics lessons. In addition the school has decided to allocate a further half hour each day to reading. This limits the time available for other subjects and although the curriculum is covered it lacks depth in some foundation subjects. Literacy and speaking and listening skills are used well to support all curriculum areas. The school offers a good range of activities for pupils outside the school day and provides visits and visitors to enrich the learning opportunities and this motivates pupils to work hard.
17. Subject coordinators review the curriculum and have developed curriculum guidance to ensure provision is consistent. In history and geography lesson planning is limited to identifying the knowledge to be covered and does not identify how skills will be acquired as pupils progress. Resources are at least satisfactory for all subjects and they are good for science, art and mathematics, and this supports learning well as pupils have good materials to work with. Classroom book collections are good and these supplement the central provision which is housed in the junior building. The curriculum provision for science is very good because the coordinator uses his very good knowledge of the subject to influence colleagues and to support them in teaching experimental and investigative science well.
18. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator does not have a clear understanding of the curriculum for the youngest pupils and there are too few opportunities for them to develop independence through purposeful activities. This limits the progress they make. The outdoor play area and classroom areas for the Foundation Stage are satisfactory but are not used as well as they could be to support learning in all the areas of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares well for its pupils and makes **good** provision for their welfare. The pupils feel well supported and they have adults to whom they can turn with any problems.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils have confidence in the school staff and they are well supported and cared for.
- There are good procedures to maintain high health and safety standards.
- There are good arrangements for the induction of pupils.
- Temporary absence during the school day is not recorded adequately.
- The pupils' personal development is not formally recorded.

Commentary

19. The caring attitudes of staff contribute to the high standards as they help the pupils to like school and to feel secure. Pupils feel well cared for because they are valued and their achievements are celebrated.
20. The midday supervisors are highly regarded by the pupils. The ability of the staff to provide advice on personal development relies heavily on their own knowledge, as there is no formal system of monitoring. However, the arrangements to use assessment data to provide advice on academic matters are satisfactory.

21. The school has good health and safety standards and there are regular checks and risk assessments. However, temporary absence during the school day, for example, due to a medical appointment is not formally recorded and this creates the potential for inaccurate records in the case of an emergency. Child protection procedures meet local requirements.
22. New pupils are welcomed and they settle easily into school. Parents are satisfied with the arrangements for starting school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good**, effective and productive **partnerships with parents, the local community and other schools and colleges**. The school is exploring ways of working more closely with the Local Education Authority. Parents regard the school highly and they support it well. The support they give for their children's education is a particular strength.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents support the school and their children's learning well.
- The school makes good efforts to develop strong links with parents.
- The school seeks parents' views and values them.
- The information provided by the school is good.
- There are good links with the community and partner institutions.
- The content of the governors' annual report in 2002 did not meet requirements.

Commentary

23. Parents believe school offers their children a good education in friendly, caring surroundings. A broadly similar position was reported at the previous inspection. The school has successfully promoted links with its parents. An 'open door' policy operates successfully and the staff are very accessible. This is much appreciated by the parents. The school regularly seeks parents' views through questionnaires. Most parents reply and these help the school to understand parents' wishes and concerns. Parents are well informed through good quality information which they receive regularly from the school.
24. The parents give very strong support to their child's education both in school and at home and this contributes to the high standards. A good number of parents help in classrooms and there is a strong culture of helping at home. School activities are supported well. There is an active parent teacher association which makes a significant financial contribution. This is particularly welcome given the school's poor financial position.
25. The curriculum is enhanced by links with the community. There are visits to a range of places of interest and participation in community activities such as tree planting. There is a good and developing relationship with the local church. Local businesses have provided sponsorship, for example, to create a garden. There are numerous visitors who enrich the curriculum through drama, music and by sharing their expertise.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management is **good** overall. The management of the school is **good**, the school runs well. The leadership of the school is also good and governors carry out their roles **satisfactorily**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is good. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic but do not monitor teaching and learning sufficiently closely to know how to improve standards.

- The headteacher has encouraged all the staff, parents and pupils to consider themselves partners in the school and has given them a voice which school managers listen to. Almost all staff and all of the pupils are well motivated and fully involved in the life of the school.
- The managers are completely committed to involving all the pupils and their families in the life of the school.
- Information from tests and other performance data are used well to direct school improvement. However, the current method of school development planning whilst comprehensive does not sufficiently target the absolute priorities for development nor does it facilitate a whole school approach to improvement.
- Governors carry out their duties and are supportive but they are not well enough informed to challenge senior managers or help shape the direction of the school sufficiently.
- The headteacher, supported by the staff, is managing a very difficult budget situation caused in part by falling number on roll and by the low income per pupil which the school receives.

Commentary

26. Leadership and management have improved considerably since the last inspection. The headteacher leads well; he has very high aspirations for the school and a clear view of the improvements needed. He has involved all of the staff in drawing up the school development plan but this has resulted in the plan having so many targets that it is unachievable in the envisaged timescale. The headteacher is creating a much longer-term development plan to focus all the staff on the same issue and thus bring about whole school improvement. Plans for improvement are based, wherever possible, on good analysis of the school performance.
27. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other staff give generously of their time and energy to participate in school events, of which there are many. By leading the school in this way and modelling inclusive behaviour, the parents and the pupils understand the staff's commitment to the school and they too are fully involved in the life of the school. The headteacher has encouraged all staff to take responsibility for school improvement by expecting planned developments in all subjects. This has built their capacity to manage the curriculum.
28. The governors carry out their roles satisfactorily and they are very supportive of the school. They have a good understanding of the school's difficult financial position. They understand the strengths and weakness of the school but are not sufficiently involved in helping shape the direction of the school or challenging and supporting management.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	651,553	Balance from previous year	-18,455
Total expenditure	648,931	Balance carried forward to the next	-15,833
Expenditure per pupil	1,721		

29. The school runs well on a day-to-day basis and staff are enabled to do their work properly because of the smooth running of the school. The school currently has a financial deficit at the end of the year. This is being reduced slowly but progress is hampered by the situation of falling numbers of pupils which has meant losing teaching staff in the last two years. The financial difficulties of the school are further exacerbated by the fact that there are separate school buildings, with separate costs and a very low income per pupil compared with schools nationally. Because of the lack of finance, the school has not managed to follow the national trend of employing additional teaching assistants. The teachers have nevertheless managed to maintain standards through consistently good teaching.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision is **unsatisfactory**.

- Standards are average by the end of the reception year but the majority of children do not achieve as well as they should in their personal and social development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- The curriculum is not balanced and insufficient time is allocated to some areas of learning.
- The quality of teaching has too many unsatisfactory features in the reception class for example, frequently, the activities provided do not interest or challenge children and do not motivate them to learn.

The quality of provision has deteriorated since the last inspection but it is better in the mixed age class than in the reception class because expectations of children's personal development are higher.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Expectations are not high enough.
- Insufficient time is allocated to this area of learning.

Commentary

30. By the end of the reception year children achieve the Early Learning Goals, which are those expected nationally for their age in this area of learning. They dress and undress independently but they are given insufficient opportunities for independence in other ways. Expectations are not high enough. Frequently, they do not carry out the instructions given by the adults and so take responsibility for what they are doing. The majority of children, including those with SEN, do not achieve as well as they should. Children come to school with good attitudes to learning and are keen to please. Weekly planning does not identify specific tasks designed to support this area of learning and overall teaching is unsatisfactory in the reception class.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Appropriate attention is given to developing children's ability to read.

Commentary

31. By the end of the reception year, standards are at the level expected nationally and the majority of children are meeting expectations. They are given satisfactory support in developing early reading skills both in school and at home. They enter the reception year with appropriate communication and thinking skills and these are maintained. There is direct teaching of the sounds linked to letters and children begin to use these in their reading and writing. Overall the teaching is satisfactory in the reception class and good in the mixed reception and Year 1 class and children's achievement is satisfactory. Children with special educational needs make appropriate progress.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is direct teaching of number, space and shape.
- The tasks undertaken by children do not always support learning effectively.

Commentary

32. The standards children attain by the end of the reception year are as expected nationally. Their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with SEN achieve similarly to the rest of the class. Practical tasks are provided for children to use number and shape. They count to ten and more able children count beyond ten. They match simple regular shapes and recognise them in the packaging they find in the environment. Some of the direct teaching is satisfactory. However, the tasks provided do not always stimulate the children and they wander off to embark on other activities. Some mathematical tasks do not reinforce counting but concentrate on cutting and colouring skills and so learning is not maximised and teaching in this area is unsatisfactory.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are not enough planned opportunities for children to engage in experiences, which support this area of the curriculum.
- The environment is not stimulating and so children are not excited by their learning.

Commentary

33. At the end of the reception year the majority of children are meeting expectations but are not as secure as they should be in this area of learning. Their achievement is satisfactory. No direct teaching was observed. Medium-term planning indicates coverage of all aspects of this area of learning. Weekly planning is unsatisfactory. It does not provide sufficient time to this area or provide exciting and relevant activities to support learning. The environment does not encourage children to investigate and find out for themselves.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a secure outdoor area but it is not used effectively.
- The time allocation for use of the hall is generous but some of the activities do not meet the needs of the children.

Commentary

34. By the end of the reception year children are meeting expectations. They have appropriate control over their body movements. Children in the reception class spend long periods in the school hall carrying out directed tasks but not all of them are interested and so they do not always fully participate. They enjoy using the secure outdoor area where they develop their co-ordination; pedalling bicycles and cooperating with friends while using the vehicles for two.

However the outdoor area is not used sufficiently and some of the activities are too directed and do not enable the children to develop their imaginations in the activities they undertake.

Creative Development

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a planned range of activities.
- Some activities do not capture the children's imagination so they are not motivated to fully participate and do their best.

Commentary

35. By the age of five years, attainment is as expected nationally and achievement is satisfactory. Children are given opportunities to draw and paint in the style of Modigliani and in the reception/Year 1 class teaching is good. In the reception class children do not sustain concentration while drawing their friend in this style as expectations are insufficiently high and the activity does not capture the children's interest. There are small world and role-play resources available and children have the opportunity to retell the story of 'The Three Bears' but the resources are not stimulating or exciting enough to fire their imagination and allow them to engage in sustained and interesting dialogue with their friends or with adults.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 1 to 6.
- Literacy skills effectively support work in other lessons.
- Pupils make good progress and work hard.
- Individual pupil targets are not sufficiently challenging in some cases.
- Subject coordinators have not had sufficient opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across all year groups.
- Lessons are too long, especially in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

36. Pupils enter school with attainment similar to that expected nationally. By the age of seven pupils have made good progress and attainment in reading and writing is above the expected level. This good progress is continued in Years 3 to 6. In the 2003 tests results were good in English overall and in reading in particular. However, attainment in writing was below the expected levels. The current Year 6 pupils are working at the expected level in all aspects of English including writing. This improvement in writing reflects the school's decision to focus on writing skills in literacy lessons.

37. The pupils are attentive and behave well in lessons. They are willing to contribute their ideas and speaking and listening skills are well developed. Teachers provide a good range of activities carefully matched to pupils' abilities and this ensures that pupils of all abilities make good progress. Teachers have a good knowledge of the curriculum and carefully track pupils' progress through regular assessments. However, the targets identified for individual pupils are frequently limited and easily achieved, and do not reflect the high expectations that teachers have in lessons.

38. Leadership and management of English are good, though coordinators do not monitor teaching and learning across the whole school and therefore their knowledge of the quality of education is slightly limited. The two subject leaders have a good understanding of how the school can develop the subject and improve standards further. As a result they have identified writing for development this year and positive results are already evident throughout both key stages. Classrooms have a satisfactory range of books and other resources to support the curriculum but there is no library in one building.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

39. Literacy skills are well used to support work in other lessons. The teachers plan opportunities to develop speaking and listening, reading and writing skills in other subjects and this helps to raise standards.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching is good with some very good features.
- There are good assessment procedures and pupils' progress is tracked effectively as they move through the school.
- The subject leaders do not have an overview of the quality of teaching to inform their strategic planning.

Commentary

40. Standards are above the national average by the time pupils are seven and 11 years old. Their achievement is good throughout Years 1 to 6 due to the good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as the rest of the class, as teachers provide them with work which meets their needs. There has been a good improvement in standards since the last inspection. Seven year olds now do well and more of the 11 year olds are achieving at higher levels. The improvement in standards is due partly to the improvement in the quality of teaching, and also to the assessment and tracking procedures, which give teachers a clear picture of what pupils need to do to improve.
41. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers are confident and use the national guidance well. They encourage pupils to demonstrate a range of strategies in both oral and recorded work. Direct teaching is good, explanations are clear and structured and so pupils understand new concepts. The tasks, which help pupils learn, are challenging and engage the pupils effectively. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and so they do their very best. Relationships are good and pupils are encouraged and respond positively. Pupils work in ability groups and this helps teachers to match lessons well to pupils' needs.
42. National test results are analysed and the findings acted upon to improve the provision for groups and individuals. Pupils' progress is tracked and they are given targets to help them improve. This process is in the early stages of development.
43. The coordinators have an overview of standards from their analysis of the assessment procedures. They do not have an overview of teaching and this impacts negatively on their strategic planning for improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

44. Mathematical skills are used satisfactorily across the curriculum. Information and communication technology has been used for data handling. Appropriate use is made of measuring skills in science and design and technology and number lines in history. Most teachers use mathematical vocabulary well and support pupils in using mathematical vocabulary correctly in their speech and writing.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good curriculum which covers all areas of science and most teachers expect pupils to record their own ideas and deductions.
- There is very good provision for experimental and investigative science.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and often very good.
- The subject is very well led and the subject leader is knowledgeable and is able to support the other teachers. However, lack of direct monitoring of teaching and learning takes some of the precision from the leader's knowledge of the standards achieved and the quality of provision.

Commentary

45. The school curriculum is well planned and organised. The topics which the pupils are taught cover all of the areas of the curriculum and the work has been planned so that the pupils have a comprehensive experience of investigative and experimental science. This gives them a good insight into scientific ideas and principles and they learn to apply their knowledge in a range of situations.
46. The quality of teaching is good and this can be seen in lessons and in the work which the pupils have completed in the past. The teachers in Years 3 to 6 in particular, mark the pupils work well, adding comments to the work which explain difficult ideas and which help the pupils to improve in the future. In the best lessons seen, the teachers take the time to question pupils thoroughly; questioning to steer thinking rather than giving pupils the answers.
47. The subject leader has a good knowledge of science and has developed the leadership role very well. He supports the other teachers with advice and guidance and reviews the work of the pupils as far as he is able. Recent improvements to the provision have included the development of improved ways to check how well the pupils are doing. This is very useful for the teacher in helping to plan future lessons. The subject leader does not however monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and does not therefore have an overview of how successful the lessons are.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching staff are confident teaching ICT and make good use of the facilities.
- The computer suite allows whole classes of pupils to have reasonable access to computers.
- The curriculum is planned well and all pupils experience all aspects of the subject.
- Computers are used regularly in classrooms to support learning.
- The use of ICT to support learning across a range of other subjects could be further extended.

Commentary

48. Pupils reach good standards by the end of Year 6. Many of them demonstrate good confidence with computers because they have had plenty of experience of using them and become familiar with various programs during their time in the school. This expertise builds gradually over the years and by the time they reach the upper part of the school, some pupils use programs very effectively. Some of them have clearly extended their learning at home.
49. The computer suite is a very good facility for the pupils, though being located in the smaller of the two buildings; most of the classes spend some time in getting to it. However, as the class sizes have grown so the amount of time each pupil has using the computers has diminished and some of the classes now push the suite beyond its effective limit. For example, three pupils to one computer is not the most effective use of time.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

50. Some of the teachers use ICT well to support learning in a range of other subjects. The Year 3 to 4 classes for example were creating business cards for a Tudor monarch thus using and reinforcing their historical knowledge and using their literacy skills to good advantage. Well planned work was seen throughout the school.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision for geography is **satisfactory**.

51. It was not possible to observe lessons in geography so it is not possible to make a judgement on standards, teaching and learning. An analysis of teachers' planning and a small amount of work in books, together with a discussion with year 6 pupils indicates that good use is made of visits to support pupils' learning. Consequently pupils have a reasonable understanding of the local area. Whilst the coverage of geography is satisfactory there is not enough planned development of geography skills such as mapping. The coordinator does not check up on the quality of teaching and is not able to best advise colleagues of how to bring about improvement.

History

Provision for history is **satisfactory**.

52. Only one lesson was observed in history and the judgement is supported by an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with Year 6 pupils and the subject coordinator. It is not possible to judge the quality of teaching but work indicates that standards are as expected nationally and pupils demonstrate a good level of knowledge about different periods in history. Their work is supported by visits and pupils clearly enjoy history lessons. In the work seen, pupils had made good use of their developing literacy skills. The scheme of work lacks detail and there is no agreed plan to ensure that pupils systematically build their historical skills.

Religious Education

The provision for religious education is **good**. Three lessons were observed during the inspection. Pupils' work and teachers' planning were also seen and discussions took place with Year 6 pupils and the subject coordinator.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- The curriculum is good and enriched by visits to churches and visitors to the school.

- There have been no opportunities for the coordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

Commentary

53. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate a good understanding of the nature of festivals and suggest a new one based on the familiar story of 'Elmer'. They show good knowledge of festivals in Christianity and Hinduism. In Year 5, pupils reflect on the nature of forgiveness and show good knowledge and understanding of the Christian message. Their prayers indicate their sense of responsibility. Teachers in Years 1 to 6 show good skills of questioning and provide good role models. This supports pupils as they develop their skills and understanding. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has good ideas for developing the subject further but has not had the opportunity to monitor standards of teaching and learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and design and technology

The provision in art and design and design and technology is **satisfactory**.

The organisation of the curriculum is such that art and design and design and technology are taught alternately during the term. During the inspection the majority of lessons were art and design. No judgements were made about design and technology.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are as expected nationally in art and design.
- The curriculum is good for art and design.
- Pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy being creative.

Commentary

54. Pupils reach satisfactory standards in art and design at both seven and 11 years old. The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Discussions with pupils' in Year 6 indicate they really enjoy the opportunity to be creative. The work on display shows their application to carrying out the tasks carefully.

55. There is a good scheme of work for art and design, which is used effectively. The guidance includes information on a progression of skills as pupils move through the school. This is helpful and ensures pupils make appropriate progress throughout the school. Year 4 pupils made coil pots with clay but when a similar task was provided for pupils in Year 6, there were higher expectations that the coils be merged to make a smooth pot. The entire scheme of work is linked to examples of work by artists and so creativity is focused. However, at times this does not allow the pupils to make independent selections of how best to represent their ideas or give them opportunities to develop their own imaginations. There is a good range of work in both two and three dimensions. For example, figures in the style of Giacometti are made from wire frames and the designs of William Morris inspire stencilling.

56. There are good links with other areas of the curriculum especially history where pupils create miniature portraits in the style of the Tudor artist Hilliard. There are also links with ICT.

57. Medium-term planning indicates that the design and technology curriculum is well balanced and follows national guidance and the provision is sound. Currently, the coordinators do not have the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning to inform strategic planning.

58. The quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection and standards achieved by the oldest pupils have improved in art and design.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**. Very little music teaching was seen and therefore it is not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching or the standards achieved other than in the performance elements of music. When encouraged to do so, pupils sing very well, breathing properly, phrasing the songs appropriately and singing the words clearly. They control their voices well and, even to the liveliest of accompaniments, resist the temptation to shout. They have a broad experience of composition and performance. There is a great deal of support for music outside the curriculum either through very well attended clubs for choir and recorder or through musical tuition.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All aspects of the curriculum are developed well and the provision is good.
- The curriculum is enriched through extra curricular activities and participation in sport.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The teachers in Years 3 to 6 do not have sufficient knowledge of the skills that pupils have gained in Years 1 to 2.

Commentary

59. Standards are in line with those expected nationally for the majority of pupils. A significant minority of pupils' achieve higher standards in specific areas. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection and all were in Years 3 to 6. All pupils including those with special educational needs achieve at least as well as they are capable. Pupils are confident in the water and swim at least 25 metres.
60. The quality of teaching and learning is good, lessons are lively and pupils are engaged well. The teachers though, have too little knowledge of what pupils can already do at the start of the year, especially as they transfer from Year 2 to Year 3 and they repeat things they have already learnt. Many teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the skills they teach. Where teaching is very good there are high expectations and pupils perform gymnastics skills carefully with good thought given to the sequence and a variety of levels and tensions evident. There is very good teaching of specific skills for games. The development of the invasion game of hockey is through incremental steps so all can be successful in their skills. Pupils are expected to think about the tasks they are undertaking.
61. There is a wide range of additional activities available outside the school day and a large number of both boys and girls participate. Teams and individuals have been successful in sporting fixtures against other schools. Expertise has been increased through the involvement of sport professionals.
62. Currently, there is no monitoring of teaching and learning to help the subject manager develop strategic plans for improvement or ensure continuity between the two sites. The quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

63. There was not enough evidence to report this area individually, but one lesson sampled. The teaching and learning was good. The pupils enjoy this subject which is carefully planned to ensure a full coverage of social and health related issues. Planning indicates that all pupils have regular PSHE lessons.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
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	4
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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