

INSPECTION REPORT

COOKHAM DEAN C OF E AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Maidenhead, Berkshire

LEA area: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Unique reference number: 109960

Headteacher: Miss P Church

Lead inspector: Mr M Kerly

Dates of inspection: 23 – 25 March 2004

Inspection number: 260735

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	139
School address:	Bigfrith Lane Cookham Dean Maidenhead Berkshire
Postcode:	SL6 9PH
Telephone number:	01628 482734
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Richard Craggs
Date of previous inspection:	12 October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Cookham Dean CE Aided Primary School is a small school with 139 children on roll aged five to 11 years. It is in a small residential village in rural Berkshire near Maidenhead and has four distinct and separate buildings either side of a quiet country lane: a 19th century multi-purpose hall and two teaching areas, a 1930s built school house which now provides the administrative accommodation on two floors, a modern building with two classrooms and a relatively new semi-permanent block with three classrooms. In addition there are tarmac areas and a large playing field. Almost all the children live in privately owned houses, some on substantial plots within areas of natural woodland and National Trust owned common land. The majority of the children live on the northern fringes of the prosperous town of Maidenhead. Very few of the pupils qualify for free school meals and the proportion of those with special educational needs at 14 per cent is well below the national average. Only one of these pupils has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. There are three pupils for whom English is an additional language but they are no longer at an early stage of English language acquisition. There are no asylum seekers and no refugees. In the years 2000 and 2002 the school received School Achievement Awards and it is currently involved in the School Sport Co-ordinator Programme.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12783	Martin Kerly	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education
14324	Michael Hudson	Lay inspector	
22778	Anne Shannon	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs English as an additional language
27698	Gordon Phillips	Team inspector	Science Geography History Personal, social and health education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Cookham Dean CE Aided Primary School is a very good school. It is well led and provides good value for money. Pupils achieve well. They enter the school with well above average attainment and leave with well above and in some cases high levels of attainment.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards achieved in speaking and listening and reading are high in comparison with national averages; standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the school as a result of very good teaching, and their own very positive attitudes and behaviour.
- Whilst standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above national expectations by Year 2, overall achievement in the junior years is unsatisfactory with standards achieved barely in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6.
- The pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Standards in singing, history, geography and art and design are well above national expectations.
- Elements of the accommodation are unsatisfactory and impact on the quality of the provision.
- The leadership by the new headteacher is already good as is the governance of the school.
- Some leadership and governance roles and responsibilities are unclear and there is an inappropriate distribution of responsibilities.

The school has improved well from the time of the previous inspection, maintaining and improving on the previous above average standards and good teaching and successfully addressing the weaknesses identified particularly in terms of monitoring class teaching, establishing a whole-school curriculum plan, and monitoring pupils' personal development. However, despite significant developments in ICT provision, standards achieved by the end of Year 6 have not improved as much as expected, and progress in improving the accommodation has been slow.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - exceptionally high; 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 in '99

Pupils of all abilities achieve well during their time in school. Their well above average attainment on entry is built on well in the short time in the reception class so that almost all children are in line with national expectations and many above when they enter Year 1, particularly in personal and social development, oral and reading skills. In Years 1 and 2 good achievement is maintained in all subjects. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils achieve well in all subjects except ICT where too few exceed the national expectations by the end of Year 6. **Pupils' attitudes to school are very good as is their behaviour. Their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education across the school is very good. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. This is particularly so for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but there is also some very good teaching in other subjects. Teachers plan imaginative activities for the pupils and have appropriately high expectations. The pupils' very positive attitudes to their work and their very good relationships with teachers and teaching assistants contribute to a very good learning ethos in all classes. There are good whole-school systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress. The unsatisfactory accommodation for the Foundation Stage children, and in the Year 5 classroom inhibits the range of teaching and learning styles.

Curriculum provision is very good overall. In the Foundation Stage provision is good within the classroom but constrained by inadequate outdoor facilities limiting the curriculum experiences. Curriculum strengths across the school include the breadth of rich experiences, very good opportunities to participate within the performing arts and the exceptionally wide range of extra-curricular activities. The teacher to pupil ratio is very advantageous. The school works very hard to overcome the inadequate library facilities, a poorly configured ICT suite and small hall, thus minimising their impact on the curriculum experiences.

The school has good procedures for the care, guidance and support of all pupils. All the pupils are very well known by the staff and they receive very good help and guidance.

The very good links with parents and the community impact very well on pupils' learning. The contribution parents make to pupils' learning and aspects of school life is excellent. There are good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed. Leadership by the newly appointed headteacher is already **good**. Governance of the school is also **good**. The school is managed **effectively**.

The very recently appointed headteacher has quickly established herself as a good leader with a very clear vision for the school and high expectations of all partners within it. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well led. Some leadership and governance roles and responsibilities are unclear and there is an inappropriate distribution of responsibilities. There is a very effective commitment to inclusion with all pupils equally valued and provided for. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Long-term planning to improve the inadequate accommodation has not been fully co-ordinated and communicated in the past but is now clearly established. Effective management and administration help to ensure the school operates smoothly.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have very positive views about the school. Almost all parents feel pleased with their children's progress, and all value the teaching, leadership and support given to their children within a caring and supportive ethos. The inspection team agrees with all of these views. The large majority of pupils report liking school, their lessons and their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things this very good school should do to improve further are:

- Improve standards achieved in ICT during the time spent in the junior years.
- Move swiftly to improve the accommodation in relation to the outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage children, the classroom for Year 5, the library, hall, ICT suite and the administration block.
- Review and clarify leadership roles to ensure an effective and fair distribution of responsibilities between governors, senior managers and teachers.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The children's standards of attainment are well above national expectations on entry to the school. Achievement overall by pupils of all abilities is good throughout their time in school. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above the national average in all the core subjects and by the end of Year 6 these well above average standards have been maintained.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening and reading are high by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Whilst standards in ICT are above national expectations by the end of Year 2, achievement in the junior years is unsatisfactory with standards barely in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6.
- Achievement in all years across the school is good with pupils of all abilities making good progress over time.
- Standards in singing, history, geography and art and design are well above national expectations.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively and achieve well throughout their time in school.

Commentary

1. Results from the most recent national tests in the summer of 2003 show that standards in Year 2 in reading, mathematics and science were high in comparison with the national average, and well above similar schools. In writing standards were well above the national average and marginally above similar schools although relatively few pupils exceeded the national average. Standards in Year 6 were high in English in comparison with the national average, and well above similar schools; in mathematics they were well above the national average and similar schools and in science standards were well above the national average and above similar schools.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003¹

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.0 (32.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.7 (31.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.5 (32.0)	28.6 (28.3)

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

2. The upward trend in Year 2 has been above the national trend. In Year 6 the trend has reflected the national trend whilst the absolute standards have been maintained well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Inspection evidence of standards seen and the school's own performance data indicate that these well above average standards are being maintained. This is commendable.

¹ All levels of the National Curriculum are awarded a points score. The average score for all pupils taking the test is used to grade schools in each year. The expected average points at age 11 is 27. Tables are adjusted to reflect the national average score before grading. The grades are shown in the summary.

3. The attainment of the pupils on entry to the school in their reception year is well above that found nationally, particularly in personal and social development, oral language skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. All children achieve well during their relatively short time in the Foundation Stage and they are in line to achieve and many to exceed the standards expected by the end of the reception year.
4. Many of the pupils' speaking and listening skills are high as are their reading skills. Most pupils are confident and articulate speakers and respond very well to the frequent opportunities given during lessons. These key skills support them very well and contribute to their good achievement in their written English and in other subjects across the curriculum. Good achievement in writing is most noticeable by the end of Year 6 where overall standards in writing, the awareness of audience and the imagination used are all very good. The few pupils with special educational needs benefit from the rich exchanges around them and the carefully structured support and interventions by teachers and teaching assistants, who work well together as a team, particularly during English lessons, enabling the pupils with relative learning difficulties to achieve well.
5. By the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national averages. The pupils achieve well in all year groups; this is enhanced in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 by the creation of an additional class for these subjects, allowing pupils to be taught every morning in small classes of single year groups.
6. The good achievement throughout the school is supported by the pupils' own positive attitudes to their learning as well as their very well developed key skills. An exception to this good achievement is in the junior years in ICT where pupils do not build on the good start in the early years. By the end of Year 6 standards are barely in line with national expectations, with many pupils under-achieving. This under-achievement has been related to difficulties with reliability of hardware and software, limited access to parts of the ICT curriculum, a poorly configured ICT suite and some reported lack of confidence in the subject by some teachers. At the time of the inspection most of these constraints had been resolved and sound learning was taking place in ICT lessons in the ICT suite and in classrooms.
7. All pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to the targets set for them in their individual education plans. Some make very good progress and are taken off the register. Those who don't make expected progress have further provision that may involve outside agencies. Almost all the pupils on the register at present are supported exclusively by the school and outside agencies are not needed. There is no formal register of gifted or talented pupils, although the school recognises that they have some very able pupils and their needs are appropriately met within routine curriculum planning and in the many opportunities afforded them in performing arts and sporting events.
8. Standards in history, geography, art and design and singing are all well above national expectations and pupils achieve well in these subjects, taking pride in the presentation of their work and joy in singing in class lessons, assemblies and when performing to their parents.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to their lessons and relationships with their teachers are **very good**. Pupils' behaviour, their personal development and their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are also **very good**. Attendance is **very good** and pupils arrive punctually.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils show great interest in all aspects of school life.
- The pupils are extremely confident and have high self esteem as a result of the successes they achieve. They are enterprising and responsible.
- Behaviour is very good and no pupils have been excluded for many years.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are very good, and their cultural development is good.

Commentary

- The school is an inclusive, well-disciplined community where all are valued equally. The pupils appreciate the broad range of activities they are offered and have very positive attitudes about the school and the activities they do. The breadth of the curriculum and the very extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities give the largest possible number of pupils the chance to achieve and this successfully enhances their confidence and self esteem.
- In lessons pupils show responsibility and individuality. They work well in groups and co-operate sensibly. Outside of the classroom pupils are given increasing amounts of responsibility as they get older. Year 6 pupils help in a number of ways and Years 5 and 6 are responsible for the much loved guinea pigs. The Environmental Club in Years 3 and 4 is very popular and helps pupils to appreciate and enhance their very attractive surroundings. Personal development is enhanced by the school council, which is in an early stage of development, and in personal, social and health education sessions. Teachers also assess the development of individuals' attitudes and confidence and pupils regularly reflect on their own progress, filling in yearly development sheets.
- The pupils' behaviour within and outside classrooms is very good. There have been no exclusions in the last year. An important feature is the very respectful and thoughtful relationships between all members of the school community.
- Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Pupils have many opportunities to reflect on the deeper aspects of life, especially in music, art and science lessons. They learn about and show respect for the values and beliefs of others, with, especially, first hand work about other religions. Although pupils are very knowledgeable about other countries and cultures their knowledge of the lives of people living in more multi-ethnic areas of this country is somewhat limited.
- Attendance is very good and very good procedures are in place to maintain and improve it. Parents fully understand the importance of education and ensure their children attend school regularly. The table below shows school attendance in the last complete reporting year. Punctuality is good and closely monitored with almost all pupils arriving promptly at the beginning of the day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided within the school is **very good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **very good** and as a result the pupils learning is **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are at least good and frequently very good in English, mathematics and science.
- Children in the Foundation Stage are well taught and learn effectively.
- Teachers plan very imaginative activities which engage the pupils and enhance their learning.
- The pupils' very positive attitudes contribute strongly to the overall quality of their learning.
- The very good relationships and behaviour enhance the learning ethos in lessons.
- The good learning in ICT in the early years is not maintained throughout the school.
- The unsatisfactory accommodation for the Foundation Stage children and in the Year 5 classroom inhibits the range of teaching and learning styles.
- There are good whole-school systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress.

Commentary

14. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. This is a further improvement from that reported at the time of the last inspection when teaching and learning were judged to be good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school and a high proportion of the lessons observed were very good or excellent.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	9	9	4	0	0	0

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

15. Teaching is consistently at least good and frequently very good throughout the school in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In all three of these subjects teachers plan very effectively, frequently for the different ability groups within the class, and use a range of imaginative and stimulating activities which capture the imagination of the pupils. For example in a Year 1 mathematics lesson the pupils were totally absorbed in a practical activity comparing the weights of different objects, having enjoyed some challenging counting activities at the beginning of the lesson; in a Year 4 English lesson pupils were inspired by a most imaginative introduction to an English lesson using music, poetry and visual stimulation to establish empathy for a character in a crisis in the jungle; and in science Year 6 pupils were absorbed and enthused when challenged in groups to solve a problem building electrical circuits. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and demonstrate enthusiasm for the subjects which is communicated to the pupils and impacts on their learning. The pupils are taught English, mathematics and science in single age classes throughout the school; this is achieved in the junior years through the creation of an additional class each morning. This arrangement has a positive impact on the quality of learning as teachers are able to carefully match work to pupils' needs and the class sizes are small enabling substantial individual attention for each pupil. However, the very cramped conditions for the Year 5 class inhibit the range of teaching and learning styles that can be used and restrict the teacher's access to work alongside pupils. A scrutiny of pupils' mathematics work over the year showed that in some lessons in some year groups the work set is not always varied sufficiently to ensure that pupils of all abilities are appropriately challenged.
16. Within the Foundation Stage, whilst overall teaching and learning are good, the learning is constrained by the inadequate accommodation and the absence of a secure area outside for routine use for a range of activities. The class teacher makes very good use of the classroom facilities for these children but an area between the two classrooms to which the reception year children are frequently withdrawn cannot be set up for practical and investigative learning as it is a thoroughfare between two classrooms, the main entrance and the toilets.

17. There are many other very good features within the teaching and learning in subjects across the curriculum. In many lessons teachers prepare stimulating and imaginative activities which motivate the pupils. Teachers regularly explain the purposes of the lesson and ensure that the activities directly relate to these learning intentions. Examples of very good teaching with imaginative activities include the Foundation Stage pupils administering routine hygiene on their dolls following a healthy meal they had prepared; in Year 1 pupils showing real wonderment and excitement at the way a tuning fork vibrates, and pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 responding to the teacher's very good subject knowledge, enthusiasm and high expectations in a singing lesson, where they all enjoyed the notion of performing together to a high standard.
18. Another very good feature is the very positive learning ethos in all classrooms. A number of elements combine to produce this positive ethos; they include the very good relationships between the teachers, teaching assistants and their pupils; the pupils own very positive attitudes to themselves, each other, their work and the school; and the very well presented classrooms celebrating the pupils' achievements, encouraging them further and giving them helpful prompts and guidance related to current points being taught.
19. The teaching in ICT is good overall within the early years in school, with effective preparation in the classroom before the pupils work in the ICT suite on purposeful activities. These activities are carefully related to work in other subjects; for example in a Year 2 lesson pupils were creating data bases using data collected from a geography lesson. Pupils learn well in these lessons, although some of the most able are not always fully challenged. Whilst no lessons were observed in Years 4, 5 and 6 the evidence of unsatisfactory achievement in ICT by the end of Year 6 indicates that the good learning in the younger classes is not being maintained in all aspects of ICT.
20. Pupils with SEN are given effective support by the headteacher, who acts as the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) and by the teaching assistants. These assistants play an important role in managing the children and guiding them in activities. All have very good relationships with the children and they offer unobtrusive but effective support and as a result pupils with SEN make good progress. The assessment of the needs of these pupils and of their progress is good and their individual education plans contain clear short-term targets which are referred to during some lessons.
21. Learning is supported well by the good whole-school assessment practices. In many classes there are relatively few pupils enabling the teachers to spend substantial time with each pupil. During lessons teachers successfully use a range of effective assessment strategies; lessons frequently begin by inviting the pupils to reflect on what was learnt during the previous lesson; at the beginning of new units of work teachers encourage the pupils to discuss what they already think they know about a concept or topic, helping the teachers to adjust plans to match the pupils' levels of understanding. Also during some lessons teachers involve all the pupils in the use of mini-whiteboards or number fans to record their responses, showing the teacher at a glance exactly who has understood the point in question. Most of the work produced by pupils is marked thoroughly with constructive comments about how to improve. In English, mathematics, science and ICT there are well structured regular assessments and records kept so that teachers can track their pupils' progress over time. This contributes to maintaining appropriately high expectations and the ability to match work to the needs of particular groups of pupils. Assessment procedures in other subjects are less formally structured. However, teachers produce very good annual reports for parents which accurately describe individual pupils' achievements and identify some next steps to work at. Another good feature of assessment is an established whole-school procedure for monitoring and recording the pupils' personal development to which the pupils themselves are encouraged to contribute. Pupils have literacy targets; however, they do not have targets in mathematics and are less clear about what they need to do to improve, especially in the junior years. Homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend learning. Parents contribute to this very conscientiously and many maintain a dialogue with the class teacher.

The curriculum

The school provides a **very good** curriculum that enables the pupils to achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a rich and varied range of learning activities.
- Provision for English, mathematics and science is very good.
- A very good curriculum plan has been developed in other subjects.
- Good use is made of local resources, sport coaching and business links to enrich the curriculum.
- An exceptionally large range of clubs is available outside of the school day.
- The quality of classroom displays makes the school most attractive.
- Aspects of the accommodation are unsatisfactory and have a detrimental effect on provision in the Foundation Stage, in ICT and physical education and for one group of older pupils in English, mathematics and science.

Commentary

22. The curriculum is very good, due to a broad and relevant range of activities and experiences that are planned to help the pupils learn successfully. The main strength of the curriculum is the high quality of provision for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This quality has enabled pupils consistently to achieve well in national tests while also developing their skills in the creative aspects of these subjects. The very good development of already high levels of speaking and listening also helps pupils to think about and discuss very well in other subjects.
23. At the time of the last inspection it was noted that the school had not developed a coherent plan for the remainder of the curriculum. Much work has been done in the intervening period and a very comprehensive programme has been developed to ensure coverage and continuity in all subjects including the humanities and creative arts.
24. Pupils benefit from a very large range of enriching opportunities. Within the curriculum there are special events and weeks, for example a range of regular arts events. There are frequent visitors to the school and an extensive range of visits to sites of interest in the immediate and more distant locality. There are many clubs outside of school hours, covering a particularly large range of activities for a relatively small school. These include the whole range of sporting activities, art, music, ICT and science, necessitating considerable commitment from the whole staff and parents. The school grounds are also well used with areas for guinea pigs, an excellent pond and good play and sporting areas. A weakness in the outdoor curriculum provision is for the relatively few pupils in the reception year for whom there is no specially designated secure area in which to work during lessons.
25. A particular feature of the school is the high quality of display. This is prominent in all full-time classrooms and makes them very stimulating and rewarding places in which to work. The quality of the learning environment is at least good in all classrooms; the Year 1 and Year 3 classrooms are outstanding examples of stimulating primary teaching areas.
26. The school makes good provision for children with SEN throughout the school. Procedures are well organised. The requirements of the New Code of Practice for SEN are fully met. The co-ordinator works effectively with all members of staff. The headteacher is responsible for organising the support the SEN pupils have and she ensures that they have full access to the curriculum. Individual targets are reviewed regularly to monitor each pupil's progress towards the learning targets and to set new ones. The school also ensures that provision matches the needs identified in the individual education plan of any pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Needs.
27. There are significant problems with accommodation in several parts of the school. Teachers work hard to minimise their impact on the overall quality of curriculum experienced by the pupils

and they use well the overall good range of learning resources. One of the areas used to withdraw the children in the reception year is inadequate to meet all their needs. It is basically a hallway that others have to pass through in and out of classrooms and when visiting the toilet. Development in ICT has been severely limited by the unreliability of resources, both hard and software, and the shape of the teaching space used as an ICT suite. Even more significant is the classroom space used by Year 5 for English and mathematics and by Year 6 for science. This area is unsuitable for teaching more than a small group of pupils and totally inadequate for the numbers it has to house. Pupils have real difficulties moving around the classroom and carrying out practical work, and the teacher is unable to get alongside many of the pupils to check upon their progress. It is a tribute to the behaviour of the pupils that they manage to work so well in an area that is unacceptable in the 21st century. The use of this small area is a direct consequence of the commendable commitment to teach English, mathematics and science in individual year groups throughout the school. The deployment of an extra teacher every morning boosts further the overall number of teachers to a very advantageous number, with almost all classes being little more than 20 pupils. The multi-purpose school hall is relatively small, limiting its use for gymnastics and dance, and the area designated as a school library is inadequate.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **good** overall with some very good features. The provision of support, advice and guidance for pupils is **very good**. Pupils' involvement in the school's work is **very good** and their views are properly valued and acted upon.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pastoral care and welfare are very good and arrangements for medical provision are good.
- Child-protection procedures are very good.
- Health and safety procedures are good overall with some minor aspects requiring attention.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are very good.
- Pupils' induction arrangements are good.

Commentary

28. The staff team knows the pupils very well and pastoral care and welfare have a very high priority. Pupils feel nurtured and secure. Provision for accidents, illness and medicines is good. Sufficient numbers of staff have up-to-date first-aid qualifications. Child protection procedures are very good and the child protection officer is very diligent.
29. Health and safety procedures are good overall, but some aspects require attention, particularly in relation to securing the deep pond and updating the health and safety policy. The risk-assessment inspections are not well structured and evacuation procedures are to be revised. Cleanliness is good and hazardous substances are well managed. All members of staff are aware of health and safety issues and police and fire officers are invited to speak to the pupils at assemblies. Equipment inspections are up-to-date.
30. The pupils receive very good support, advice and guidance. The social and personal development of all pupils is very closely monitored and their achievements are recorded. Any pupils who have difficulties are given very good additional support as they progress through the school. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and pupils are very happy to confide in their teachers if they are worried or upset.
31. Induction arrangements for new pupils are good. The school has close links with local play groups. Reception year staff team visit the groups and children from play-groups come into school to play and listen to stories. New parents are made very welcome and when their children start school they are given a very helpful booklet about life in the reception class. Induction procedures further up the school include a mentor system.

32. Pupils are very closely involved in the school's work and development. Their views are sought through discussions, assemblies, and class and school councils. Pupils views are properly valued and where appropriate acted upon, football in the playground being an example. Pupils are very pleased with the part they play in school life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parental links including information to parents are **very good**. Parents' contributions to their children's learning and their involvement in school life are **excellent**. Community links within the local area are **very good**. Links with other schools and colleges are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information given to parents including that on pupils' progress is very good.
- The school regularly consults parents and their views are highly valued.
- Parental complaints are dealt with very effectively.
- The school and the local community are very well integrated.
- There are good educational links with other schools and good transfer arrangements.

Commentary

33. The quality of information the school gives to parents is very good. Weekly newsletters are issued and teachers are always available to speak to parents after school. There are two parents' evenings annually and an open evening for parents to see pupils' work. School reports are very good overall, although the targets for improvement could be more clearly stated. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are informative and well-structured and meet statutory requirements.
34. The school regularly seeks parents' views through telephone calls, discussions, the parent-teacher association and parent governors and helpers. Their views are highly valued. Parents are very pleased with the school's provision for their children. Any parental suggestions or concerns are dealt with quickly and appropriately.
35. The contribution parents make to pupils' learning is excellent. The school greatly values the part parents play in the pupils' education and encourages their interest in all aspects of school life. The response is excellent. Very many parents assist in school, organise after-school clubs and accompany educational visits. Sharing assemblies and school occasions such as concerts are very well attended. Parents help their children with homework and keep homework diaries. The parent-teacher association is very active and runs a variety of extremely successful fund-raising and social events. The home-school agreement is very good and parents comply with their undertakings. Parents have shown great interest in the proposals for improving the accommodation; a recent public meeting led by the governors was very well attended with many views expressed.
36. Community links within the local area are very good. The school has very strong links with the parish church and pupils attend services throughout the year, including Harvest Festival, Christmas and Easter and the Leavers' service in July. The vicar and local Methodist minister lead assemblies. The school takes part in village activities such as the annual fete and the choir sings at the nearby retirement home. Local people are very proud of the school and support its activities. Pupils donate to national charities and local appeals. Educational visits within the area and beyond greatly enrich the curriculum.
37. Links with other schools and colleges are good. The transfer arrangements for pupils to some secondary schools are well established, but the links to others are appropriately only activated after pupils have been accepted. The school advises parents about their choice of secondary school and makes sensitive arrangements for those pupils whose parents have elected for them

to apply for a place in a selective grammar school. Secondary school and college students regularly undertake school placements. Links are being developed with a school in Canada enriching the curriculum on Canada Day during the inspection.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership and management of the school are **good**. The leadership by the headteacher is **good**. The governance is **good** and the school is **well managed**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very recently appointed headteacher has quickly established herself as a good leader with a very clear vision for the school and high expectations of all partners within it.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and involves itself well in the strategic planning.
- The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well led.
- There is a very effective commitment to inclusion with all pupils equally valued and provided for.
- Some leadership and governance roles and responsibilities are unclear and there is an inappropriate distribution of responsibilities.
- Long-term planning related to improving the inadequate accommodation has not been fully co-ordinated and communicated in the past but is now clearly established.
- Effective management and administration helps to ensure the school operates smoothly.

Commentary

38. The previously reported good leadership, governance and management have been maintained. The headteacher is in her first full term in post having previously been the deputy headteacher within a highly regarded leadership team. She has very quickly established herself as an effective leader of the school with a very clear vision for the future of the school and high expectations of pupils and staff. She has a very clear understanding of the curriculum and is leading innovative initiatives to strengthen this further. She has worked quickly to establish a good working relationship with the new chair of governors and governing body, other staff, pupils and parents, all of whom are very positive about her leadership. She provides a good role model in her work with pupils and demonstrates the school's commitment to valuing all pupils equally, and ensuring those with SEN and those who are gifted and talented are provided for appropriately. The good performing arts curriculum, in which she plays a leading role, enables all the pupils to participate, successfully enhancing their self-esteem. Talented pupils are encouraged in music, art and drama and sport and perform in a variety of settings. There is currently an acting-deputy headteacher who is an experienced permanent member of staff; the newly appointed permanent deputy headteacher is expected to take up post at the beginning of the autumn term. English, mathematics and science are well led by their respective subject leaders. Although there is no long-term strategic development plan, pending the appointment of the new headteacher and deputy headteacher, there is an effective interim one year plan and a programme has been drawn up to produce a longer term strategic plan before the end of this academic year.
39. Governance of the school is good. The recently appointed chair of governors has a good understanding of the school, the role of chair and the governing body at large. He frequently and regularly visits the school and, together with the vice-chair, meets the headteacher to share issues of governance. The governing body is working effectively with an established pattern of committee meetings and full governing body meetings which are all well documented. The headteacher currently chairs three of these committees; this is not appropriate and should cease. In all other respects governors fulfil their responsibilities well and with commitment. The present governing body is very committed to improving the quality of the accommodation. It has sensibly established a working party, with a clear remit and terms of reference, to lead this key priority and is liaising effectively with the local education authority, the diocese and the parents, establishing much improved communications and a consultative approach which is welcomed by

the parents. It has both short-term and long-term proposals addressing the many limitations within the accommodation. Its first immediate priorities are to improve the teaching and learning accommodation for Year 5, followed by longer term provision of a multi-purpose hall, new library, ICT suite and administrative block. The provision for the Foundation Stage pupils needs addressing as an urgent priority. The governors have taken an appropriate lead in the recent appointments of senior managers and sensitively act as critical friends of the management team, seeking clarification and alternatives before approving policy decisions.

40. Overall the school is well managed. The headteacher is monitoring and evaluating the work of the school effectively; this includes regular observations of lessons, analysis of the performance data for individual pupils and year groups, and the scrutiny of curriculum plans. The outcomes of these evaluations are being shared with governors and acted upon by the management team. There is a rigorous target setting process based on valid data, and annual targets for pupils by the end of Year 6 are appropriately high and challenging. As yet there is no whole-school self-evaluation schedule for the year indicating all the elements and the respective roles of colleagues in its implementation. The headteacher has continued to carry a wide range of subject responsibilities since taking on her new post. A few other colleagues have considerable additional responsibilities while others, some of whom are on temporary contracts, have none. Some of the job descriptions for key staff are out of date, not reflecting relatively recent changes in the staffing structure. Performance management is in place but has yet to be extended to include staff other than teachers. Its implementation is a little constrained by the absence of some current job descriptions.
41. The management of SEN is good. Inclusion is an integral part of the school's ethos. All staff work closely with the coordinator who ensures that they are all aware of the procedures. Parents are kept well informed and are invited to all reviews. There is a governor designated as a person responsible for overseeing SEN. He is very well qualified for the responsibility and contributes much to the school's effectiveness in this area. The learning support assistants are trained and committed members of the school staff and make a positive contribution to these pupils' learning.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	368,939	Balance from previous year	31,767
Total expenditure	374,089	Balance carried forward to the next	26,617
Expenditure per pupil	2,771		

42. The governors, headteacher and bursar effectively apply the principles of best value. Financial management is good and there is sound monitoring of the budget involving the bursar, headteacher and governor's finance committee. The procedure for this monitoring is not fully formalised. The minor recommendations in the last local education authority financial audit have been implemented.
43. There are a number of significant aids to raising achievement further in this successful school. They include the leadership and high expectations of the new headteacher, the pupils' very positive attitudes to work, the very good teaching and learning and the parents' excellent commitment and involvement in their childrens' education. The main barrier relates to shortcomings in the accommodation limiting the scope for children in the Foundation Stage, the cramped room for the class of Year 5 pupils for English, mathematics and science, the configuration of the ICT suite, lack of library, small hall and inappropriate accommodation for the administrative offices.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **sound**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The attainment of the children on entry to the school is well above average, particularly in personal and social development, speaking and listening, reading, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, however the children work directly with the class teacher for only a small proportion of the week.
- Given their short time in school the children achieve well in most areas of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage with almost all achieving the nationally expected learning goals and many exceeding them.
- The children are well cared for and are helped to become confident members of the mixed age class.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory and constrains the range of curriculum experiences inside and outdoors.
- The written reports presented to parents at the end of the school year are excellent.

Commentary

44. Children are admitted to the school in the term after their fifth birthday. This is the latest statutory time, and much later than for most children across the country. At the time of the inspection, in the second half of the spring term, there were just five children in the Foundation Stage in a class with 21 Year 1 pupils. These five children were in their first term in school. Eight more children are expected to join the class at the beginning of the summer term, having had their fifth birthdays during the spring term. Some of the older Year 1 pupils will be transferred to Class 2 to make room for these new children. Children born in the summer term join the school at the beginning of Year 1 with no time in the reception year. Almost all the pupils have attended a form of nursery education before being admitted to the school. At the time of the last inspection in the autumn term of 1998 no children were attending the school within the Foundation Stage, no judgements were made and so no comparisons are possible within this report.
45. The children's attainment on entry is well above the national average. Given the relatively short time they experience in school within the Foundation Stage, the children achieve well. Achievement in **personal, social and emotional development** is good. Most of the children are socially confident, quickly make good relationships with other children and adults and have a good sense of different people's differing views and customs. They understand what is right and wrong and are beginning to use activities and resources independently, for example acting out shopping roles in the class shop as part of a mathematical development activity learning about money. They clearly enjoy their time in school and are very positive about everything they do. Aspects of their **communication, language and literacy** skills are high on arrival, and they achieve well in this area during their time in school. Many of them are very articulate; they have an extended vocabulary and talk fluently about their ideas using complex sentence structures. They listen very well to traditional stories and respond very well, for example when working with the nursery nurse in acting out roles in the story of the Gingerbread Man, recalling the story and talking about each character. They are able to think of alternative happy endings to a story with complex settings. They enjoy browsing through a wide range of books; they recognise familiar words and the names, sounds and shapes of letters which they are able to place accurately and confidently in order to make common words. Their writing skills are above national expectations and they are in line to achieve or exceed expectations by the end of the reception year. Their achievement in **mathematical development** is sound. They have a good understanding of

numbers and can successfully join in with older pupils counting in ones and twos. They count reliably and recognise the numerals 1 to 9. They are beginning to recognise coins but are not yet clear about the concept of value. They enjoy role play in the shop buying and selling tasty morsels they have previously made in their **creative** work. Their learning in this activity would benefit from more direct adult intervention. They have a good **knowledge and understanding of the world**, and achieve well in this area of learning; for example they can confidently classify foods into healthy and unhealthy categories. They enjoy arranging a healthy meal for the dolls and bears, and diligently clean the dolls' teeth after the meal demonstrating awareness of important aspects of **physical development**. During the inspection it was not possible to observe the children engaged in using large scale apparatus outdoors or in the hall to make a judgement about their control, co-ordination or use of space.

46. The class teacher takes overall responsibility for the teaching and learning throughout the day. Whilst the overall quality of teaching and learning is good the level of child/adult interaction is not consistent and there are relatively few times when the children benefit from working with the very good class teacher. They frequently join the Year 1 pupils at the beginning and end of lessons led by the teacher but during much of the day they work with the nursery nurse or a teaching assistant; this arrangement provides a very favourable adult to child ratio. Some of this time is very well used and presented, for example the time spent acting out traditional folk tales and the interventions by the nursery nurse to structure their play learning about healthy foods. At other times it is very directed and sedentary with the children having few opportunities to develop independently. There are effective systems for assessing and recording the children's progress which are used by the teacher, nursery nurse and teaching assistant. The recently introduced national assessment profiles are used very well and copies are attached to the annual reports given to parents at the end of the year. These reports are excellent, with comprehensive and accurate information specific to the individual child in all six areas of learning, based on the very effective assessment arrangements.
47. The class teacher works extremely hard and effectively to ensure the children's needs are well catered for. She provides a stimulating environment for the children within the context of a Year 1 classroom with areas specially designated for them, for example a shop, water and sand troughs and construction apparatus. A small room is frequently used by the teaching assistant and an area outside the classroom door by the nursery nurse. However, this latter area is not ideal, being an entrance hall communicating two classrooms with the toilets, and it lacks the visual and tactile stimulation young children need.
48. The outdoor provision and access is unsatisfactory severely limiting the scope for using this as an integral extension to the classroom as intended within the Foundation Stage curriculum. A door leads directly from the classroom to the outside area. However, there is no secure fencing defining an area for these young children; access to the shed containing bikes, street furniture and other outdoor equipment is muddy, the paved area is uneven and there is very little equipment routinely set up for the children. The school is fully aware of these shortcomings and has had plans to address them for some time; these have been thwarted by the uncertainties related to major re-building proposals. In the short-term insufficient has been done to address this weakness. Within these limitations the overall curriculum planning is good. The teacher uses the national Foundation Stage guidance materials well and ensures all areas of learning are systematically addressed within a topic structure.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained by the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above the national average overall and are high in speaking and listening and in reading.
- Teaching is very good and pupils' achievement is good.
- The setting arrangements providing small classes in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 have a positive impact on standards achieved.
- High standards in literacy support pupils' work in other subjects.
- The monitoring of the subject is good.
- The library provision is inadequate.

Commentary

49. The good standards in speaking and listening and in reading and writing reported at the time of the last inspection have been improved upon, and standards in English are consistently at least well above the national average. Standards attained in speaking and listening and in reading are high. The achievement of all pupils, including those with SEN, is good, as shown in the progress over the time they are in school. The tracking of progress and the setting of rigorous targets for every pupil, contribute to this good achievement. A high proportion of pupils marginally exceeded the nationally expected standards, but relatively few attained the highest level at the end of Year 2 in the national tests in 2003. During the inspection pupils were observed working at levels well above the national average in all year groups.
50. The very good teaching and learning is a major factor in the high standards in the subject. Throughout the school teachers ensure that pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills of speaking and listening. Most pupils are confident and very articulate speakers. This is evident in their ability to ask and answer questions in well-constructed sentences and in the quality of discussion in English lessons and other opportunities, for example class School Council sessions. Teachers encourage pupils to listen carefully and to express themselves clearly. Pupils talk expressively with each other and with adults about their work and things that interest them. The school has recently become part of a new initiative to promote the skills of speaking and listening. This entails working with the local museum and borrowing artefacts, which form the stimulus for class discussion. This was observed in a Year 6 lesson in which the pupils were well prepared by their teacher to take part in a debate about the merits or otherwise of an Inca village selling a valuable icon to British explorers.
51. Attainment in reading is very high by the end of Year 2 and continues to be so by the end of Year 6. Pupils are able to read with great expression and fluency. Records are kept by teachers of pupils' achievement. Reading is taught successfully through group reading sessions with the younger pupils receiving more guidance. Pupils keep a reading log (a record of what they have read) and this must be taken home and shown to parents. Pupils' experience of good literature is developed by the careful choice of challenging texts that are used for whole-class teaching. Each classroom has a fiction library but there is no adequate central library area for the pupils to use. There are only a few shelves containing non-fiction books housed in a corner of a room, which stores musical resources. This discourages pupils from borrowing the books. The English displays around the school and in the classrooms show very good examples of different genres of writing. Some of them are examples of poetry writing and show that pupils have been taught about using figurative language to make their writing more interesting. By the end of Year 6 punctuation is good and spelling is satisfactory. This is an area the school has highlighted as a focus for improvement and a new programme to teach spelling has been introduced. Handwriting is taught throughout the school and most pupils present their work well.
52. Good support is provided for the relatively few pupils with SEN. Class teachers work closely with teaching assistants and the SEN co-ordinator to provide the necessary support in lessons. Work is well matched to their needs and the pupils make good progress. Their progress is carefully monitored helping teachers to meet their needs accurately. There is challenge for the more able pupils and support for the less able through supplementary teaching such as the Early Literacy Strategy.

Teaching in most English lessons is very good and an excellent lesson was observed in Year 1. In this lesson the teacher demonstrated an enthusiasm for the subject and a high degree of subject knowledge, which encouraged work of a high standard from the pupils. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the small classes in single age groups established throughout the school, and in particular in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 where an additional teacher is employed each morning to avoid large mixed age classes. Marking of pupils' work shows older pupils how to improve their work but some marking of younger pupils' work is over zealous and results in all spelling mistakes being corrected but no indication of how the pupils can improve their writing.

53. Learning is further enhanced in the subject through the Arts Weeks when the school employs a poet in residence to work with all the classes to produce a collection of poems. Information and communication technology is used for presenting work and Year 3 pupils were observed using special programs to develop their spelling skills. However, more use could be made of ICT.
54. The subject is led and managed well. The coordinator is well established and she monitors the subject through looking at the pupils' work and looking at teachers' planning. She is not able to monitor teaching at present but the analysis of other monitoring data is fed back into the development plans for the subject. For example, teachers now state what they expect their pupils to learn in the lesson in their planning. This analysis of data to evaluate initiatives and the focusing on the needs of particular groups of pupils has been a contributory factor in the rise in standards since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. The principles of the National Literacy Strategy have been embedded and the reinforcement of literacy skills in other subject lessons is very good. Opportunities are taken in, for example, history and geography, to develop reading and writing skills. This is a strength of the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards attained by the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above the national average.
- The quality of teaching is consistently at least good.
- The setting arrangements providing small classes in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 have a positive impact on standards achieved.
- The large majority of pupils have a very positive attitude to the subject.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- The pupils are not always clear about how they might improve their mathematics work.
- There are good teaching and learning resources which are used well in lessons.

Commentary

56. Mathematics standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are well above the national average. This is a further improvement on the above average standards reported at the time of the last inspection and demonstrates good improvement since that time. The pupils' mathematical understanding is well above the national average on arrival in school; they achieve well overall during their time in the school, including the few with SEN and those who are gifted. By the time they leave the school a high proportion of the pupils have achieved standards well above the national average and some have exceptionally high levels of understanding.
57. Pupils in Year 2, at the end of the infant years, have covered a wide range of mathematical concepts, are confident and accurate in their use of the four rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, have a very good understanding of numbers and the number system, the collection and presentation of data, the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes and

the use of standard units in measuring time, weight and distance, which they can perform accurately. They are also developing secure problem solving strategies and can solve problems, sometimes mentally, with two distinct steps.

58. Pupils in Year 6, at the end of the junior years, have a very good understanding of a comprehensive range of mathematical concepts. Their mental arithmetic skills are very high with quick recall and the ability to carry out complex calculations mentally, or when required, set them down using conventional formats, for example long multiplication. Their understanding of place value and the relationships between fractions, decimal fractions, and percentages is very good, as is their understanding of shape, including the measurement and construction of angles, area of irregular shapes, the use of brackets in algebra, and the manipulation and interpretation of data. Even the less able, who are comfortably in line with the national average for their age group, are becoming confident in the use of spread sheets on the computer to collate and present data, and are beginning to understand the difference between presenting discrete and continuous data. The pupils' very good language and thinking skills enable them to approach problem solving with confidence although there is little evidence of experience in extended mathematical investigations.
59. Teaching and learning in mathematics is consistently at least good across the school. During the inspection several lessons seen were very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan effectively and explain new concepts clearly, effectively modelling precise mathematical language and using plenty of clear visual stimulation. They use the good mathematics resources well and imaginative activities to stimulate the pupils' interest, this successfully enhances the pupils' learning which is further supported by their very positive attitudes and the very good relationships they have with their teachers. Expectations are appropriately high for almost all pupils, although on occasions the most able are not fully challenged and extended, and a scrutiny of the pupils' work over time shows that sometimes there is little difference in work set for the most and least able within a year group. Homework is used well to contribute to mathematical learning.
60. The creation of an extra class within the junior years enabling mathematics to be taught in single year groups of no more than 24 pupils significantly enhances the quality of learning and overall provision. However, the provision for pupils in Year 5 is constrained by the inadequate accommodation limiting the range of teaching and learning styles and contact between the teacher and individual pupils. Mathematics has a high profile in most classrooms with good displays of number lines, charts, key mathematical language and concepts, which are used well by the teachers to support their teaching. However, very little of the pupils' mathematics work is displayed in classrooms or around the school. Pupils' work is well presented in their books demonstrating their care and positive attitudes. In one class almost all the work is on loose sheets of paper, making it more difficult for the pupils, their teacher or parents to track progress over time.
61. There is a good range of assessment processes in place, including regular marking of work, half-termly assessment tests, and annual nationally constructed tests. All their work is carefully marked; in most classes there are helpful comments indicating how to improve further. The pupils do not have clear short-term mathematics targets to support them in their learning although the school has just introduced a clear structure for assessing and recording progress against the key objectives in each year group. The school has an established system to track each pupil's progress over time and is able to set challenging targets for the end of Year 6 based on valid data. The pupils are not yet fully aware of the targets nor what they need to do to achieve them. There are advanced plans to improve the use of ICT to manage the performance data and enable all class teachers to become more actively involved in its interpretation. The annual reports to parents are of a high quality providing accurate and detailed information with some indication of next steps for the pupils to work at.
62. The subject is well led by a teacher who has responsibility for a number of other subjects and whose classroom practice provides a very good role model for colleagues. She has effectively monitored mathematics teaching and learning across the school and provided valuable feedback and advice. She has produced helpful guidance for parents of children in each age group, on

the way pupils are taught the four rules within the National Numeracy Strategy. She oversees the purchase of high quality resources and provides consultancy support to colleagues.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Whilst the National Numeracy Strategy principles are largely adopted by the school there is no systematic planned approach to using mathematics across the curriculum. However, the pupils' very good levels of mathematical understanding and application ensure that mathematics enhances rather than detracts from their learning in other subjects. Some evidence was seen of mathematics supporting learning well in other curriculum areas, for example geography and ICT in Year 2 and science in Year 6. Effective use is made of ICT to support both teaching and learning in mathematics in specific classes across the school.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the subject are well above the national average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- There is a very good emphasis on investigative and experimental science.
- Leadership in the subject is good.

Commentary

64. Standards in science are well above the national average throughout the school. In national tests for 11 year olds, in 2003, virtually all of the pupils reached the standard expected for their age and a high proportion exceed the expected standards. The findings of the inspection confirm the continuing well above average standards. Pupils of all abilities achieve well in all classes. They show real enthusiasm for experimental and investigative work. The pupils also use their excellent speaking and listening skills to predict and speculate on the results of their enquiries in a very mature manner.

65. Teaching and learning in science are very good. All the teaching seen was very good, being very well organised and with a major focus on investigation and fair testing. Commendably every lesson in the subject during the inspection was an experiment or investigation. Although excited by the tasks set them, the behaviour of pupils was exemplary. An example of the use of enjoyable and challenging activity was seen in a Year 6 lesson. At this time of year many lessons seen for pupils of this age across the country are based on revision as pupils have national tests at the beginning of the summer term. Here, however, the need to revise facts was not based on a dry testing of knowledge on paper, but with a very stimulating activity. The pupils were given the task of creating a face, or head, with parts that moved or lit up to reinforce their knowledge of electricity and circuits. They worked very hard and knowledgeably to create faces with spinning bow ties, flashing earrings and eyes which blinked in turn. The teachers' good subject knowledge and the relatively small single age classes contribute to the very good learning throughout the school.

66. The concept of fair testing is skilfully introduced at a very early age. For example pupils in Year 2 could explain that to ensure that their friction experiment was fair they had to start their cars at the same point on the slope and make sure that the cars ran straight. A further strength of the teaching seen is the confidence of teachers to quickly amend their plans when they realise that pupils already understand a concept.

67. The curriculum is comprehensive, with that in Year 6 particularly building upon previous knowledge very well. Each unit has a built in assessment element so that staff and pupils can gauge success.

The subject leader has done very well to introduce a changed syllabus over a period to reinforce the confidence of colleagues. This change has resulted in a focus, which has increased the amount of investigative work and has raised standards. Improvement is further assured by the careful scrutiny of the results of tests, which results in provision being refocused. Good links are made with other subjects and a very good feature is the use of stimulating displays to reinforce the concept that science is exciting. The display on the senses in the Year 1 classroom, for example, is of the highest quality. A recent innovation that will enrich the work is the creation of a pond area at the bottom of the school field, and there is also a popular and well-attended environmental club that reinforces scientific knowledge while teaching responsibility. The only negative aspect of provision in the subject is the accommodation in which Year 6 pupils work. It is very cramped and experimental work would be difficult if the pupils were less well-behaved. There has been good progress in the provision of science since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

- Standards by the end of Year 2 are above national expectations.
- By the end of Year 6 standards are in line with national expectations but overall achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Unsatisfactory accommodation and hardware difficulties have impacted on the overall curriculum provision.
- The subject is well led and managed and there is a very good plan to address the well understood shortcomings within the subject.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1, 2 and 3 is good overall.
- There is a very comprehensive system for assessing and recording pupils' progress in ICT.

Commentary

68. Standards by the end of Year 2 are above national expectations in most elements of ICT; this is a significant improvement on standards reported at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 6 standards are broadly in line with national expectations. Whilst this is an improvement on the standards reported at the time of the last inspection it represents unsatisfactory achievement over the course of the junior years for most pupils and insufficient improvement over time. Achievement in the use of the internet for research, finding and extracting information is sound. Achievement in other aspects is limited, including text management, modelling, control technology and simulations. Pupils have had almost no experience of producing multi-media presentations, using electronic mail, the digital camera or controllable toys. Despite the limited experiences in school many pupils use the computer very confidently and efficiently with a proportion of them having very good keyboard skills. Almost all pupils report having access to a computer at home and a significant proportion of the older ones report having their own personal computer in their bedroom.
69. The quality of teaching and learning in the early years is good. No teaching was observed in the upper years in the ICT suite and so it is not possible to make a definitive judgement about teaching and learning although individual pupils were using computers effectively as part of other lessons in classrooms, for example, text management in an English lesson in Year 3 and data handling on a spreadsheet in Year 6. In the lessons observed teachers made good use of the time, preparing the pupils well in the classroom, with the help of a data projector, before moving across to the ICT suite. Pupils enjoy working with the computers and collaborate sensibly in pairs taking it in turns to use the keyboard. Whilst some teachers are confident in teaching ICT others recognise the need for further training and regular practice if they are to become competent and use the facilities fully. Unfortunately much of the pupils' work, previously stored on the networked machines in the suite, has been lost due to a fairly recent major malfunction of the system. However, the school has an established procedure for assessing and recording each pupil's progress which is exceptionally comprehensive. These

records clearly show the inequalities in standards achieved between different aspects of ICT, with many pupils being below national expectations in some aspects.

70. The school has a good overall curriculum plan for ICT ensuring that in the course of this academic year all elements of the National Curriculum will be covered in each year group. Difficulties with accommodation in establishing an ICT suite in a poorly configured room, compounded by hardware reliability problems have restricted the pupils' access and inhibited the overall quality of learning. The subject is well led by the headteacher who has high expectations and commitment, a clear vision and understanding of what needs to be done and a very good strategic plan for achieving it. Implementation of the plan has been somewhat thwarted by circumstances beyond the control of the school; most of these are now resolved and the school is poised to provide much improved provision. The plan includes a considerable element of staff training which needs to be seen as a priority.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. During the inspection there were good examples of the use of ICT to support learning in other curriculum areas. In lessons observed pupils were using ICT to support work in other subjects, for example in Year 3, in an English lesson, pupils were motivated in their grammar work by taking it in turns to use a word processing package, with tasks matched to different abilities. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, less able pupils were entering data on a spread-sheet, and in a history lesson pupils were making good use of information they had previously downloaded from the Internet. The school has no inter-active whiteboards in either the suite or classrooms, limiting the current contribution ICT is making to teaching and learning.

HUMANITIES

72. Although only one lesson was seen in history and none in geography during the inspection, it is possible to make judgements on provision and standards achieved based on the scrutiny of a large sample of pupils' work since September 2003, displays in classrooms and around the school, discussions with pupils, the one lesson in Year 6, the analysis of curriculum plans for each subject and discussions with the subject leaders.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in history are well above national expectations and pupils achieve well.
 - There is good use made of the opportunities to develop language skills through history.
 - The history curriculum is carefully organised in considerable detail to ensure progression and balance.
 - First hand experiences make work stimulating and relevant for the pupils.
73. The pupils' work shows that standards are well above average in the subject. Pupils in Year 6 have a very good knowledge of the chronology of British history and the major historical features of other countries studied. They are very good at evaluating information sources and picking relevant details to present in their own work. Throughout the school pupils write at length in the subject and their excellent speaking and listening skills are used to good effect in very impressive discussions. The teaching also stimulates their imagination of times past. For example a Year 6 pupil commented in a lesson on Vikings, "*The dragon head at the front of the invaders' ships coming out of the mist must have terrified the British.*" The good annual reports to parents present a clear picture of pupils' understanding and attitudes towards history.
74. The curriculum is organised so that all the classes within a Key Stage cover the same topic simultaneously. The school makes very good use of library and museum loans to take full

advantage of this and it also enables the school to hold special events to reinforce knowledge. An example of this was the obviously enjoyed 'battle' held on the school field between pupils acting as Romans and British which, in itself, is an imaginative way of enabling pupils to experience and learn about history.

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in geography are well above national expectations.
- The local environment is very well used to develop geographical concepts and to compare with other locations.

Commentary

75. Standards in geography are well above average by the time the pupils leave the school. Pupils are very knowledgeable about geographical ideas and concepts and can talk about them confidently. They are good at note taking and complete large amounts of work in the subject. Older pupils consistently demonstrate in their work how they understand how human activities influence the environment. They actively participate to improve their own environment through creating habitat, building nest boxes etc. The pupils use their experiences of travel to develop their understanding about other countries, for example, sensitively and perceptively comparing and contrasting life in Kenya with life in Britain. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taken on a residential visit to a mountainous area of north Wales, providing them with a further experience of a contrasting locality. The annual reports to parents are of the same quality as are those for history.
76. The local environment is particularly well used to make the teaching of geography relevant to pupils. Mapping skills are learned through the study of the classroom and their routes to and from school. Older residents in the community are also interviewed to develop both historical understanding and awareness of geographical change. As with the historical studies, work in geography is undertaken in blocks involving whole Key Stages to maximise the availability of resources and enable joint visits and visitors.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in art and design are well above national expectations particularly in relation to drawing and painting.
- Good curriculum planning ensures that pupils' creativity and skills develop well.
- Some good enriching experiences are provided that enliven the curriculum.
- Sketch books are not annotated with consistent effectiveness to provide good records of pupils' progress.

Commentary

77. Art and design features strongly within the school's curriculum and within cross-curricular themes. Standards in art and design are at least above national expectations and there are examples of work of a high standard displayed around the school; for example the drawings of shoes and trainers in the Year 4/5 classroom and in the Year 5/6 classroom the painting inspired by Munch's *The Scream* and

the paintings of faces inspired by the work of Picasso. The displays are frequently changed helping to ensure that pupils are constantly stimulated by fresh material and their cultural awareness and appreciation of artistic development are fostered. The pupils clearly enjoy art and design. They learn to draw, and to keep sketchbooks as they move through the school and they have experience of many art forms. There are examples of good quality work in classrooms that show how one theme is developed through different media. For example, in the Year 3/4 classroom there are paintings in the style of Cézanne that the pupils have completed after looking carefully at the shapes and colours of a bowl of fruit and drawing them in oil pastels. The same stimulus was used for textile work, weaving the colours into a simple sampler and then translated to a collage using tissue paper before transferring the design to fabric printing.

78. Younger pupils learn to mix colours and then create pictures using for example shades of blue. In the only lesson observed during the inspection, Year 5/6 pupils were engaged in making a three dimensional version of the face they had painted in the style of Picasso. The teaching in this lesson was good because it built well on previous learning and the teacher was confident and allowed the pupils to be creative in their work. There was also good support from a teaching assistant.
79. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has ensured that the scheme of work allows pupils to develop their skills systematically through the use of resources. She organises regular art competitions and weeks when art is the focus. During these weeks they have an artist in residence who inspires the creativity of the staff and the pupils and this raises the level of teaching and learning. The subject leader runs an art club during the summer term, which is open to pupils in a designated year group. Work in sketchbooks is adequate, but these books are not used consistently to experiment and develop ideas. Annotation by teachers is variable and is not a secure base for identifying progression in pupils' work.

MUSIC

80. Insufficient evidence was gathered in **music** to draw a firm conclusion about overall provision or pupils' attainment and achievement. However, evidence from a singing lesson for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 pupils, singing in assembly and during a school pantomime evening performance all demonstrated that singing across the junior years is of a high standard. The session for pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 was led very well by the Nursery Nurse who demonstrated very good subject knowledge. This made a significant contribution to the pupils' enthusiastic approach and the quality of their singing. There was good attention to pitch with effective teaching points, such as warming up the voice activities, before starting the main singing activity. As a result, pupils sang expressively and harmoniously, keeping in time well with piano accompaniment and showing an ability to sing in parts. In the two lessons observed, both in the juniors, pupils demonstrated an ability to both compose their own rhythm patterns and also to keep the rhythm going, although in neither lesson was there a high level of challenge for the more able pupils. No lessons were observed where pupils were working on compositions using tuned or un-tuned percussion. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Every pupil has the opportunity to join in the school performances of which there is one each term. The headteacher is managing the subject satisfactorily.
81. Only one lesson was observed in **physical education (PE)**, and none in **design and technology** and therefore it is not possible to make a judgement on provision, standards achieved and the quality of teaching and learning in these subject areas. Evidence was gained from the analysis of curriculum plans for each subject, discussion with the subject leaders, the scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work since September 2003 and displays in classrooms and around the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. In design and technology pupils complete several design projects a year. They are taught to use tools safely and experience handling small hacksaws and cold glue guns in their work.

There are examples of artefacts displayed around the school, for example treasure boxes in Year 2 and slippers in Year 5/6 but as these are only a selection from the class it is not possible to judge overall standards, although those on display are of a good standard. The subject was not being taught during the inspection and there was very little photographic evidence from which to make judgements. Curriculum planning shows that pupils are given an appropriate range of experiences.

83. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The school has identified design and technology as an area to develop within the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

84. No judgements can be made on the provision, standards or overall quality of teaching and learning in PE as only one lesson was seen and this had been hastily re-arranged to take place in the hall because of uncertainties in the weather.
85. There is a good whole-school curriculum plan based on a two year rolling programme intended to address the mixed age classes across the school. There are several innovative features within the PE curriculum; these include engaging a local specialist dance teacher to work alongside the teachers following an audit of teachers' training needs within the subject; involvement in a local education authority Sports Partnership project and also, the expansion of a long established annual residential visit in Years 5 and 6 to an outdoor pursuits centre in a mountainous region of north Wales. This year adventurous activities have been arranged in the local area for pupils not participating in the residential visit. There is an extensive programme of after-school clubs many of which enhance the overall PE provision.
86. There is no whole-school system for assessing and recording PE. Annual reports to parents are satisfactory, but do not give information separately on standards achieved in games, dance and gymnastics. Standards in swimming by pupils who have lessons in a local pool during Year 5 are said to be high but the school has no formal records of the pupils' achievements and no list of which pupils have successfully swum 25 metres or more. There are good resources for games and gymnastics and satisfactory outdoor facilities with large tarmac and grass surfaces, and a purpose built climbing wall. The multi-purpose school hall is small, limiting the scope for gymnastics, dance and in-door games.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. Only two short personal, social and health education (PSHE) sessions were seen and the lack of written work prevents secure judgements being made about provision.
88. In the sessions observed, teachers ensured that all pupils took part. The teaching of PSHE is an integral part of the life of the school and contributes well to the very good development of pupils' attitudes and values. Consequently, pupils are confident to express their feelings in a trusting and secure environment. Personal, social and health education are seen as important elements by the school, and curriculum experiences are taught discretely and integrally within other lessons. Topics covered include sex education, drug awareness and healthy eating. The recently introduced school council is one effective strategy through which the school is encouraging pupils to think about their responsibilities as members of a large community, contributing to the notion of citizenship. The pupils' highly developed speaking and listening skills, along with their very good social and moral development enable them to contribute well to school council class discussions. There is an effective and successful whole-school PSHE assessment process which commendably involves the pupils and tracks their progress from year to year. This is a major improvement from that reported at the time of the last inspection.
89. The school has identified PSHE as an area for further development within its recent self-evaluation.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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