

INSPECTION REPORT

LONG BUCKBY INFANT SCHOOL

Long Buckby, Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121844

Headteacher: Mrs. Linda Mitchell

Lead inspector: Judy Dawson

Dates of inspection: 11th – 13th October 2004

Inspection number: 267230

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Communitiy
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	148
School address:	High Street Long Buckby Northampton Norhamptonshire
Postcode:	NN6 7RE
Telephone number:	01327 842637
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Philip daSilva
Date of previous inspection:	8 th February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Located in the village of Long Buckby, the school is smaller than average for infant schools. The pupils are from predominantly white UK heritage backgrounds. Socio-economically, the area in which the pupils live is broadly average. Very few take free school meals. The percentages of pupils with special educational needs is above average and has risen since the last inspection; an average number of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Attainment on admission to school is broadly average. There is a new headteacher since the last inspection and a mix of long standing and recently appointed teachers. The school has gained the Effective Early Learning award and is involved in an initiative to promote Information and communication technology [ICT] in the Foundation Stage and sport throughout the school. Almost all pupils transfer to the local junior school with which there are educational links, including the use of the swimming pool.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20911	Judy Dawson	Lead inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology (ICT); Design and technology; Music; Physical education.
14178	Patricia Willman	Lay inspector	
4287	Brian Allaway	Team inspector	Special educational needs; English as additional language; English; Personal, social and health education and citizenship; Geography; History; Religious education.
22509	Gail Cowmeadow	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Science; Art and design.

The inspection contractor was :

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This inclusive school provides a sound quality of education. The governors and staff have maintained and strengthened the caring ethos and established very strong links with parents. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features; consequently pupils achieve satisfactorily overall, and well in some subjects. The pupils benefit from a broad curriculum and a wide range of cultural and sporting activities. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in reading, mathematics and science are above average in Year 2
- The teachers' marking does not give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work
- Due to consistently good teaching, children in the reception classes make a good start
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good
- There are very good links with parents and good links with the community
- The broad curriculum gives relevance to pupils' learning
- The role of subject managers is not yet firmly established

The school has made sound improvement since the previous inspection in February 1999. The school has been successful in improving the standards and provision for ICT although the quality of pupils' handwriting remains variable. Standards in English, mathematics and science have been restored to the 1999 levels after a significant drop in 2003. The school has been successful in providing for the higher number of pupils with special educational needs. The school's clear understanding of what it needs to do to improve provides it with a sound basis for future improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average points scored in National Curriculum tests.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	C	B	D	E
Writing	C	B	C	D
Mathematics	B	A	D	E

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

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In reading, mathematics, science, art and design and physical education good teaching leads to above average standards and higher achievement. The children in the Foundation Stage also achieve well and most will meet the expected learning goals by the end of reception.

Standards in the 2003 national tests for Year 2 pupils were lower than previous years because of the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in that cohort. The results for

2004 show a significant improvement in reading and mathematics, although pupils' results in writing were lower. Boys' achievements in writing were lower than the girls in 2004 but there are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls in the present cohort. The inspection findings show that standards in writing, ICT and most other subjects are average in Year 2. Standards in ICT have improved significantly since the last inspection as a result of good guidance and better equipment. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school.

The **pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.** The pupils express very positive attitudes about school: they generally work hard and behave well. There is a good level of attendance and most pupils are punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a sound quality of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, though they are good in some subjects and consistently good in the Foundation Stage. All teachers make good use of resources and the effective support staff are deployed well and given very clear guidance to support their work with the pupils. Firm and fair discipline facilitates the pupils' concentration and cooperation in most lessons. The children's social skills are promoted very effectively through all aspects of the curriculum in the Foundation Stage. There is a good curriculum throughout the school. Links between the subjects generate enthusiasm and interest in the pupils as do the many opportunities for learning outside lessons. In some long lessons the pace of learning slows to fill the time available and teachers' planning, although satisfactory overall, does not always address this. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall; occasionally opportunities for them to work independently are limited. Throughout the school, teachers assess pupils' achievements thoroughly and pupils are set targets for improvement. While written comments about their work inform the teachers and parents about the pupils' response to their tasks, they do not give the pupils enough information about how to improve. This prevents them from taking responsibility for their learning and evaluating their progress. The school is well-resourced and has good accommodation overall. Links with other schools are good and there are very good relationships with parents and carers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher, new since the last inspection, has been successful in her aims to generate a caring, happy community and to fuse strong links with parents. She has improved the involvement of both governors and teachers in school development although the role of subject leaders is not yet sufficiently well developed. **Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory.** The governors work hard and effectively on behalf of the school, fulfilling their statutory duties well. They effectively promote the school's ethos within the community and the school's values are reflected in their annual report to parents. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and an increasing understanding of areas for development. The financial management is satisfactory and the principles of best value are applied appropriately when purchasing supplies and services.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The pupils are very pleased with the support they receive and like their teachers, but a few feel they could work harder. Almost all parents are very positive about all aspects of the school although a few were concerned that the management of pupils' behaviour sometimes discriminated against the "good" pupils. The inspection team found that teachers were very fair in their management of pupils' behaviour and the acknowledgement of effort.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do next, so they can take responsibility for improving their work.
- Ensure curriculum coordinators take responsibility for analysing, supporting and improving teaching and learning in their subjects so that pupils of all abilities are challenged.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and pupils' achievements are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Standards are above average in mathematics and science and average in English, religious education and information and communication technology [ICT]. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment in reading, mathematics and science has improved since 2003 and is now above average
- As a result of the school's focus, standards in ICT are now average
- Almost all children achieve the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- Some pupils lack the confidence and skills to write independently
- Standards in physical education and art and design are above average

Commentary

1. When children join the reception classes their attainment varies considerably but overall is close to average for children of this age. They achieve well, most attaining the early learning goals all areas of learning. Almost all achieve the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development because of the very good introduction to school and the consistent teaching of personal and social skills.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.2 (16.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.9 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.8 (17.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. There was a drop in the standards achieved by pupils in the 2003 national tests because half the pupils taking them had special educational needs. Standards in reading and mathematics were higher in 2004 and above the 2003 national average. Inspection evidence indicates that this improvement has been sustained. Boys' achievements in writing were significantly lower than that of the girls in 2004 but this is no longer the case for pupils with average and above average abilities. Pupils in Year 2 are currently attaining average standards in writing.
3. The new reading scheme and the well-structured teaching of reading have raised pupils' standards while the good range of books motivates pupils to read. The school has worked hard to generate interest in writing through varied and relevant opportunities to write across the curriculum. There are no significant differences between the standards attained by boys and girls amongst pupils of average or above average abilities although there are more boys than girls with special educational needs. Standards in mathematics are above

average overall and a significant minority of pupils are on track to achieve the higher level 3 by the end of Year 2. The school's focus on the experimental and investigatory aspects of science has resulted in above average standards. Although comparisons with similar schools based on the number of pupils entitled to free school meals were unfavourable in 2003 the increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs means that such comparisons need to be treated with caution.

4. Standards in ICT have risen since the last inspection and are now average. This is due to the recent improvement in hardware and software and the understanding of the subject leaders. Pupils have achieved well in a short time and some have good ICT skills but the lack of opportunities for the subject leaders to support their less confident colleagues has kept standards at average levels throughout the school.
5. Pupils achieve well in physical education throughout the school and standards are above average by Year 2. Techniques are taught well and pupils have a thorough understanding of how to keep safe. The additional opportunities for sport and the good use of external trainers have contributed to the pupils' achievements. Pupils achieve well in art and design and standards in the two lessons observed were above average. Samples of work in design and technology, history and geography throughout the school show some good achievement and displays are of good quality. Pupils' singing demonstrates appropriate skills for their age but there was not enough music observed during the inspection to judge standards overall. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs [predominantly boys] have generally good support for their learning but this sometimes gets in the way of independent writing, resulting in a lack of confidence and willingness to write and their overall achievement is satisfactory. The higher attaining pupils also achieve satisfactorily but a lack of understanding of how to improve their work prevents them from making full use of their abilities. They achieve well in mathematics because the lessons are challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupils respond well to the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural values promoted by the school and, as a result, their attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. Most pupils are punctual and attendance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and often very good relationships help to create a happy environment which is conducive to learning
- Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and are consistently encouraged and praised for making the right choices
- Pupils have a good awareness of their responsibilities towards each other and many are kind and caring friends
- The provision for pupils' cultural development has improved since the last inspection
- There are some inconsistencies in teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour

Commentary

6. Pupils have a good range of opportunities to develop spiritual awareness through new and sometimes exciting experiences in their lessons. They enjoy painting and begin to develop an appreciation of colour, form and beauty. The natural world is brought into classrooms in

the form of autumn leaves, cones and other natural objects for pupils to examine and marvel at. They become absorbed in stories, identifying with some of the characters and are beginning to express their own views and feelings about what happens in the story. They sing with enjoyment and perform the actions with enthusiasm. They feel valued because teachers always listen to their contributions in lessons and this develops good levels of self-worth and encourages them to participate. Their enjoyment of life at school has a positive impact on their level of achievement.

7. Because the school promotes clear moral and social values which are supported by parents, pupils develop a clear understanding of the boundaries of acceptable behaviour within the school community. The school has good strategies to motivate and reward all pupils for their good behaviour and hard work. For example, Golden Time is highly valued by all pupils and they say they try hard to earn this. While teachers and support staff manage behaviour well overall, there are some inconsistencies in the level of discipline expected from pupils. When pupils are asked to work together in lessons they do so effectively and photographs displayed in the school show pupils working as a team when creating the garden area. Because of the good relationships between pupils, there are few concerns about bullying and pupils know that teachers will always help them if they are unhappy. All pupils have the opportunity each term to offer ideas for making school life better. Because the school takes these ideas seriously and acts upon them whenever appropriate, pupils feel part of the community. The *playground pals* elected at the beginning of each week take their responsibilities seriously. There have been no exclusions.

8. Provision for cultural development is good. Pupils have opportunities to listen to music from different cultures, for example, Chinese and South African music is played in assembly. They learn about the lifestyles of those from different parts of the world often through role play. They dress up in saris, taste different foods, celebrate festivals from a range of different world faiths and discover interesting facts about other countries in their geography lessons. They learn about British and European cultural traditions through stories and visits to places of interest.

9. During their time in the Foundation Stage, the children achieve well in personal, social and emotional development. Because of the very good induction arrangements the children settle quickly into the routines of the classroom and begin to learn through the good range of interesting activities provided for them. They respond with enthusiasm and try hard to please their teachers. They behave well.

10. Attendance is better than that found in most primary schools and unauthorised absence for the last reporting year is much lower than average. Good systems monitor attendance and follow-up absence, and parents are very good at notifying the school when their child is absent. Most pupils are punctual.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.5
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
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

Overall, the quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, though a number of important elements of it – the curriculum, the care and welfare of pupils and links with parents, schools and community, for example – are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good elements in the Foundation Stage and some subjects. Thorough assessments give teachers a good understanding of what pupils have achieved but marking does not help pupils improve their work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the Foundation Stage gives children a secure grounding in all areas of learning
- Marking and oral feedback do not help pupils improve their work or give them responsibility for their learning often enough
- Teaching assistants and other adults are deployed effectively to support and challenge pupils
- Homework supports learning well
- Time is not always used effectively and the time taken for pupils to learn expands to fill the time available

Commentary

11. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is almost always good. All adults give clear and consistent messages about how children are expected to behave and guide them towards good relationships with their peers and an understanding of the feelings of others. As a result all the children, including those with no nursery or playgroup experience, quickly settle into school. This good teaching enables the children to achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development. Teachers have a good understanding of the way children learn and plan interesting and practical activities. In one lesson, for example, the teacher gently encouraged a reluctant speaker to join her as she counted the sides of flat shapes. Her gentle and unobtrusive approach gave him confidence to say the numbers with her. Good assessments of the children's response and progress through the day enable the teachers to match the activities to the children's needs. This enables children to make good progress during their time in the reception class. The teachers make good use of the resources including the outside area. Children are encouraged to use the computers and are taught new skills effectively. As a result, they learn well and have confidence to try new skills. Occasionally there are missed opportunities to extend learning, through counting beanbags in a physical education lesson, for example.
12. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. It is good in a number of subjects, most notably mathematics and science. Teachers have a secure understanding of the curriculum and the government guidance for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. They make good use of adult support to extend pupils' learning and ensure that all adults have a good understanding of the level of support to be given to the pupils in their care. As a result all adults know the pupils well and effectively extend their learning. Occasionally, however, the support inhibits opportunities for pupils to work independently and, for some

pupils, especially the less able pupils and those with special educational needs, the expectation is that their written work will be supported. This results in these pupils lacking the will or the confidence to “have a go” at writing independently. Teachers make the most of opportunities to promote speaking and listening across the curriculum and the recent focus on the teaching of reading has been instrumental in raising standards.

13. Mathematical skills are developed well. Most pupils are encouraged to apply their skills to relevant and interesting problems or investigations, often linked to other subjects. Very clear teaching in the best lessons, backed up by practical applications of the new learning, enables the pupils to succeed. This approach has resulted in an almost unanimous enjoyment of mathematics and an eagerness to learn. Homework supports and extends the work in the classroom and challenges are offered to parents as well as the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support to learn basic skills but they have fewer opportunities to pursue interesting investigations, sometimes leaving the classroom to consolidate their skills with a teaching assistant. Good questioning ensures that they have opportunities to answer questions at their own level in the best lessons. The teachers have high expectations of pupils’ mathematical prowess and most lessons are challenging. As a result, pupils with average and above average abilities enjoy their lessons and make good progress. In some other subjects, where less is expected of the pupils, their progress is slower.
14. When planning lessons teachers make the most of opportunities for the pupils to find things out for themselves. Much of the science curriculum is taught through scientific enquiry and practical work consolidates learning well. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic. Sometimes, however, although the teachers have high expectations of pupils’ understanding, they are rarely expected to record the outcomes of their work independently, and rely on teacher-generated worksheets, missing opportunities to extend higher attaining pupils writing. ICT was taught well in the lesson observed during the inspection and most teachers provide opportunities for the pupils to use computers to support their work in other subjects. The very new hardware is not yet fully established in all classrooms and some teachers are less confident in its use than others. The two subject leaders use ICT well, both as a teaching tool and to develop pupils’ skills. Religious education is taught with sensitivity and pupils are encouraged to discuss their response to their learning. Physical education is taught well. Teachers have a good regard for health and safety, and their planning develops the pupils’ skills effectively. Very good relationships with the pupils and clear expectations of good behaviour and effort result in good progress in lessons.
15. The organisation of the school day results in some very long lessons. In a few lessons the pace of both teaching and learning slackens and the learning slows to accommodate the time available. In one science lesson, for example, a group of pupils had finished their jointed figure and were told to colour the limbs to fill the time. In another lesson pupils finished building models from solid shapes and were encouraged to build more, without any extension of learning. Sometimes pupils finish their work and choose other activities before the final session where the outcomes are discussed, losing continuity. Occasionally teachers allow too much noise in lessons, resulting in some lack of concentration.
16. The teachers carefully assess the pupils’ abilities and progress in most subjects. They record the pupils’ response to learning and the level of support given in the pupils’ books, providing a useful tool for the teachers to plan future work. Comments, other than praise, are rarely directed at the pupils. Pupils are set general targets for some subjects but these

are not referred to in the marking. As a result pupils do not know what they need to do to improve their work or how well they have completed their tasks. There are very few comments to indicate what the teacher expects in the way of quantity or the quality of the work in pupils' books. Sometimes praise is given for mediocre work and untidy presentation or handwriting is rarely commented upon. This is a weakness in the teaching as pupils cannot take responsibility for improving their work. The lack of comments to support learning in the pupils' books makes it very difficult for them to see the progress they have made. Teachers do not make the most of the pupils' targets to effect improvement. The targets are shared with parents but pupils are rarely involved. Although pupils quite often learn well in lessons, pupils' achievements over time are no more than satisfactory because they lack the information they need to improve.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	16	10	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The quality and range of the curriculum are good. There are worthwhile opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular activities. The accommodation and resources are used well to meet the pupils' needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum
- The curriculum is enhanced by lunchtime clubs
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is planned well
- There is currently no recorded long term curriculum plan to ensure continuity and progression during the year

Commentary

17. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and makes appropriate provision for pupils across all areas of learning. The Curriculum in Year 1 and 2 is broad and balanced and includes regular opportunities for the pupils' personal, social and health education. Appropriate use is made of national guidance to ensure that the vast majority of pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. During the inspection the curriculum was planned well for the term but there was no whole school, long term plan to ensure continuity and progression over the course of the year. Subject leaders, especially for the humanities, cannot be sure that their subjects are taught regularly enough to prevent pupils forgetting previous learning, although the use of government guidance ensures that, over time, the curriculum is covered. Good cross-curricular links are made between subjects such as history where pupils make effective use of research skills, drama and role play. In design and technology pupils use speaking and listening well to evaluate their models. There are sufficient resources for the school's planned curriculum to be implemented well. During the inspection the school was experiencing some technical difficulties with the

interactive whiteboards but there is evidence to indicate that ICT has improved since the last inspection and is now used appropriately across the curriculum.

18. Pupils benefit from a wide variety of lunchtime clubs which include French, ocarina, chess and sport. Visits to places of interest and visitors to the school also enhance the curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to appreciate their own and other cultures.
19. There is appropriate equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. This is especially apparent in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' individual progress is checked regularly against their individual education plans, showing that they acquire the basic skills, but the resources provided to support them, whether teacher-generated worksheets or adult support, sometimes prevents them from using their skills independently. All teaching and non-teaching staff promote the school's caring ethos and strong sense of community.
20. Very effective induction arrangements ensure a smooth transition when pupils are admitted to the Reception class and also when older pupils transfer to the junior school. Teachers make home visits to all Reception aged children and organise a staggered admission procedure which ensures that the children settle confidently into school life.
21. The quality and quantity of the accommodation are good. The school is clean, attractive and well ordered. Classrooms provide stimulating and lively learning environments. There are a number of useful areas adjacent to classrooms which are regularly utilised for group work. The external hard play area and attractive grounds are used well. The governors have earmarked funding to ensure that the external play area for the Foundation Stage pupils is made secure.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for the care, welfare and health and safety of all pupils. The caring relationships in school ensure that pupils receive good quality support and pastoral guidance. Pupils' views have a good impact on the quality of school life.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good induction arrangements provide a strong foundation for constructive and effective communication with parents
- The kindness and commitment of all staff ensures that parents and pupils feel confident that problems will be handled quickly, fairly and effectively
- All pupils have opportunities to influence school life
- Pupils are not always clear about what they have to do to improve their work

Commentary

22. There is a good awareness of health and safety issues and the school provides a clean and healthy environment. Fire drills are carried out regularly and there is good provision for first aid. Regular checks of the premises are carried out which ensure that the school provides a safe environment. Although there are good recorded risk assessments for visits out of school, risk assessments of the school building and grounds are not recorded

in sufficient detail. The headteacher is responsible for child protection issues and all staff are aware of their duty of care in this aspect of pupils' welfare. Pupils learn about the benefits of good hygiene and a healthy diet through their science and personal, social and health education lessons and parents are encouraged to provide healthy lunches for their children. The pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe round and about the school and in their lives outside school. Supervision at playtimes and during the mid-day break is good.

23. Because there are very good relationships between most pupils and the adults who work with them, pupils are confident that someone will help them if they are unhappy or worried about something. Any instances of poor behaviour are monitored and appropriate action taken to modify such behaviour. Personal, social and health education lessons provide good opportunities for teachers to informally monitor and support pupils' personal development and to identify any specific worries they may have. Educational support and guidance are satisfactory overall, although marking of pupils' work rarely gives a clear indication of where they may have gone wrong and how to make their work better. The very good induction arrangements for new arrivals ensures that parents are confident that their children will be well cared for.
24. The involvement of pupils in improving school life is good. Each term there is a brainstorming assembly when pupils are invited to offer suggestions for improvement. They have come up with ideas for the lunchtime clubs and playground resources and activities. As a result of the school implementing some of these ideas, the quality of pupils' life at school has improved.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a very good partnership with parents and the links with the community and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents are very positive about the work of the school
- Parents feel welcome in the school and have many very good opportunities for formal and informal contact with teachers
- The very good advice and help parents receive about working with their children at home has a positive impact on pupils' achievement, particularly in reading
- The good links with the community improve the quality of pupils' learning experiences

Commentary

25. The majority of parents who took part in the consultation before and during the inspection spoke very highly of the work of the school. They comment that they feel welcome in the school and are confident that the school listens to their concerns. They are provided with good information through the prospectus, the annual governors' report and the newsletters. The annual reports on the progress of children are good and all parents attend the consultation evenings to learn more about the achievement of their children and how they can help them to improve. Parents read with their children at home and large numbers join their children in class at the beginning of the day to share books. A small number of parents help regularly in classes and many volunteer to accompany the children on visits outside school. Although the parents' organisation is currently inactive, they have in the

recent past provided funds for the new staging and helped towards the cost of the canopy over the reception play area. The school values parents' views and formally consults them over organisational arrangements and future developments. The headteacher is very much in evidence at the beginning and end of the day and always makes time for parents who may have a concern.

26. The school has well-developed and beneficial links with the local community. There are regular and interesting visits to local amenities which increase pupils' enjoyment of school life. Visitors from the community support pupils' personal and social development as well as extending their learning. There are good links with the other schools and good systems to ensure effective transfer to the next stage of education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear understanding of the areas for school improvement
- Strong pastoral leadership has resulted in a good ethos and secure values
- There are very few opportunities for subject leaders to monitor the curriculum, teaching and learning or to support colleagues in their subjects
- The governors are now more involved in school life, understand the school strengths and are beginning to set challenging targets to address weaknesses

Commentary

27. The headteacher is strongly committed to the school and its community and has been successful in deepening links with parents and carers and the community. The pupils' personal development has been a major feature of school development enabling pupils to feel happy, secure and well-cared for. She identified the need to enable other staff to become more involved in school development and has had some success in guiding teachers towards successful audits of their subjects leading to appropriate plans for development. A strength of her leadership is the encouragement she gives to individual teachers to pursue initiatives such as the Effective Early Learning [EEL] project and the development of physical education. She is aware of the need to provide time for subject leaders to support teachers and to monitor teaching and learning and this forms part of the evolving development plan. The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher well and plays a full role in school development. The school is committed to inclusion and has coped with the increasing number of pupils with special educational needs well. The headteacher's evaluation of the school is thoughtful and perceptive and clearly identifies areas for development as well as its strengths.

28. The governors have increased their involvement in the school since the headteacher took up her post three years ago. They have an astute understanding of the strengths of the school and are very supportive of the headteacher and staff. Several have good expertise in their fields and offer valuable guidance over issues such as health and safety and special educational needs. One of the governors is a minister and is one of a group of four ministers who lead weekly acts of worship on a rota basis. The governors support the headteacher in drawing up plans for development and initiatives are appropriately linked to the school budget. Financial management is sound and money is put aside to address

specific needs such new fencing and replacing windows. Subject leaders do not have the responsibility for managing a budget but requests are appropriately linked to school priorities. School development planning until recently lacked rigorous priorities based on an analysis of the effectiveness of previous plans. This is being addressed and development planning is improving.

29. There is an appropriate programme of staff training and performance management. There have been difficulties involved in subject leaders meeting their management targets because they have not had the opportunity to monitor and support teaching and learning through the school. This not only impacts on pupils' progress but also limits opportunities for subject leaders to develop their management skills. This is unsatisfactory but there are plans to address the issue. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning in each class every term. The management of the Foundation Stage is good and the two teachers work together effectively, constantly reviewing and developing the provision. The deputy headteacher manages special educational needs well and uses her non-contact time effectively. She works closely with the governor with responsibility for special educational needs and together they ensure that the agreed policy is implemented well.
30. The very different leadership style of the present headteacher has begun to make leadership, management and governance more corporate and staff are eager to develop their management skills. School development has improved and the governing body, the headteacher and staff are fully aware of the challenges ahead and are well equipped to face them.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	423,256.91
Total expenditure	371,431.29
Expenditure per pupil	2,544.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	57,950.00
Balance carried forward to the next	51,830.00

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

31. The two reception classes provide a good educational start for the youngest children. At the time of the inspection the 49 reception children were attending school in the mornings only. The newly appointed Foundation Stage coordinator leads an established team of teachers and assistants who work well together. She has clear priorities for further improvement arising from the Effective Early Learning programme, which was successfully completed last year. The rich curriculum allows children a good balance of teacher directed and self chosen activity in all six areas of learning. Adults track children's development carefully so they know their individual needs, including special educational needs, well. This enables them to plan a wide range of interesting experiences to build learning in small steps. The Foundation Stage team establishes very good links between home and school and parents support their children's learning effectively. The two classrooms are suitably set out to provide a practical, play based environment and there is convenient access to a well resourced outdoor area. However, children cannot move freely between the indoor and outdoor environments because the outdoor space is not yet fully secure.
32. It was not possible to judge the standards attained or the quality of teaching and learning in **knowledge and understanding of the world** because no teaching sessions were observed. Teachers make good use of the local environment with trips and visits to develop understanding about places. They develop children's curiosity about the living world through exploration, investigation and interactive displays such as the autumn displays in evidence during the inspection. Children have good opportunities to use ICT to support their learning and some children have above average skills in managing the computer mouse to select, drag and enlarge images on the screen.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children quickly build good relationships with adults and other children
- Adults convey consistent messages, so children behave well

Commentary

33. Children join school with broadly average skills in this area of development. Teaching of good quality enables them to achieve well so that nearly all of them are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the year. The carefully structured induction programme helps children to settle quickly. By the time of the inspection, the children in both classes were happy and confident and relationships with adults and other children were strong. All children have good opportunities to make decisions and choices of their own and many make good attempts to dress and undress independently. All adults give clear and consistent messages about how children are expected behave, as when a teaching assistant stopped a group in the outdoor area to remind them how to share the toys. This means children work and play well together and behaviour is generally good in both

classes. They learn to wait until it is their turn to talk and to concentrate on their tasks. However, sometimes teachers expect children to spend too long on the same activity which leads to some loss of attention.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Early reading and writing skills are developed systematically in both classes
- Children are given, time, opportunity and encouragement to develop at their own pace.

Commentary

34. Children enter the reception classes with a wide range of skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing, although attainment is average overall. The systematic approach to teaching and learning means that children achieve well in both classes and a majority are likely to reach the expected goals in this area of learning. Good teaching was observed in both classes, supported by a wide range of books, opportunities for free writing and labels and captions on drawings and pictures. Children enjoy the short whole class sessions and are developing good speaking and listening skills. For example children in one class were taught the word “title” and suggested the word “golden” as an alternative to “yellow” as they shared a story about a scarecrow with their teacher. They were then asked to talk to a partner to recall the different animals in the story. This effectively ensured the active participation of each child.
35. A carefully planned programme for introducing words and letter sounds is sensitively taught so that all children are encouraged to build reading and writing skills in small steps at their own pace. Higher attaining children can already read some familiar words and identify and say the letter sounds. They composed, and attempted to copy, a short sentence written by their teachers. These skills are above those expected for children at this stage. However, most of these children will need systematic teaching to learn how to form letters correctly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide different interesting activities to repeat new ideas.
- Some incidental opportunities to practise skills are missed.

Commentary

36. Children start school with wide ranging but broadly average knowledge and understanding of numbers, shapes and measures. For example, at the time of the inspection when they had just started school, most children could count accurately when clapping and counting to five and some could name basic shapes. Achievement is satisfactory overall and was good in the only session observed. The majority of children are on course to reach the early learning goals for this area at the end of the year. The teaching is good. Teachers

plan well so that new learning is repeated and consolidated in a number of ways. When the children were introduced to the idea of repeating patterns they made up patterns with body actions before moving on to printing and drawing patterns with paint, paper and on the computer. In the outside area during the inspection children were provided with a number of ways to consolidate their understanding of “long” and “short” which had been introduced during the previous week. For example, they constructed buildings with long and short materials and compared the lengths of the worms found when digging. Teaching assistants have a clear understanding of their role in extending learning. However, sometimes incidental opportunities to use counting purposefully, such as the distribution of bean bags in a physical development session, were missed.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outdoor and indoor spaces are used well to develop coordination and control
- Some activities are continued too long for children to sustain their concentration

Commentary

37. Children start school with broadly average skills in moving with control and in using space, equipment and tools. They make sound progress and achievement is satisfactory because teachers give them time to develop their skills in the classroom, in the outdoor area and in the school hall. Children improve their coordination and control whilst enjoying a range of wheeled toys in the outside area. They develop finer movements in the classroom by practising skills such as cutting with scissors. All the teaching observed was at least satisfactory and most was good. In the hall sessions teachers modelled movements and skills clearly so that children joined in with confidence. Simple reviews and evaluations at the end of the sessions are used effectively to help children to begin to be aware of their own learning. Teaching is less good when the pace of change is too slow, which leads to some children losing concentration. The majority of children are likely to achieve the expected goals for this area by the end of the year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and assistants interact effectively with children to develop their creative and imaginative ideas
- Children sing familiar and new songs well

Commentary

38. Children have a wide range of creative abilities when they enter the reception classes and their attainment is average overall. They achieve well in this area of learning because teachers plan and allow time for a range of rich experiences and teach new skills well. Most children are likely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the summer term. The outdoor area is resourced well to develop imaginative play and adults intervene effectively to extend learning. For example, a small girl dressed up as a lollipop lady and carefully used large chalk sticks to make a zebra crossing on the paved area. The teaching assistant pointed her work out to those riding bikes and pushing prams and they were soon developing and enjoying an imaginative game together. Provision for sand, water and “small world” play is good and there are plentiful opportunities for children to explore different media and materials for art work. The standard of singing was high for this age group because teachers lead them confidently as they sang a new repertoire of songs linked to the autumn theme.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening and writing are average
- Standards are currently above average in reading
- There are stimulating opportunities to write but a significant minority of pupils lack the confidence and skill to write independently
- Pupils are often not clear about how to improve their work
- The role of the curriculum co-ordinator is currently underdeveloped

Commentary

39. The Year 2 provisional national test results for 2004 are a significant improvement on 2003 results. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has implemented a thorough overhaul of the reading programme. Standards in reading are now above average. Throughout the school all pupils benefit from access to a wide range of good quality books and the majority of pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because they are provided with appropriate and well targeted support from teachers and teaching assistants. Strategies such as guided reading, group reading and individualised reading are used well by teachers to ensure that all pupils have regular and varied opportunities to read. Home school diaries are used effectively and maintain a helpful record of pupils' reading progress.
40. Pupils are provided with good opportunities for speaking and listening. Teachers question very well to encourage pupils to extend their spoken responses such as in circle time when Year 1 pupils discussed what was good about their school. Year 2 pupils discussed with a partner the verbs which they thought would most aptly describe the way in which different animals might move through the jungle. Very good discussions took place as pupils were asked to evaluate their models of furniture following a design and technology activity.
41. Standards in writing are broadly average. Pupils generally work hard and achieve well in lessons. There are varied and interesting opportunities for pupils to write. For example in a Year 1 class 'Toby Troll' and Toby's book are taken home by the pupils who then write up their out-of-school experiences with the troll. There are many examples when pupils write letters, make booklets and plan their own stories. In a Year 2 class pupils had read the story entitled 'Handa's Surprise' and as a follow-up writing activity they chose a variety of imaginative adjectives to describe the look and taste of the tropical fruits in the story. In another Year 2 class the same stimulus was used to enable the pupils to use dictionaries to re-order the tropical fruits into alphabetical order. Teaching assistants provide appropriate support and guidance for pupils with special educational needs and they record pupils' progress diligently.
42. An investigation into the variable quality of the children's written work indicates that some of the average and lower attaining pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, many of whom are boys, are doing too much copying from adults' writing. In these situations the pupils are not developing sufficient confidence or skill to write on their own. Spelling is taught

systematically throughout the school and standards are in line with national recommendations. Standards in handwriting are more variable because insufficient attention is given to improving the letter formation and pencil grip of some pupils.

43. Most of the teaching seen during the inspection was good. Lessons are planned well, time is used efficiently and the work is generally matched appropriately to the needs of the pupils. Teachers are good humoured and establish very good relationships with the children and have a good understanding of what they are teaching. Consequently, the pupils are keen and remain interested throughout the lesson. There are a few occasions however when, in their eagerness to be positive, teachers over-praise mediocre work and in these cases a few pupils underachieve. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and also give them oral feedback about what the pupils have achieved. Rarely does the marking or oral feedback give the children any advice on what they need to do to improve still further. Consequently, teaching overall in English is judged to be satisfactory.
44. The role of the subject co-ordinator is currently under-developed because there are no systems to observe and analyse the quality of teaching and learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum.

45. Improving standards in reading are enabling pupils to access information in other areas of the curriculum. The school uses appropriate opportunities to develop a range of writing styles in other areas of the curriculum. For example, previously completed history work demonstrated how well the pupils had used empathetic writing to describe their thoughts and feelings as evacuee children.

Mathematics

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the 2003 national tests and are now above average
- The teaching is good and pupils achieve well
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in acquiring basic skills but progress in applying these to solving problems is satisfactory

Commentary

46. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the 2003 cohort depressed the overall performance in national tests when pupils' achievements were well below those of pupils in similar schools. In 2004 results improved and pupils achieved better than the 2003 national average. Although early in the term, the indications are that the pupils now in Year 2 are achieving at least as well as those in 2004. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress and there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. More able pupils and those of average ability make particularly good progress because the teachers encourage them to apply their skills to practical and relevant tasks. Less able pupils and those with special educational needs consolidate basic skills well because of the good support they receive from the teachers and the teaching assistants. There are fewer opportunities for them to apply their skills and they make satisfactory

progress overall. Overall provision for mathematics has been maintained since the previous inspection and standards are rising from the significant dip in 2003.

47. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall and never less than satisfactory. Lessons are prepared well and the work of the teaching assistants is well planned. During the inspection they all made a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. For example, a teaching assistant working with lower ability pupils in Year 1 used the technical vocabulary related to shape very effectively so that by the end of the session all the pupils knew what the faces of shapes are. The best lessons are challenging and well paced and learning is brisk and purposeful. In a very good lesson the teacher's questioning encouraged pupils to find the answers for themselves. By the end of the lesson the pupils had learnt a lot but the teacher had actually told them very little. In less effective lessons, although the tasks are always achievable and challenging for the more able pupils, the challenge for lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs varies. Sometimes not enough is expected of these pupils and their attention wanders while on other occasions they have concentrated support to master basic skills and little opportunity to work independently.
48. The pupils enjoy lessons and respond enthusiastically, working hard and taking care over their work. Homework is used well to encourage pupils to practise and extend their skills. For example, in one lesson a pupil asked what a 1D shape is. The teacher immediately delivered the challenge to the pupils to find out at home. Most teachers use ICT effectively to support mathematics and the pupils enjoy using computers to find solutions to problems or commercial programs to consolidate learning.
49. Teachers mark pupils' work accurately and give useful information about how the pupils' have worked, analysing what they have done, making a useful tool for assessment and planning. However, the marking does not inform pupils about what they need to do to improve. Some written comments praise mediocre work and pupils do not know what is expected of them. Not enough is done to help pupils take some responsibility for their learning and progress. Pupils have general targets that are shared with parents but these are not referred to in the marking.
50. The subject leaders have an appropriate overview of the subject and attend courses to inform the curriculum. Their information and support for parents is good. However, they have not monitored teaching and learning and have not yet had the opportunity to support teachers in the classroom.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. Mathematics is used well to support learning across the curriculum. In a science lesson, for example, pupils recorded the number of times they performed a movement in a minute on a chart, extracting data such as the fastest pupil. In an art lesson pupils cut their straws to size to make bones for their skeletons. The curriculum planning is geared towards integrating subjects where possible and pupils' topic and science books show good opportunities for developing mathematical skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching through scientific enquiry and investigation has raised standards
- Pupils show enthusiastic interest and work hard in lessons
- Higher attaining pupils do not record enough of their work independently

Commentary

52. Standards attained in science are above average and improving. Nearly all pupils attained the expected level in the most recent national assessments and a greater proportion of pupils attained above this level than in 2003. During the inspection these standards were confirmed in the lessons observed and through talking to pupils. For example, higher attaining Year 2 pupils showed good knowledge of healthy and unhealthy foods and compared the different features of plants and animals with confidence. They explained clearly how they had investigated the effects of exercise on their bodies. Pupils achieve well in science because their teachers promote a spirit of enquiry and careful investigation from an early age. The recent initiative they have undertaken to improve this aspect of their teaching is now raising standards.
53. Pupils enjoy their science work because teachers capture their interest with lively activities that are well pitched to present an appropriate level of challenge for all groups, including those with special educational needs. For example, a Year 2 class were encouraged to think deeply because the teacher structured her introduction to build on their own experiences in order to present the new idea that medicines can be harmful as well as helpful. Year 1 pupils were very interested and attentive as they explored how their own joints move through a wide range of practical activities. Pupils have many opportunities to use their speaking and listening, reading, writing, and numeracy skills purposefully in science lessons. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils read and designed labels for medicines and tablets and some of them used computers to create pictures and text. Earlier in the term they had produced block graphs to record their investigation into favourite healthy foods. However, higher attaining pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to achieve independence when recording their science work because they use structured worksheets too often.
54. The curriculum is well balanced across the different aspects of science to build knowledge, understanding and skills over the two years. Regular assessments enable teachers to track progress. However, the marking of children's work is not sharply focused enough to show children what they have done well and how to improve. The joint coordinators lead the subject satisfactorily. They are raising standards by leading the work to improve the teaching of scientific enquiry and investigation. But they do not have enough opportunities to thoroughly analyse performance, teaching and learning and this makes it difficult for them to monitor standards effectively.

Information and communication technology

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good, enhanced by good resources
- Pupils attain average standards and achieve well
- Computers are used well to support pupils' work in other subjects

Commentary

55. Progress for pupils of all abilities is good in developing and using the full range of skills in ICT. The school's good resources are used in class lessons and across the curriculum to provide ample opportunities for the pupils to develop a good range of skills and techniques. Pupils thoroughly enjoy using computers and, in the classes where the very new systems are up and running, develop skills rapidly. Boys and girls are equally successful.
56. The school's well structured guidance for the teaching of ICT as well as the new equipment has resulted in improved standards and provision since the previous inspection. Pupils respond well to the introduction of new skills and are quick and eager learners. Older pupils have secure skills in word processing and use the computer's tools to draft, edit and refine their work. The pupils competently use graphics programs and demonstrate good control of the mouse. They have their own folders and in Year 2 they access them confidently and save their work accurately. Although old folders cannot easily be transferred from the older computers, samples of work show that pupils cover the full range of the curriculum. Pupils are particularly adept at using the digital camera to record activities across the curriculum. Pupils use CD-ROMs and the Internet and are aware of the benefits and dangers of this research tool, supported by the school's policy on Internet use.
57. The teaching and learning were good in the lesson observed during the inspection. Very clear instruction and the use of pupils to demonstrate techniques ensured that learning was effective. The interactive whiteboard enhanced the demonstration and pupils are confident in its use. Lesson plans in a variety of subjects often incorporate ICT. Pupils are permitted to work independently and use their initiative so that the subject contributes well to personal, social and emotional development. However, some of the new equipment is not yet functional and some teachers lack confidence in its use. The subject leaders have a good overview of strengths and areas for development but do not have the opportunity to support their colleagues in the classrooms. There are plans for in service training and setting up pupils' personal e-mail accounts and the school website. Governors support initiatives well and have been proactive in contracting for equipment following setbacks outside the school's control.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. Pupils use ICT effectively in a range of subjects and this enhances their progress and understanding in a variety of skills. In science, for example, they use commercial programs with drop-down options to produce animal keys and drag and drop labels of body parts. Pupils have designed T shirts and produced graphics in the style of Mondrian. Commercial programs are used regularly to support learning in English and mathematics. Pupils often use computers for research at home and these contributions are highly valued in school.

HUMANITIES

59. No lessons were seen in geography and history and it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching but indications are that it is at least satisfactory. Inspectors gathered evidence from previously completed work, teachers' planning and from discussions with pupils and teachers. Two lessons in religious education were seen in Year 1.

60. In **geography** Year 1 pupils have looked at a map of their journey from home to school. The pupils recalled some of the main features of their own locality. Good use was made of the interactive whiteboard for pupils to see how their journey to school compared with that of other children. Year 1 pupils were also aware of the changes occurring in the environment and the responsibility that they had to care for it. In history Year 2 pupils had used maps to identify some of the significant castles in the British Isles.
61. In the Year 2 **history** study on castles a visiting actor had provided an excellent stimulus for role play which had included the re-enactment of a medieval banquet. The pupils have been highly motivated and excited by this experience and have talked with great enthusiasm about how they had prepared ink and had used quill pens to write with. The castle study also involved the pupils in bread making and in preparing olive oil. Pupils deployed their art and design skills as they made pomanders and clay gargoyles. Previously completed work demonstrated excellent use of empathetic writing when pupils considered the thoughts and feelings of evacuee children and their host families during a study of World War II. This work demonstrated that pupils showed an understanding of how events affected peoples' lives. Current work indicates that the pupils are beginning to start to understand why people in the past acted as they did.

Religious education

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils reflect upon their own thoughts and beliefs
- Pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of some of the events in the life of Jesus and some of the stories from Hinduism

Commentary

62. Standards are broadly in line with the requirements of the Northamptonshire Syllabus for Religious Education. The two lessons observed were in Year 1 where the pupils discussed the concept of 'belonging'. Pupils considered their own experiences of belonging to a school community, to their own family and to other organisations and clubs. The pupils discussed their own school logo and the symbols and emblems used to denote membership of a group. Having seen the symbols of a cross and fish some of the pupils were able to discuss their own experiences of Christian places of worship and of prayer and worship. Very sensitive questioning by the teacher enabled these pupils to share their thoughts and experiences with the rest of the class. Year 2 pupils understand some of the main events in the life of Jesus and recall with accuracy the parable of the Good Samaritan. The pupils also understand why Jesus taught in parables. Previously completed work indicates that pupils have explored the significance of light in the festival of Christmas and they have also looked at the significance of light in the Hindu festival of Diwali.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

63. Inspectors observed two physical education lessons and two lessons of art and design. One music lesson was observed and a group of pupils evaluated their design and technology work with a teaching assistant. In addition, inspectors looked at teachers'

planning and talked to the teachers and pupils about the subjects. They also looked at a range of completed work. The planning for all the subjects meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and there are regular opportunities to study each subject. The school has well crafted schemes of work and skills, knowledge and understanding are developed consistently. Evidence from the work observed shows that boys and girls are working at similar levels which are appropriate for their age.

64. Pupils enjoy **music** and sing with enthusiasm in their singing assemblies. The subject leader teaches every class, alternating the music lessons with the class teacher. This way she has a good understanding of pupils' musical abilities throughout the school. The planning for the subject covers all aspects of the curriculum and a computer program is used for simple compositions. In the satisfactory lesson observed during the inspection, pupils in Year 1 pupils tapped simple rhythms and sang simple songs with actions, controlling their voices with appropriate skill. However, pupils were very cramped in the classroom and several were not fully involved in the lesson. There is a good range of opportunities for the pupils to take part in musical productions and the lunchtime ocarina club is well-supported. The school is hoping to introduce violin tuition on a fee-paying basis. Pupils listen to a variety of music from a range of cultures and styles and have had visitors to introduce Chinese and Indian dance. There is an appropriate range of equipment to support the subject.
65. The teachers provide well planned opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills and techniques in **design and technology**. Pupils design, plan construct and evaluate their work and the work around school and in photographs shows appropriate skills. Pupils were involved in designing the outdoor play area, adding purpose and relevance to their learning. Much of the work is cross-curricular. In a science lesson, for example, pupils joined cardboard limbs to construct a body showing joints. There is an interesting selection of artefacts related to castles in the Year 2 classrooms, with home-made soap, candles, pots, writing with home made ink and heraldic shields. A group of lower attaining Year 1 pupils discussed their models demonstrating a clear understanding of the principles of effective evaluation. The teaching assistant's effective questioning resulted in good improvement in pupils' speaking and listening skills by the end of the lesson.
66. **Art and design** work displayed around the school and standards attained in both lessons indicate that provision in this subject is good and standards attained are above average. Year 2 pupils observe very carefully as they draw and they mix paint colours well. Displays around the school show that children have opportunities to develop their creative skills through a wide range of experiences with different media including clay for three dimensional work. Year 1 pupils planned how photographs should be composed by making sketches before the pictures were taken. Work is well planned to help children make meaningful links between their learning in different subjects.

Physical education

Provision for physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above average
- The teaching is good and pupils make good progress in lessons
- There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in sport outside the lessons

Commentary

67. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 demonstrated above average skills in the lessons observed during the inspection. Both teachers emphasised health and safety before the lessons began, and pupils were encouraged to discuss the changes in their bodies after movement. Pupils were knowledgeable about this and understood why the heart beats more quickly. In both lessons pupils showed they were aware of space and each other. They strived to improve their movements and rose to the challenge of increasingly difficult throwing and catching tasks in Year 2. The teaching was good in both lessons. Both teachers made good use of pupil demonstration to extend learning, occasionally picking a pupil who normally lacks confidence to boost self-esteem. Good relationships and pupil management ensured that pupils remained on task. Pupils in Year 1 have been taught to handle large apparatus safely. Both lessons maintained a good pace and it was evident that all pupils enjoyed themselves.
68. Pupils have access to coaches for aspects of the curriculum who also support lunchtime clubs. Pupils participate in tournaments with other schools as well as their own sports day. They have raised money for charity with a sponsored obstacle race and the community have joined in the school dance festival. Subject leaders are involved in a four-year course to develop physical education in school. Pupils use the junior school's swimming pool and pupils have the opportunity to swim during the year. They have experienced dance from different cultures, making a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
69. The subject is managed well and the opportunities for enrichment are good. However, the subject leaders have not observed lessons to evaluate teaching and learning or had the opportunity to develop teachers' expertise in the subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

70. No lessons were seen in **personal, social and health education** and so no judgements are made about overall provision. However, the school places considerable emphasis on health education and on living and working in harmony with each other. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in discussion and to learn social skills such as taking turns, looking after people and helping each other. Circle time is well established and is used appropriately for pupils to talk about feelings and concerns. In science and physical education pupils learn what makes a healthy lifestyle.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

