

INSPECTION REPORT

Broom Barns Junior Mixed and Infant School

Stevenage

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117189

Headteacher: Mrs A Wesley

Lead inspector: Mrs Christine Huard

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st April 2005

Inspection number: 266514

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 230

School address: Homestead Moat
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
Postcode: SG1 1UE

Telephone number: 01438 354913
Fax number: 01438 722652

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mrs S Buckley
governors:

Date of previous 17th May 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Broom Barns is an average size school in the centre of Stevenage. It caters for pupils between the ages of three and eleven and most attend from the local area. Pupils are from a range of backgrounds and the area is well below average in socio-economic terms and there is some deprivation. There are 230 pupils on roll and slightly more girls than boys. Boys and girls are fairly evenly spread amongst classes but there are considerably more girls than boys in Year 3. Children join the nursery class in the September or January of the year in which they are four. When children join the school their attainment is generally well below average and a considerable proportion of the children have very low language and social skills. The school has a small percentage of pupils from ethnic minority groups, and few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. A broadly average percentage of pupils receive free school dinners although the percentage of pupils eligible is likely to be much higher than this. About fourteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is broadly average, however the school is catering for a high level of need from the time pupils enter the school and only identifies those for whom additional help is required. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Extra support is provided for pupils who have difficulties with learning, speech and behaviour.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27290	Mrs Christine Huard	Lead inspector	Science, art and design, music, The Foundation Stage.
32697	Mr Dave Smith	Lay inspector	
31222	Mrs Sue Croft	Team inspector	English, history, geography, religious education.
30244	Mr Roger Tapley	Team inspector	Mathematics, design and technology, ICT, citizenship, physical education, special educational needs, English as an additional language.

The inspection contractor was:

e-Qualitas Limited

Langshaw
Pastens Road
Limpsfield Chart
Oxted
Surrey
RH8 0RE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Broom Barns Junior Middle and Infant School provides a good education for its pupils and gives good value for money. Last summer's national test results showed that standards at the end of Year 6 were broadly average despite pupils having entered the school with standards well below average. Pupils' work clearly illustrates that they are making good progress and inspection evidence confirms that this is likely to continue. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and this ensures that pupils achieve well. The leadership and management of the school are good. There is a strong emphasis on continuous review and taking positive action on areas needing improvement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Standards in science and art and design are above average
- Standards in English are below average at the end of Year 6 although pupils make good progress from their low starting points
- Pupils' achievement is good overall because of the good teaching they receive
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good and her drive and enthusiasm are instrumental in taking the school forward
- Pupils' attitudes are good and their behaviour is very good. They are eager to learn and this helps them to achieve well
- Tasks for pupils with special educational needs are not always matched closely enough to the targets on their individual education plans
- Standards in ICT are satisfactory but the use of ICT has not yet been developed across all subjects
- The role of the foundation subject¹ co-ordinators has significantly improved over the last two years, but there is still more to do in order to give them a full overview of their subjects

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in 1999. Standards are broadly similar to those seen then at the end of Year 6, although at the end of Year 2, standards are now not as high as those seen nationally. This reflects the change in intake in the school. The school has made very good progress in the last two years with nearly all the issues raised in the previous report, although little had been done to secure improvement before that time. Subject co-ordinators fulfil their roles satisfactorily, and actions to further improve their effectiveness are identified in the school development plan.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	C	D	D
Mathematics	D	D	C	B
Science	B	C	B	B

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

Achievement is good overall. Standards over time by the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with those found nationally. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Year 6 in English are just below average, because the low starting points of the pupils

¹ Foundation subjects are: art and design, citizenship, design and technology, geography, information and communication technology (ICT), history, music, physical education.

means that a significant proportion still have difficulties with writing. Standards in mathematics are average and those in science are above average. Higher attaining pupils in all subjects do well because they are challenged by the tasks they are set. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily because they are not always provided with work that matches the targets on their individual education plans closely enough. Pupils for whom English is not their home language achieve well. Most children in the Reception class enter the school with attainment well below average. They make good progress although most will not achieve the goals expected nationally,² except in their physical development, by the time they move into Year 1. In Years 1 and 2 pupils continue to achieve well although standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils' personal qualities and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Pupils' attitudes towards their work are good. They are eager to learn and very attentive in class. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. Pupils are very polite and have good relationships with each other and the adults with whom they come into contact. Pupils are prepared well for life in an ethnically diverse society. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education.

Teaching is good, particularly in the Foundation Stage, and Years 2 and 6. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes learn well because the teachers assess their particular needs and take action to ensure they are met. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn and achieve well because the tasks set motivate and interest them. Pupils learn effectively in Years 3 to 6 because work is challenging and usually well matched to their needs. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily overall because, although they receive good support, the tasks set are not always sufficiently well matched to the targets on their individual education plans.

The school provides a good, broad curriculum. It is supported by a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which further enriches pupils' learning. The school takes very good care of its pupils. Relationships with parents are good and those with the local community are very good and benefit pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides strong, focused, leadership. She has high expectations of what the school can achieve and a very good understanding of the areas where improvement is necessary. She works very well with her deputy and together their leadership is very good. Governors challenge the school appropriately and fulfil their statutory duties. Management is very good. The headteacher successfully increases funding by applying for numerous grants and spending is focused on actions taken to raise standards. Subject leaders manage their subjects satisfactorily. However, because of the very recent development of the role, they are not yet fully equipped to deal with weaknesses in pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents are very supportive of the school and are pleased with the information they receive. The pupils enjoy school and value the support they receive from teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

² The Early Learning Goals refer to the six areas of learning covered in the Foundation Stage (Reception classes). These are: personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

Broom Barns is a good school. The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Improve standards in English
- Fully integrate information and communication technology across all subjects
- Ensure tasks for pupils with special educational needs are more closely matched to targets on their individual educational plans
- Fully develop the foundation subject leaders' roles so that they have a complete overview of their areas of responsibility

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, achievement is good. Standards are broadly average overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good because of the good teaching throughout the school
- Achievement in science is very good, and pupils complete a good volume of high quality work
- Standards in English are below those expected, but pupils achieve well
- Standards in art and design, are above average
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well

Commentary

1. Standards attained by pupils at Broom Barns are broadly average overall and this represents good achievement when compared with their attainment when they first entered the school. Documentation shows that the trend in improvement in test results is above that seen nationally at the end of Year 6. The school sets challenging targets for its own future development. The targets set for last summer were met, and the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 exceeded expectations in mathematics. Targets for results this year have been lowered slightly in both English and in mathematics but are still very challenging given the make up of the group. In particular, the percentage of pupils expected to reach the higher level 5 has been significantly increased across both subjects. However, with the consistently good teaching the pupils receive and the level of achievement identified, the targets may be attainable.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.2. (27.0)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.3 (25.8)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.4 (28.5)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The school has established good achievement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science because of good teaching. There is also consistent and regular assessment and tracking of pupils' achievement. There are good systems which enable staff to closely monitor the progress of the pupils in their class and compare performance and achievement because of the consistent way in which records are kept. This has a positive effect on standards because teachers ensure that pupils' needs are met. In the analysis undertaken after the 2004 tests, the school identified that boys were not achieving as well as girls particularly in English. As a result of action taken, no particular difference was noted in the attainment of boys and girls during the inspection.
3. Children in the foundation stage enter the school with a range of capabilities, although overall these are well below average. Children achieve well, particularly in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, numeracy, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Careful on-going assessments ensure that tasks set are clearly matched to each child's capabilities and the support provided by the classroom assistants is of high quality. Few of the children are likely to reach the expected goals for their age, except in physical development, and most will need additional support before working towards National Curriculum, level 1.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.7 (14.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	12.7 (13.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	13.4 (14.9)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Year 2 are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. However, pupils achieve well given their low starting points. These pupils are having to catch up on learning from a relatively poor start to their school career from a time two years ago when the nursery provision was considered to be unsatisfactory. The main reasons for the improved standards are that lessons are well structured and pupils achieve well because each lesson builds carefully on the one before, and on the learning by each pupil. Pupils are making sound progress with their speaking and listening, and good progress in reading and writing. Progress in speaking and listening is slower because pupils do not always have enough opportunities to talk at length in lessons or confer in pairs or small groups. In mathematics, the curriculum is varied and covers all areas of the subject thoroughly. Pupils are encouraged to solve problems, and their independent learning skills are developing well. Achievement in science is very good. The curriculum for younger pupils is firmly built around investigative work and from an early stage pupils learn to set up experiments and devise a fair test.
5. This good, broad learning continues into Years 3 to 6. At the end of Year 6 standards in English are still slightly below average because, although most pupils are likely to attain the nationally expected levels, there are fewer working at the higher level 5. Standards in mathematics are average, and those in science above average, with a good percentage of pupils working at the higher level. However, there are many pupils with special educational needs operating at a significantly lower level than would be expected for pupils of this age. Pupils' writing is of a sound quality and the examination of pupils' work shows that it develops well as they move through the school. They write for a wide variety of audiences, read a wide range of genres and have some opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through classroom debate and informal reporting back of work carried out, although these opportunities are not consistent in all classes. However, in some lessons lower attaining pupils were set tasks which were not sufficiently well matched to the targets on their individual education plans, which meant that they only made satisfactory progress. In mathematics, standards at the end of Year 6 are well in line with those expected. The curriculum is carefully structured, building on previous learning. Teachers carefully identify on a day-to-day basis what topics require further re-enforcement or extension and appropriately adapt their planning. This means that most pupils are enabled to perform to their optimum potential. However, as in English, the provision for the lowest attaining pupils was not always precise enough. Standards in science at the end of Year 6 are above average. Pupils are given ample opportunity to devise and carry out investigations and experiments and have a good knowledge of understanding of the subject. In all subjects pupils produce plenty of good quality work.

6. Standards in art and design are above average. Standards in the other foundation subjects,³ where there was enough evidence to make judgements, were in line with those expected nationally. There has been considerable improvement in the provision for ICT and pupils throughout the school meet the standards expected. Although pupils have acquired a good level of skills and understanding, they have too few opportunities to apply these skills in subjects across the curriculum. The school has already taken action to redress this situation and new equipment and training for staff had already been arranged prior to the inspection.
7. The school has very few pupils from ethnic minorities and there are only two pupils currently at an early stage of learning English. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar rates of progress to the other pupils which represents good achievement overall. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily overall because, although work is generally well matched to their needs, this is not consistently so in all lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are good and their behaviour is very good. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths

- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and promote good relationships very well
- The school provides an enriching and supportive environment within which pupils develop into responsible and confident young citizens
- Pupils enjoy attending school and using their initiative

Commentary

8. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are very effective. The school's behaviour policy has been recently reviewed and staff training now includes awareness of 'Protective Behaviour' in order to ensure that pupils feel safe. Teachers regularly stress the importance of good manners and they provide very good examples of how to behave. This has a cumulative effect and pupils' behaviour improves as they move through the school. During lessons, teachers have consistently high expectations of behaviour and this means that pupils know exactly what they should and should not do. The names of any pupils who deserve a special mention are entered into the *Commendation Book* and they are congratulated at the deputy head teacher's special weekly assembly. Pupils say that teachers manage occasional incidents of bullying very well. This harmony helps to create a warm and purposeful atmosphere and motivates pupils to work hard and to give of their very best.
9. Pupils' personal development is very good and is fostered through very good provision for social and moral development. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and are very supportive of each other. Older pupils look after younger ones in the playground, acting as play buddies and helping them at lunchtime. Pupils enjoy being part of the school community and like being given responsibilities for various jobs around school. For example, they undertake numerous tasks in their classroom and elect representatives for the school council. Pupils' appreciation and understanding of the cultural traditions of others is very well promoted through assemblies, lessons and a rich variety of displays, many of which capitalise on the direct experiences of staff. As a result, pupils from all ethnic groups get along very well and racial incidents are very rare. Analysis of the pre-inspection questionnaire shows very positive views; indeed, almost every parent who returned their

³ The foundation subjects are: art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, music, physical education.

form indicated that their child likes coming to school and that they enjoy taking part in the various activities available.

10. The last inspection found that pupils had positive attitudes to learning. Over the intervening six years, these have been maintained. Pupils are articulate, outgoing and confident and are keen to tell inspectors what they like about their school and why. They enjoy their lessons and the opportunities for educational visits. Many pupils attend the various extra-curricular activities, such as the mathematics, art and dance clubs. During discussions, pupils speak highly of their teachers and say they are very proud of their school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	0.4
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.

Exclusions

There were no exclusions during the last year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall and enable pupils to achieve well. The curriculum is good and is well planned. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress are satisfactory. Pupils are cared for very well. The school has a good partnership with parents, a satisfactory one with other schools and very good links with the local community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 2 and 6 is particularly good
- Teachers have high expectations of what can be achieved
- Although assessment procedures are satisfactory, there is scope for further improvement
- Pupils learning is enhanced because they apply themselves very well to tasks and produce a good quality of work

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0 %)	8 (24 %)	14 (41 %)	11 (32 %)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

11. The children in the nursery and reception class learn effectively and achieve well, because a good range of exciting and interesting activities are provided for them. The teaching is good and shows a good understanding of the needs of children of this age, and the support provided by the trained assistants is of high quality. In the rest of the school the teaching observed during the inspection was good overall. It was consistently good in Years 2 and 6. In these classes the teachers have a particularly good command of the subject areas and teach confidently across the range of curriculum areas. They ensure that pupils develop good levels of knowledge, improve their skills and deepen their levels of understanding. Planning is thorough with clear objectives to indicate what is to be learnt by pupils. Teachers form good relationships with pupils, show a high level of interest in their welfare and give praise and encouragement to spur pupils to higher levels of achievement. Effective teaching methods are used, such as good question and answer sessions during the introduction of lessons, which make pupils reason⁴ and allows them to express their views clearly. In the best lessons, the plenary session⁴ not only consolidated learning, but also showed pupils what they should do next, in preparation for the following lesson. Learning resources are used well, and classes are generally well managed and teachers insist on high standards of behaviour.
12. An examination of pupils work showed, that, for the most part, pupils benefit from good teaching. During the inspection a few weaknesses were observed. In a small number of lessons the pace of working was a little slow and the introduction over-long, so that pupils become fidgety. This was particularly evident in the one unsatisfactory lesson. On a few occasions, tasks were not well matched to the complete range of ability within the class. However, this does not detract from the overall, positive picture of the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

⁴ Plenary session - the final part of the lesson, which is used to consolidate pupils' learning.

13. The school has a good number of committed and knowledgeable support staff. They provide a valuable role when addressing the particular learning needs of individual pupils or groups of pupils. They are generally deployed well throughout lessons to support pupils. However, sometimes the focus of this support is helping pupils to access the curriculum and supporting them in the same tasks as the rest of the group rather than working on activities which are carefully matched to their specific learning needs. Support provided for the few pupils for whom English is not their home language is good and these pupils achieve well.
14. Pupils' learning is enhanced by their own very positive attitudes to school. They collaborate well and form good relationships with each other, and their teachers. This aspect was illustrated very well in a Year 6 science lesson when a teacher had been using a video to illustrate seed dispersal and reproduction in plants. Tasks were set at three distinct levels and pupils worked both independently and collaboratively to complete these. At the same time, pupils were working their way through a science revision programme on the computer. They worked independently and as soon as they had finished, speedily handed over to the next pupil whose turn it was before returning to the main task. The pupils acted responsibly and maturely and did not require checking up on. In this, and in other classes, pupils apply themselves well, present their work neatly and produce a good volume of work in the time available. This is because teachers have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving and ensure that everyone is included and does their best. A good quantity of homework is also completed by pupils on a weekly basis.
15. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but there is scope for improvement, particularly in the foundation subjects. Assessment procedures for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are very good and thorough. The tracking of pupils' progress is undertaken and information is easy to extract so that clear patterns can be discerned as pupils move through the school. However, assessment in the foundation subjects and religious education is at an early stage, and an appropriate system is currently being trialled in history which would be suitable for adoption throughout the school. Marking is generally thorough and most teachers make valuable comments which help pupils to understand what they have to do to improve, but this is not an embedded practice with all staff. Some comments made by teachers are too bland and are not focussed sufficiently on ways in which improvement can be made. All pupils have specific targets for improvement and many older pupils know exactly how their performance in English and mathematics can be improved. Assessment is used well to identify pupils who will benefit from additional support with their learning.

The curriculum

The curriculum is of good quality and covers all national curriculum requirements. There are good opportunities for enrichment and resources are well managed. Accommodation is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good
- Planning for pupils with additional needs is not rigorous enough
- There is very good provision for personal social and health education
- A wide range of extra curricular activities enriches the curriculum
- The very good accommodation enhances learning

Commentary

16. In the nursery and reception classes the curriculum has substantially improved since the last inspection and now matches the six areas of learning for this age well, with a strong emphasis on personal development, language and literacy and mathematical development. Children with special educational needs receive well targeted support carefully matched to their own capabilities.

17. For pupils in Key Stages One and Two the curriculum is well planned, meets national curriculum requirements and is relevant to pupils at various stages. All pupils at the school have an equal chance to participate in what is being taught. The school has addressed all issues from the last inspection. There are now schemes of work for all subjects and a regular programme in place so as to monitor teaching and learning. The school has done well to make appropriate provision for ICT despite limited resources. It is currently developing a computer suite and installing data projectors and inter-active white boards in the classrooms that will significantly improve provision.
18. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is generally satisfactory. Information from assessment is used well to identify those pupils who would benefit from additional support. However, planning does not always reflect or respond to the particular requirements of individual pupils. Consequently, although they make satisfactory progress towards the targets on their individual education plans, there has been insufficient monitoring of provision to ensure that the help pupils receive within lessons is sufficiently precise to help them meet their targets. As a result, although these pupils achieve satisfactorily, they do not achieve as well as others in the school. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good and the support provided ensures that they are able to fully participate in all school activities.
19. Provision for personal social and health education is very good. There is a very good scheme of work and the subject is taught regularly each week. Arrangements for sex education have been revised to make closer links with the school nurse and attention given to the potential misuse of drugs and alcohol. Skills are developed well in other subjects. For example, in a design technology lesson planned for pupils in Year 1, the teacher gave pupils plenty of opportunities to select food that would improve their health in the making of a fruit salad. As a result the pupils were able to taste the food and give reasons for their choice. The school is working towards the healthy schools award, which has helped in developing links with the local community. All staff has been trained so as to teach 'protective behaviour' and this helps to explain why pupils are so happy and confident. Links are being developed with local secondary schools within the Stevenage partnership scheme that has produced a range of resources from golf sets to play equipment, which is used during the lunch hour.
20. Enrichment activities are interesting and appreciated by both parents and children. Pupils of all ages attend a good range of after school clubs such as football, netball, lacrosse, cricket, art, dance and maths. A variety of visits and visitors, such as workshops for African music, and performances of classical music serve to enrich the curriculum. The profiles of subjects are raised by themed weeks, for example in science with the study of 'solids liquids and gases'. Assemblies are also used well to share aspects of the curriculum covered by different classes. For example, in Year 5 with performances on 'Victorian school days', and 'Reading is Fundamental' lead by a local author.
21. There is good provision of teachers and support staff. The school is able to draw on the expertise of specialist music, geography and physical education teachers and ICT specialists. Teaching assistants are well deployed and trained so as to cope with the needs of all pupils.
22. The accommodation of the school is very good. The accommodation for the children in the nursery and reception classes is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection especially in the nursery, which is now well equipped to provide children with a wide range of activities appropriate to their needs. The classrooms are spacious and colourful and are kept meticulously clean. Good use is made of supplementary work areas. The library is spacious with quiet areas designed where the pupils can sit and read. The playground is large with suitable dry weather apparatus and adventurous play equipment. Resources to support the curriculum are good overall and very good in some areas. The quality of stimulating displays around the school is very good. The curriculum has improved well since the last inspection when planning for subjects was much weaker.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety; and the support, advice and guidance they receive are all very good. Involvement through seeking and acting on pupils' views is good.

Main strengths

- The school looks after its pupils very well
- Teachers monitor pupils' personal development closely and provide clear educational guidance that helps pupils to improve their work
- The school council is an effective body and is well regarded by staff and pupils

Commentary

23. The strengths in care, support and guidance noted in the last inspection report have been maintained and improved further. Monitoring of health and safety is very thorough and staff and governors work closely as an effective team. Risk assessment procedures are very well applied and the school ensures that safety tests of school equipment are regularly completed. First aid procedures are comprehensive, records are meticulously kept, and parents are promptly informed if a mishap occurs during the school day. Child protection procedures are thorough; members of staff are well trained and are fully aware of their individual responsibilities. The school's health and safety provision was audited recently as part of a recent successful bid for a day-linked care centre and it confirmed this very positive picture. Most pupils say they know of an adult to turn to if they have problems. Extra-curricular clubs provide informal opportunities for adults and pupils to get to know each other. This close contact helps to ensure that teachers are in a very good position to spot emerging difficulties and address them at an early stage. During discussions, pupils say that they feel really well looked after at school and that they would not hesitate to seek help or advice, if they needed it. As a result pupils, feel happy and safe and this puts them in a very good position to make the most of their time in school.
24. The school knows its pupils well and procedures for assessing pupils' academic and personal development are very thorough. For example, the school keeps a close eye on pupils preparing for the transfer to secondary school. Very good support is provided to any pupils facing difficulty with this transition and this ensures that they are well prepared for their next school. There are a number of displays around the school, which provide very clear advice to pupils on how to improve their work. Most of the teachers mark work thoroughly and older pupils are encouraged to respond to teachers' comments in writing. Reading records have been simplified to ensure that they are clear to pupils and teachers set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. Pupils refer to these regularly to ensure that they are being achieved. For example, samples of writing are recorded separately and this allows pupils to see the progress they have made over time. During discussions pupils say that their teachers provide clear feedback on how well they are doing and how they can improve. This helps them to make the most of their time in lessons and encourages them to work hard and make good progress.
25. The school listens to pupils' views through surveys and discussions and pupils say they can also talk to the head teacher if they want to make a suggestion. There are regular whole class council meetings and elected representatives take proposals forward to the school council. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and appreciate being able to contribute to school life. Through the school council, pupils have been able to provide suggestion boxes, a friendship bench and to make changes in the school playground. As a result, pupils feel they have an effective 'voice' in the running and future development of their school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with the community. Links with parents are good and links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

Main strengths

- The community and local businesses support the school very well
- The school provides good information to parents and responds well to their comments and suggestions
- Parents think highly of the school and there is little they would like to change

Commentary

26. The last inspection found that links with business and the community were satisfactory. Over the intervening period the school has forged constructive and rewarding links with a number of businesses. These links support the school very well through donations of funds and equipment and sponsorship of events and have broadened the range and quality of activities available to pupils. For example, a multi-national pharmaceutical company sponsored Science Week events and has donated a number of items of scientific equipment. Pupils also visit a nearby restaurant chain to learn about the ingredients and how to make pizzas. This provides a valuable insight into the wider world and the importance of a healthy diet. The school lies at the heart of the local community and teachers make good use of the resources available. Pupils visit local amenities such as the museum and art gallery and links with local churches and religious organisations are also close. Representatives from the emergency services, parents and other visitors talk to the pupils about their work and they regularly contribute to assemblies and lessons. Their involvement makes a strong contribution to pupils' growing understanding of the wider world and appreciation of what it takes to be a responsible and active member of society.
27. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting felt that the school keeps them well informed and inspectors agree with their positive views. Regular newsletters and letters keep parents up to date with school events and important information is displayed prominently around and outside the school. Each year the school provides detailed information to parents about what their children are learning and pupils' reports give parents a clear understanding of their child's progress. Reading records also allow parents to see what their child is doing and can be used to communicate between school and home. Teachers are flexible and try to make time at the end of the school day if parents want to discuss any particular concerns. Parent consultation evenings are also well attended. In addition, the school nurse runs a drop-in advice session for parents and can call upon other agencies to provide additional support.
28. The school has a very good reputation and there is a waiting list for entry. The pre-inspection survey showed that the views of parents are overwhelmingly positive and this was reflected in the comments of those who attended the pre-inspection meeting. Parents regularly help with reading and with school visits as well as providing support in the nursery. The school seeks parents' views through surveys and good use is made of this information when planning for the future. Clear processes for dealing with any parental concerns are in place and the school ensures that the views of parents are fully considered.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The governance of the school is sound. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and that of key staff satisfactory. The management of the school is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership, management and governance of the school has improved significantly since the last inspection
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has addressed vital areas for development effectively
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very well together to ensure the efficient management of the school
- The role of the foundation subject co-ordinators is not sufficiently developed
- Governors have successfully improved their role over the last two years

Commentary

29. At the previous inspection, the leadership and management of the school was judged to be satisfactory, and its management satisfactory. Since then, there has been a change of senior management and, because of astute appointments the leadership and management shows good improvement and is now good overall. The Governance of the school has improved significantly since the last inspection. The governors now take a more active role, are more aware of their responsibilities, and appropriately and effectively challenge the school.
30. The headteacher, who has been in post two years, has an inspirational vision for the future direction of the school. Her vision builds on the strong aims and values of the school and the maintenance of high standards. She has been instrumental in addressing many issues across the school, following a drop in standards after the last inspection. There is a commitment by the whole staff to an approach that involves the teaching of a broad curriculum, which enables pupils to leave the school as well-rounded individuals. Although the school has few pupils from ethnic minorities it has an appropriate policy for racial equality, which is monitored by the school and governors. The school constantly challenges itself to do better. The headteacher has been very well supported by the Deputy Headteacher and, as a result, the school has made good progress.
31. All, including the pupils, are now involved in evaluating the work of the school and a systematic programme of monitoring by the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher has made a positive impact on the standard of teaching and learning throughout the school. Subject leaders carry out their responsibilities satisfactorily. Co-ordinators of the core subjects have done much to raise standards through a rigorous approach. Other co-ordinators are conscientious and have a good understanding of what their roles entail. However, because many are new to the position the role of subject leaders has not yet been fully developed and their ability to improve pupils' learning is not as effective as core subject co-ordinators. Most have not yet had the chance to carry out lesson observations although they have examined the quality of pupils' work. Good use is made of subject leaders' skills, and where these require updating or improving, training is provided to enable them to fulfil their roles as effectively as possible. As a result they provide good quality advice to colleagues. The school welcomes input from other sources and involves various educational groups and visitors to help further advance its provision. It seizes every opportunity to apply for additional funding in order to help the pupils' learning.
32. The leadership of special educational needs is satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides good administrative support but, because of teaching commitments, there has been insufficient monitoring of provision in the classroom. She ensures that targets on pupils' individual education plans are precise and measurable. However, the degree to which these targets are addressed in lessons is variable across the school.
33. There is good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage. Teaching time is well organised and there is good monitoring of pupils' progress and good record keeping which is building up into a comprehensive record of achievement.

34. The school's approach to strategic planning is good. There is a detailed five-year development plan, which continues to emphasise on-going improvement and a broadening of the school's curriculum. Good use is also made of information available to evaluate the quality of the school's work. This includes results from national and other tests, as well as the monitoring of teaching and analysis of pupils' work, and the outcomes of surveys of parents' views.
35. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The Headteacher has worked closely with the Governors over the last two years and there is now an effective structure of meetings in place. Governors are aware of their duties and do their best to fulfil them. Many of the governors are involved in the life of the school through 'visits' to classrooms or accompanying the children on trips. As their knowledge of the school increases, they are beginning to think more strategically and to look for best value on significant purchases and decisions.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	697116.83	Balance from previous year	37562.66
Total expenditure	690444.5	Balance carried forward to the next	44234.99
Expenditure per pupil	3002		

36. The administrative staff are experienced and contribute positively to the running of the school. There is effective budgetary control, both on a short, day-to-day, and longer term basis. The financial planning is very well organised. The financial information presented below shows an appropriate carry-forward figure which should enable the school to forward plan in order to meet the requirements of the workplace reform act. All elements of the school's spending and decision making are evaluated to ensure that the most economic, effective and efficient quality of education and support is provided for the pupils in its charge.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for pupils in the nursery and reception classes is good overall.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good.

37. The children in the nursery and reception classes learn effectively and achieve well, because a good range of exciting and interesting activities are provided for them. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, especially with provision for children in the nursery. The teaching is good and shows a good understanding of the needs of children of this age, and the support provided by the trained assistants is of high quality. The curriculum matches the six areas of learning for this age well. Pupils with special educational needs receive well targeted support carefully matched to their own capabilities. There is very good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage. Teaching time is well organised and there is good monitoring of pupils' progress and good record keeping which is building up into a comprehensive record of achievement. The accommodation for the children is good and there are secure play areas, where pupils can work outside as well as use the large outdoor equipment, that enhance their learning opportunities.

Main strengths

- Children achieve well and are developing self-confidence because of the good organisation and well established classroom routines
- Very good relationships are evident, which make the children feel secure and cared for

Commentary

38. When pupils enter the nursery they have poor personal and social skills. They make good progress because they are taught well, presented with many opportunities to learn and play together and become familiar with consistent every day routines. When they move into the reception class they have learned to sit sensibly and listen to their teacher and to share with their peers. The reception class staff build well on these experiences and teaching is good enabling children to learn effectively. The children respond well to daily routines with which they are now fully at home. They know what to do on entering school, the routine for taking the register, getting ready for play, milk and lunch times. They relate well to one another and show concern and care where appropriate. There is a good variety of activities and these ensure children are purposefully employed and enable them to move confidently from task to task. They work very well in small groups together and with a member of staff.
39. Adults work constructively with the children, helping them to take turns and encouraging sharing. Adults provide good role models and children respond positively to the care shown towards them. Children make good progress and are beginning to maintain their concentration for a longer time. When working as a class group, children are expected to take turns, put up their hands when answering questions, and listen carefully to each other. Behaviour is good and children are kind and courteous to each other. Although some will reach the early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1 there is a significant minority who will not.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan and organise activities well so that the children can practice and develop a full range of skills
- Adults' skilled interaction with the children ensures that they learn to use language with increasing expertise although they are not always expected to speak in full sentences

Commentary

40. When children enter the nursery they have poor speaking and listening skills. They have a very limited vocabulary and are clearly unused to speaking before an audience or taking turns. The priority in the nursery is to develop these skills and a good range of activities is provided to enable them to do this. A few children recognise some letters and know their sounds. There are several areas – such as the Teddy hospital, where pupils can experiment with early writing and pretend to write. Appropriate materials are provided for them, although there is not a great deal of variety such as sand or foam trays.
41. In the reception class appropriate opportunities for speaking and listening are provided in early morning sessions, snack time and when they are working in their groups. Teaching is good and children make good progress in extending their vocabulary, although opportunities for speaking to help develop writing skills are more limited. For example, pupils are not expected to answer fully so they do not become sufficiently familiar with constructing sentences. Reading skills are developing well. Some children can already read and sound out simple words confidently. Sounds are taught through the use of appropriate books such as 'Each Peach, Pear, Plum', and practical activities such as creating a simple booklet and observational drawing help to re-enforce their learning. However, although children make good progress few are likely to meet the expected levels by the time they move into Year One.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of children achieve well although they are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the end of the reception year
- The quality of teaching and learning is good

Commentary

42. Children in the nursery are given appropriate opportunities to develop early mathematical concepts through whole class and group sessions. Grouping teddies according to their size and learning vocabulary such as 'smaller', 'larger', 'smallest' 'largest' as well as counting round the class all help develop the very limited skills with which they join the school. When they move on to the reception class children continue to achieve well although, by the end of the school year, most still will not reach the expected levels in their mathematical development. Children enjoy mathematical activities and learn effectively because the teaching is good and made lively and interesting for the children. They sing simple counting rhymes matching written numbers to those in the song. The teacher encourages children to scribe the number in the air so that they get used to the shape of the digits. The teacher prepares thoroughly and provides a good range of stimulating activities. She gives clear explanations and encourages independence and mature behaviour. All adults interact well with children providing good support. A brisk pace is maintained and supplementary, more challenging activities are provided to extend those who are more able.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

Main strengths

- The teacher provides a wide range of activities in order to develop children's knowledge of the world around them
- Children's computer skills are developed well
- Children are taught to observe carefully in order to learn about their environment

Commentary

43. Most children enter the nursery with a very limited knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. The quality of teaching and learning is good although children are unlikely to meet the early learning goals by the end of this year. Children make good gains and achieve well because the teacher provides activities which interest and excite them. For example, after hearing the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears the children made porridge and tasted it – with a variety of flavourings – as none of them had had porridge before. Similarly, children in the reception class are introduced to fruits such as the Peach and Plum as in the title of the picture book they had been looking at. Computer skills are developed well in both the nursery and reception classes. Children in the nursery are at an early stage of developing their mouse skills, and use a paint programme to complete a picture of Winnie the Pooh; in reception, these skills are extended to clicking and dragging activities in order to ‘Dress Teddy’. Some children have sound computer skills although most still have some problems manipulating and controlling the mouse. Appropriate provision is made for pupils’ religious education, they reflect on their own experiences and consider carefully what makes them particularly happy or sad.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is good.

Main strengths

- Children achieve well and attain the expected standards by the end of the reception year
- The quality of teaching and learning is good
- Assessment procedures are well developed

Commentary

44. Children achieve well in this area of learning and by the end of the reception year the vast majority are meeting the expectations of the early learning goals. The quality of teaching and learning is good because sessions are well planned and teachers use clear explanations, which the children understand. The activities provided in the nursery are varied and interesting and, because resources are good, they enable children to improve their co-ordination. In the reception class children become more independent. They manage to undress and dress themselves with increasing competence. When they reach the hall they warm up well – showing some understanding of the need for exercise. Many show a good sense of rhythm and they are imaginative; for instance, in dance they match their movements well to the mood of the music and move strongly and floppily.
45. The provision for physical development and the achievement of children has improved significantly since the last inspection. The children have regular access to a wide range of equipment, including wheeled toys and receive many other opportunities to enhance their physical development.

Creative development

46. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or teaching in this area. However, from planning and the work on display, it is evident that this is appropriately planned for and pupils have opportunities for painting and experimenting with a range of modelling materials. In addition, the role play areas provide opportunities for pupils to use their imagination and to play out situations. One music lesson was observed in the nursery. In this the children responded well to the very good teaching and learned simple songs and how to tap out rhythms, adding accompaniment using un-tuned percussion instruments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and has been instrumental in raising standards
- Actions taken to improve writing are having a positive impact on the pupils' learning although speaking and listening are not promoted highly enough
- Literacy links with other subjects are not planned into the curriculum systematically

Commentary

47. Pupils enter the school with well below average language and literacy skills. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 builds on the progress made in the nursery and reception classes so that achieve well. However, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are still below average by the end of Year 2. Although standards in English are improving, there are further improvements to be made.
48. By Year 2, most pupils are gaining confidence in speaking with a wide vocabulary and general knowledge. However, opportunities for children to interact and discuss are sometimes missed and as a result pupils' language does not develop as fully as it might. Reading is generally of an average standard overall. Higher attaining pupils read confidently, pointing out a wide range of punctuation and why it was there, showing complete understanding of the text. Some less able pupils use a wide range of strategies to help them sound out their words. Writing has been a particular focus in the school. Many pupils have gained the basic skills of spelling, punctuation and joined handwriting although a significant minority still have difficulties with these. Pupils' work shows that over the year they have made good progress and are writing more confidently and enthusiastically for a range of different purposes. They are beginning to use a more adventurous vocabulary and write more interesting sentences.
49. Learning is underpinned by the good attitudes of the pupils. They are responsive, eager to answer questions but do not always have the opportunities to discuss at greater length. They generally listen well to the teacher and to each other and their concentration is good. Lessons are productive; and almost all pupils have completed a considerable amount of good quality work over the year.
50. Standards in the current Year 6 are just below average although achievement is good. Pupils' vocabulary is increasing and they engage well in discussion in class lessons. However, opportunities for discussion are sometimes missed in other classes. Pupils' reading skills are broadly in line with those expected. For example, they can analyse why characters behave as they do and make informed predictions of how a plot might develop. They understand the term 'genre' and can give examples of different types of book they enjoy. Standards are still below average in writing although initiatives to improve this are having a positive impact on standards. They have completed a good amount of work during the year and progress made has been good.
51. The quality of teaching of English is good throughout the school. In a good Year 6 lesson on explanatory text, a brisk pace challenged all members of the class. Tight deadlines were imposed and the correct technical language was used throughout. Pupils were encouraged to take risks and did so, thus making rapid progress in their learning. Effective links with other subjects resulted in efficient relevant learning. In some lessons teacher introductions are informative but opportunities for pupils to interact and discuss were sometimes missed and thus pupil's language did not develop as fully as it might. Lessons are conducted in a calm and purposeful atmosphere, based on good relationships both between pupils and teachers and between pupils. Teaching assistants were used effectively and always added value to the pupils' learning. Teachers use information from assessment to plan well for the

needs of pupils. However, the tasks in lessons are not always appropriately matched to the targets of those pupils with special educational needs.

52. Although attainment has fallen since the last inspection this is largely due to the change in profile of pupils entering the school. Actions taken to raise standards in the last two years are having a positive impact and improvement has been good.
53. At present there is limited use of ICT in English although pupils have developed good word processing skills. However, equipment recently purchased has the potential to considerably improve this situation.
54. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has introduced a scheme of work for all aspects of the subject and has improved the range of resources on offer. She has a clear plan of action and has closely monitored its implementation and, as a result, standards are steadily rising. Assessment books that illustrate the progress that pupils make are useful aids to setting targets for pupils.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching is now helping to improve achievement and standards
- Pupils enjoy maths and behave well
- Leadership and management are satisfactory but there is not enough focus on improving standards in Years 1 and 2
- ICT is used well in maths

Commentary

55. Inspection findings show that standards are beginning to rise. Actions taken to improve standards over the last two years are having a positive effect. They are just below average by Year 2 and are average by Year 6. There are more pupils in Year 6 who are attaining the higher levels when compared to the 2004 test results and the school is likely to exceed its target this year. This is due to the school identifying areas of learning that need to be improved, for example, improving mental calculations and problem solving, then acting quickly to address these weaknesses. As a result pupils achieve well throughout the school. Pupils with additional needs achieve satisfactorily and the school has correctly identified further development of assessing their needs as an area for development.
56. Overall teaching is good, with a number of strengths and some areas for improvement. In the most successful lessons teachers have a strong command of the subject and effectively build upon what has been learnt in previous lessons in order to develop pupils' understanding. For example, in a good lesson for pupils in Year 2 the teacher told them that they were going to add numbers to 10, which they had done in the previous lesson. After this, a clear explanation given, on how to apply what they had learnt to adding numbers to 100, resulted in almost all of the pupils making accurate calculations. Teachers provide an effective range of activities, which are well suited to the needs of the pupils, and teaching assistants are deployed well to assist the lower attaining pupils. In less successful lessons, teaching is over directed, which reduces the opportunity for problem solving and investigative learning. Overall, lessons are managed well and this results in good behaviour and attitudes to learning. Pupils listen attentively and quickly settle to tasks, so that little time is wasted. Pupils take pride in their work most of which is well presented because of the high expectations of the teachers. Marking of pupils work is inconsistent with better examples seen in the classes for older pupils, where feedback is given, which shows pupils how they can improve.
57. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Results of national tests are analysed and targets are set for groups of pupils in order to raise attainment, but too little has been done in evaluating the quality of pupils individual work in Years 1 and 2 so as to plan the next steps in learning. ICT is being used well to track pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 and the information from this has been used well in order to ensure appropriate provision for the pupils. Standards have

been maintained since the last inspection although pupils are entering the school at a lower level. The accommodation is good and resources are well managed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Opportunities for developing maths skills in other subjects are satisfactory, for example when pupils draw graphs of their results in science and when they order a sequence of events in date order in history. Teachers are alert to encouraging pupils to give reasons for their calculations, which is developing their speaking skills in English. Pupils have further developed their measuring skills by designing and making photo-frames in design technology. Good use is made of computer programmes in maths.

SCIENCE

Provision in Science is very good.

Main strengths

- Pupils reach above average standards in science by the end of Year 6
- The quality of teaching is very good enabling pupils to achieve very well
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good
- Assessment procedures and systems for recording the results of assessments are well developed

Commentary

59. Standards in science meet the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and exceed expectations by the end of Year 6. These results represent a considerable improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when standards at Year 6 met expectations. Pupils with special educational needs make the same good progress as their peers because of the very good teaching and focused support they receive from classroom assistants.
60. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and lessons are well sequenced so that pupils are very effectively challenged to use their knowledge and understanding. Lessons build carefully on pupils' previous learning consequently pupils achieve very well. Imaginative teaching and skilful questioning lead to pupils developing high levels of interest and enjoyment. Keen involvement in practical activities helps pupils of different abilities to learn well. This was apparent when Year 6 pupils focused on plants, the function of their different parts and explained how pollination occurs. Pupils collaborated really well in this activity because they are used to working productively together, knowing that their ideas will be treated with respect.
61. Pupils apply literacy and numeracy skills well, for example when writing about their experiments and when making accurate use of measurement and graphs. However, they do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their ICT skills to learning in science. The school is aware of this deficiency and the new ICT suite and the provision of data projectors and inter-active whiteboards in each classroom should rectify it. The systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress are very good and information about pupils' attainment and progress in science is readily accessible. As a result, teaching is well focused and pupils have a very good idea of their level of work and how best they can improve. Marking is conscientiously completed and generally provides suggestions for improvement. Homework effectively reinforces learning undertaken in classes. The school provides very good enrichment to the science curriculum through its science fair. This stimulates interest and promotes learning in science as well as making a positive contribution to pupils' personal development.
62. The subject leader is extremely competent and provides very good leadership and management. Through her professional competence and enthusiasm, she has led the development of the subject well. She has monitored planning, teaching and pupils' work effectively. Consequently she is aware of what needs to be done to improve the curriculum. The coordinator provides a very good role model for teaching science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Expert technical knowledge is available within the school which enables problems to be resolved quickly
- There are not enough planned opportunities to teach ICT through other subjects
- Resources have improved but it is too early to see their impact on standards

Commentary

63. Only one lesson was observed and, therefore no judgement has been made on the overall quality of teaching. Judgements on standards and pupils' achievements have been made after talking with pupils and teachers; observing pupils working independently on computers and scrutinising work.
64. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach average standards and achieve well. They are confident using the mouse to control programmes and understand the function of 'CD Rom's' and 'floppy discs'. They are developing their keyboard skills well. For example, their word-processed accounts of their stories show that they can type and set out a piece of writing, and they know how to use different sizes of print. By the end of Year 6, pupils' word processing skills have developed well. They cut and paste pictures into text and type script into paragraphs for a 'Power Point' presentation. Work based on Henry Eighth and his six wives was of good quality. Overall by the end of Year 6, standards are well in line with those expected and pupils' achievements are good, and better than at the previous inspection.
65. In the one lesson observed for Year 5, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. The pupils learnt how to plan a collage on the computer. The teacher's clear explanation and helpful demonstration helped the pupils understand what they had to do. After completing a series of written instructions, many of the pupils were ready for the practical task, but a lack of equipment meant that pupils could not try out their ideas immediately, which held back their learning. As there were a small number of pupils working with the teacher all made satisfactory progress.
66. There has been satisfactory leadership and management of the subject, but some areas are insufficiently developed. Until very recently there has been little improvement in the quantity and quality of resources since the last inspection and the school has done well to maintain standards seen then. A new computer suite has just been completed with new computers. Digital projectors and inter-active whiteboards were being installed at the time of the inspection. The school is developing more rigorous assessment procedures, but these are at an early stage and it is too soon to judge how effective in enabling teachers to keep track of pupils' progress. There is a portfolio of work showing expected standards that are to be achieved in each year. This is a good support for teachers. Issues concerning control and modelling have been dealt with well since the last inspection. There is good day-to-day management and technical support provided by a well-qualified teaching assistant.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. The use and development of pupils' skills in ICT is satisfactory. Teachers are alert to providing opportunities when planning other subjects. For example, in science pupils have used a data-handling programme to display and analyse their results in a study of the planets. In English, pupils have changed the mood of a piece of writing by replacing words within a sentence. Pupils have composed musical sequences using a computer software programme. However despite these good examples of ICT skills being developed this largely depends on individual expertise rather than carefully planned opportunities.

HUMANITIES

68. No **Geography** lessons were observed and therefore no judgement can be made on provision. Evidence was gathered by looking at pupils' work and through a group discussion with co-ordinators. This evidence showed that the school covered all necessary Geography requirements and standards are broadly inline with those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. In Key Stage 1 children investigate traffic issues and learn about the local area. In Key Stage 2, children study life in Chembakoli and compare it to life at home. They study the weather and learn the features of rivers and mountains, gauging the impact of both on the life of the people who live nearby or who

might visit. Pupils learn appropriate geographical skills as well as developing the appropriate knowledge and understanding.

History

Provision in history is good.

Main strength

- Pupils learning is enriched by a number of extra activities

Commentary

69. Standards in history are broadly in line with those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. An examination of pupils' work shows that they cover all the necessary National Curriculum requirements and that provision is enhanced by 'special events' such as the visit of a Viking Warrior to Year 4. Children in Year 2 learn about famous people including Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes and are beginning to learn a little of chronology. Pupils in Year 5 enthusiastically tackled their topic about the Victorians and prepared a lively and stimulating assembly for the rest of the school. Pupils in Year 6 show a good understanding of the contribution that the Greeks made to modern life, as well as extending their historical studies into literacy by looking at Greek myths and legends.
70. Teaching and learning in History are good overall. Teachers use a range of strategies and artefacts to motivate the children and engage their interest. Pupils achieve well and have applied their literacy skills effectively to produce written work of sound quality. Most work is marked effectively and at best gives pupils clear guidance as to how they might improve.
71. Co-ordination of the subject is good. An action plan for the development of the subject is in place and an appropriate assessment system is currently being trialled which provides teachers with the information they need in order to be able to plan for pupils' needs.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is satisfactory.

Main strengths

- The co-ordinator is committed to raising the profile of the subject within the school
- Teaching is good enabling pupils to learn effectively

Commentary

72. Standards in Religious Education are broadly in line with those expected in the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. Across the school most pupils are achieving well. Standards reported by the previous inspection have been maintained.
73. Teaching is good overall and during the inspection varied from very good to satisfactory. Teachers plan carefully and try to ensure lessons are stimulating for the pupils. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 learned about the principles of Islam and how they could be applied to their own daily routines. The teaching was lively, the pace was good and, by relating to the pupils' own experiences, ensured they remained interested and motivated. Pupils learn effectively and achieve well, partly because pupils' bring good attitudes to the subject and are sensitive to the needs and views of others.
74. There is a good bank of resources which supports the teaching of world faiths and which also supports the Hertfordshire RE syllabus.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is a clear action plan to drive forward the further development of the subject. However, as yet assessment procedures have not yet been developed and this restricts the effectiveness of both teachers and management in identifying strengths and remedying weaknesses in pupils' learning.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

76. Design and technology, music and physical education were not a focus of this inspection and no overall judgements have been about provision in these subjects.

77. In **design technology** one lesson was seen. Judgements on standards have been made after scrutinising work and talking to teachers and pupils. Standards meet those expected by Year 2 and Year 6 and issues from the previous inspection have been remedied. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. By Year 1 pupils have produced simple models of dragons with moving parts and can give explanations of how they work. By Year 6, pupils are planning more independently and show satisfactory understanding when explaining how they chose healthy ingredients when making biscuits and what they would change to improve the recipes. Scrutiny of work shows that pupils' design and making skills are good but their ability to evaluate what they have made is more limited.
78. Two lessons were observed in **physical education** and no judgements have been made on standards, teaching and learning. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed in a Year 6 and a Year 5 class was satisfactory with pupils reaching the expected standard in batting and fielding skills. No observations could be made on dance or gymnastics. A good feature of the teaching is the way games skills are taught, for example when pupils are shown how to catch and pass a ball correctly. Pupils are enthusiastic in their lessons play fairly and co-operate well together in teams. Their behaviour is good. The pupils have good opportunities to take part in a range of sport during the year both in lessons and after school. Pupils learn to swim locally and most swim 25 metres by the time they leave school. The inter-school matches and competitions contribute to the very good provision for pupils social development. Strong links have been made with the Stevenage partnership where support is given by specialist staff for lacrosse, cricket, athletics and tennis. The school has recently participated in football and athletic leagues with other local primary schools. A recently planned residential visit for pupils in Years 5 and 6 will give opportunities to develop their orienteering skills.
79. There were few opportunities to evaluate the quality of **music** in the school. However, it is an integral part of school life and taught regularly. The pupils were heard singing in assembly. They were joyful and enthusiastic, the singing was tuneful and clear and pupils maintained the pitch of the songs very well. They have a very good sense of rhythm and were able to deal with a Bob Marley rap with exuberance and accuracy. Pupils listen to and participate in music from a range of cultures and also participate in a range of dramatic productions involving music. The pupils have the opportunity to participate in a number of musical extra-curricular activities and plans are in the pipeline for all pupils to learn a musical instrument during their school career.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is very good.

Main strengths

- A good range of work in different media is provided
- The accommodation and resources are good
- Good reference is made to the work of a range of artists

Commentary

80. Standards in art are above those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. Work in art and design is planned to introduce pupils to the required skills and understanding and to support work in other subjects, such as history, science and religious education. This is very successful, and pupils in all year-groups have produced a very good variety of work to high standards in a wide range of media. In addition, there has been a good amount of work on art appreciation and in critical studies of a range of art and design. Pupils have a good knowledge of the work of a range of famous artists and have learned a good deal about art from different cultures, particularly Africa. Lively examples of art, including pupils' own work, are very well presented in stimulating displays around the school. These are of a good standard and create a bright and welcoming atmosphere.
81. The teaching observed was consistently good. Pupils achieve very well and benefit from the teachers' knowledge. Teachers confidently demonstrate techniques to the pupils. The enthusiasm of the teacher in one lesson in Years 3 and 4 transmitted itself to the pupils, and they eagerly set about a task to draw their peers in various poses using quick sketching techniques. Pupils worked extremely hard, the attention to detail was good and they confidently explored a range of techniques to make their work more effective. Sound use is made of information and communication

technology, and computers are sometimes used for reference as well as experimentation with a range of paint programmes. Pupils throughout the school use sketch-books effectively and they are used well for experimenting with new techniques, and trying out ideas.

82. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has developed a good action plan and identified appropriate areas for further development. Planning ensures that pupils have the opportunity to develop skills and techniques over a sustained period of time. Art and design was found to be above expectations at the last inspection and these standards have been successfully maintained.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

83. Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and citizenship, have a high profile in the school. One lesson was observed, work was scrutinised and discussions were held with teachers and pupils. The sample indicated that both areas are major strengths.
84. The teaching and learning in the lesson was good. The lesson was well planned and consequently, pupils achieved well. Pupils' opinions and ideas are well represented at the school council and pupils develop responsibility for each other through the friendship bench, and play monitors. There are a wide variety of awards in place, which promote positive behaviour and values. The leadership and management of PSHE are good. The subject leader has a clear vision and understanding of future developments and of how other subjects contribute to this area of pupils' development. Pupils have access to a wide range of activities to promote citizenship. Year 6 pupils participate in activities that are run by Stevenage emergency services 'Crucial Crew' day where they solve problems based on health and safety issues. Pupils' responsibilities to each other are reinforced through a system of library monitors, play monitors and fruit monitors. Regular examples of good citizenship were evident during the inspection as pupils moved sensibly around the school. Pupils are mature and polite to adults, for example, by opening doors or asking if help is required.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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