

INSPECTION REPORT

OAKWAY INFANT SCHOOL

Wellingborough

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121900

Headteacher: Mrs A J Phillips

Lead inspector: Mr D Marshall

Dates of inspection: 27th – 30th June 2005

Inspection number: 267421

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	207
School address:	Off Oakway Wellingborough Northamptonshire
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Telephone number:	01933 678714
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr N Wright
Date of previous inspection:	October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Oakway Infant School is set in the small market town of Wellingborough. There are 207 pupils on roll; there are nine classes and 12 teachers some of whom are part time. The school serves a large council estate with socio-economic disadvantage to the north of the town although the recent expansion of the town has enlarged its catchment area and 25 per cent of the children travel within a three-mile radius. There are 36 per cent of pupils claiming free school meals – well above the national average.

Pupils' level of attainment is below average on entry to the school. Pupil mobility is about average – 18 pupils joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission, and 14 left.

Attendance is well below the national average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic background is around 25 per cent – above the national average. Currently there are no pupils with English as an additional language and at an early stage of language acquisition. However, there are 48 pupils supported through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant provision and there are four Traveller pupils.

The school received Beacon Status in 1999 and this was renewed until September 2004.

In 2004 the school became part of the Excellence in Cities initiative which has supported some of the essential work linked to attendance and deprivation.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27681	David Marshall	Lead inspector	Mathematics Physical education Information and communication technology Music The Foundation Stage English as an additional language
14141	Ernest Marshall	Lay inspector	
24895	Kath Hurt	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology
1678	David Peckett	Team inspector	Science Religious education History Geography Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Oakway is a good school with many very good features. Pupils achieve well academically and very well in their personal development. Achievement is good because teaching and learning are effective. The school is very well led by the headteacher and effectively managed. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The quality of teaching is good and pupils are now achieving well in English, mathematics and science. However, handwriting and presentation could be improved.
- This is a very caring school in which all pupils are included and made welcome, and achieve very well in their personal development. Pupils have very good attitudes to work, behave very well and contribute very well to school life.
- Leadership by the headteacher is very good and the school is well managed. Governors support the school well and make an important contribution.
- The curriculum is well balanced and enriched by a very good range of additional activities.
- In some lessons, checks on pupils' learning are not used well enough to provide for them all.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in October 1998. The headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard to move the school forward. All key issues from the last inspection have been resolved well. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved. All schemes of work are completed and being used well. Provision in both information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education has improved significantly. Learning support staff are now well informed, enthusiastic and skilled in taking on new roles. The involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own work has improved well. The effective work of the headteacher and staff has maintained the many good features noted at the time of the last inspection, and built on them well.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 2 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
Reading	D	B	E	C
Writing	C	A	D	C
Mathematics	D	B	D	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with pupils claiming the same percentage of free school meals.*

Overall achievement is good from reception to Year 2. Children start in the reception classes with below average skills in all areas of learning. Although children are well taught, standards remain below average overall, but particularly in their language development. However, standards are average in children's physical and personal development. Pupils work hard in Years 1 and 2. Although results in the Year 2 national tests in 2004 were well below average in reading and below

average in writing and mathematics when compared to all schools, they still represent good achievement for a cohort of pupils with an above average number with special educational needs. Pupils' work is improving overall and this year's unconfirmed scores have risen. Standards in Year 2 now are average in reading, writing and mathematics and above average in science. Achievement in art and design, music and religious education are good. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and many achieve standards in line with their peer group by the time they leave school.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. As a result, they have very positive attitudes to school. They are enthusiastic and motivated, and enjoy coming to school. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They form very good relationships, are keen to help each other and enjoy each other's success. The attendance of a small minority of pupils is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers manage pupils very well and secure high standards of behaviour. The good quality of teaching in all classes reflects very great care and skilled management on behalf of all adults. Throughout the school, teachers have good subject knowledge, use a wide range of teaching methods and resources and plan lessons effectively. In the best lessons teachers ask probing questions and listen to pupils' ideas, praising them so that they want to try even harder, and all staff treat pupils fairly. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning. The quality of whole-class teaching in the literacy and numeracy sessions is good. Assessment information about what pupils know, understand and can do in English and mathematics is detailed, and used well to make the work relevant to pupils' needs in some classes, but not consistently in all. This means that in a few lessons some pupils show less interest or make slower progress than they might. The curriculum throughout the school is good and well planned, although the use of resources in ICT does not enable pupils to make adequate progress. Teachers ensure all pupils are included in all activities and provide a rich range of activities outside lessons. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Procedures for child protection are good. The school has very good links with other schools and very good links with the local community. Partnerships with parents are very good. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and support the school well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher's very good leadership provides a secure and very welcoming environment that ensures all staff and pupils are valued and fully included in the life of the school. The head works very well with all staff to raise standards. Management of the school is good; all staff manage their areas of responsibility well, work as a team and share a vision for future improvement. Overall, governance is good and ensures that the school's work meets all legal requirements. Governors show a strong commitment to supporting the school and organise their work well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a high regard for the school and the place it has in the local community. Pupils enjoy school, and are proud of it and enjoy the very good support they receive.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve so that standards are raised further are:

- Use the results of assessment procedures consistently to refine the work set in lessons to meet the needs fully of pupils of different abilities on a daily basis.
- Improve the presentation and accuracy of pupils' work through a well-structured and consistent approach to teaching writing.
- Continue to develop ways of improving levels of attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is good throughout the school. Standards have improved overall since the last inspection and are now average overall. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the reception classes, children's learning is good but due to their low starting point most children do not reach the expected levels at the start of Year 1.
- Although standards in Year 2 now are average in English and mathematics and above average in science, handwriting and presentation are often unsatisfactory.
- Standards in art and design are above average by the time pupils leave school.
- Pupils achieve well in other subjects, although with consistent use of assessment some pupils could achieve more.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.

Commentary

1. The provision for children in the reception year is good. Good teaching and curriculum planning give the school the capacity to continue its current good level of provision. All children make good progress overall from a below average starting point. The good teaching means that despite the fact more children than usual come into school with attainment below that expected for their age, all learn well and are well prepared for Year 1. Their attainment is average in their physical development and their personal development by the time they enter Year 1, and they achieve below average standards in the other areas of learning. Children with special educational needs are identified quickly and made good progress in the lessons observed.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.5 (16.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.5 (16.6)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.6 (17.1)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 91 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The attainment of the current Year 2 is average and inspection findings confirm that seven years olds achieve well. Over the last four years the school's results in the national tests for seven year olds have shown significant improvement. The change for the better has been above the national average when compared with similar schools. Standards in the National Curriculum tests of 2004 for Year 2 pupils were well below average in reading and below average in mathematics and writing. When compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment in the same tests was average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics, a good level of achievement and progress for a group of pupils with a very high number with special educational needs. The number of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was above average in reading and well above

average in writing and mathematics when compared to similar schools. Pupils' work is improving overall and this year's standards are set to rise.

3. Standards in the current Year 2 are average overall in English, mathematics and science. Inspection evidence shows that standards in speaking and listening rise from below average on entry to the school to average by the time pupils leave. Most pupils speak clearly and with increasing confidence. They show great willingness and spirit when answering questions in all classes in the school. Standards in reading in Year 2 are average and improving because the good teaching of basic reading skills means pupils learn well. Pupils read a wide range of books and keep clear records of their reading. Writing is now progressing well and standards are rising and are currently average, although poor presentation and handwriting often disguise the good progress being made.
4. Standards in mathematics have also risen well throughout the school. In previous years, standards by the end of Year 2 have generally been below the national average. Pupils achieve well overall since they generally enter the school with below average standards and are on course to leave with average standards this year. This is because of the consistently good teaching throughout the school that leads to pupils learning well. Achievement by the end of Year 2 is good. Both boys and girls do equally well in the various strands of the subject.
5. In science, standards in school have risen and are continuing to improve. The pupils enter the school with below average attainment in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Pupils achieve well because the teaching and learning in science are good throughout the school and standards reached are now above average at the end of Year 2. In 2004 the number of pupils judged to have achieved the average level, and the higher Level 3, in science was in line with that of similar schools. These results are set to rise this year as pupils have been taught in groups of similar ability and have consolidated their skills well.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Very good individual education plans are provided for all pupils, with clear targets for improvement to ensure work is matched to their ability effectively and pupils are enabled to learn well. Teaching assistants maintain good progress by focusing on individuals and small groups. Pupils' attainments vary by the time they leave. There are more pupils with statements of particular need than in most schools and some of these attain below national expectation. However, most pupils reach national expectation because of the effective well-planned support in the classroom.
7. Currently standards are above average in art and design by the time they leave. The good teaching and good leadership of subjects ensure that throughout the school pupils continue to learn well overall. Achievement is good in music and religious education and satisfactory in the other non-core subjects¹, but with better use of ongoing assessment to modify lessons to meet all pupils' individual needs achievement in all subjects would be enhanced.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

¹ The core subjects are English, mathematics and science. Geography, history, art and design, design and technology, physical education, religious education, music and ICT are the non-core subjects

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is also very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and a clear strength of the school. Pupils' attendance is well below the national average for primary schools and is unsatisfactory. Pupils' punctuality is satisfactory, and the school day starts and finishes on time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and behaviour in class make positive contributions to learning and progress.
- Very good relations ensure the school is a happy and mutually supportive community.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted very well by the school and pupils are encouraged to become mature and responsible.
- The attendance for a significant number of pupils is well below that expected for primary schools.

Commentary

8. The school makes a priority of encouraging pupils to become engaged in their lessons and activities. Reinforced with teachers' high expectations of behaviour, pupils are required to behave well and to work hard. Pupils respond well and concentrate on their given tasks and try to please. They are often trusted to work on their own and also required to show they are able to work well co-operatively together in groups or pairs when asked. Pupils show interest in the lessons and topics provided. They are happy to show what they have done and to talk about it. The very good attitudes and behaviour in class enable pupils to make good progress. This is particularly evident in the reception classes where children are enabled to make good early progress in developing their social skills.
9. A strong moral code based on the school's own aims and ethos is taught and encouraged across all age groups and this enables pupils to quickly understand the difference between right and wrong and the types of behaviour that will or will not be acceptable. In doing so, the school has developed very good relationships between its pupils and this reflects in the way that they are able to show genuine concern for others. The very good behaviour and co-operation seen in class are also seen in the two playground areas. Equipment provided is shared without dissent. There is no evidence of any bullying, racial or any other form of harassment. Work and play are enjoyed in a happy school community that reflects the school's commitment to full inclusion.
10. The school encourages pupils to become mature and to think about their moral and social responsibilities. Through themed assemblies and provision of drama, music and art, the school ensures pupils have many opportunities to develop their spirituality. The school makes good use of visitors to give pupils additional instruction in religious teaching; the local vicar and community worker are very popular contributors. The high expectations of behaviour and social acceptance are continually emphasised through assemblies and class discussion sessions known as circle time. Pupils have been provided with a good knowledge of their own faiths and cultures and have opportunities to learn about other faiths and beliefs. The overall very good level of personal development achieved ensures pupils are well prepared for appreciating the responsibilities of living in a wider community.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	1.5
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

11. The school's home/school liaison officer monitors attendance daily and always attempts to contact the parents of any pupil absent without prior notification. The educational welfare officer visits the school weekly. However, the extended absence of a number of pupils, together with a high incidence of sickness, has resulted in an overall low attendance rate for the school. Promotion of better attendance has begun through certificates being awarded for maximum attendance; the school is presently reviewing the effectiveness of this strategy.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and so pupils achieve well. Assessment is good. There is good provision for pupils' support, care and guidance. The school has very good links with other schools and the local community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and the staff have successfully built on the standards in learning identified at the last inspection. Assessment is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers motivate and manage pupils well, promoting very good relationships and behaviour.
- Lesson planning is detailed and thorough, giving most lessons purpose and drive.
- In English, mathematics and science, teachers' expectations are high, enabling all pupils, including the most able, to be challenged well.
- Assessment procedures are detailed in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but the use of assessment information on a day-to-day basis requires improvement.
- Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this promotes very good achievement.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	10 (29%)	19 (56%)	5 (15%)	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.

12. The good quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage reflects good understanding of the early years' curriculum and skilled management. The teachers and classroom assistants provide a broad, interesting curriculum that engages children effectively. They draw on their knowledge of individual children to ensure that learning is relevant to their developing needs. Expectations in terms of learning and social skills are high, resulting in very good progress overall and challenge for all children, including the most able. Classroom support is effective and well organised. This helps to ensure that the least able children also progress very well and gain satisfaction from learning.
13. Throughout the rest of the school, teachers manage pupils well, insisting on and securing high standards of behaviour and they use pupils' energy and enthusiasm effectively to promote learning well. Teachers plan lessons carefully to create a good learning atmosphere. A very good example was the music lesson for Years 1 and 2 where the teacher enabled all pupils to sing a complicated song in two parts – with each group able to take either part. At the end of the lesson all involved felt a great sense of achievement in what they had accomplished.

14. Carefully targeted questioning, appreciation of pupils' ideas and well-judged use of praise, motivate pupils and carry learning forward very well. An example of this was a very good science lesson in Year 2 where the teacher enabled the pupils to really understand simple electrical circuits through her very good use of the interactive whiteboard and the full involvement of all pupils. Teaching assistants work very effectively in all classes, valuably enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.
15. Teachers include pupils with special educational needs fully in lessons because they plan work at an appropriate level. Pupils have good support from well-trained teaching assistants both in lessons and on withdrawal in small groups. The strengths of this teaching and learning are the planning, relationships, high expectations, match of tasks to individual needs and use of support staff. Consequently pupils are interested and involved and want to learn. The collection and use of assessment information to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs are very effective.
16. The school has useful systems for identifying pupils' targets and tracking their progress towards them. Good analysis of standardised tests is undertaken and areas of weakness are identified. Assessment arrangements for English, mathematics and science are detailed, and used well to set up-to-date targets for pupils. All teachers use informal assessments to gauge all pupils' understanding in lessons. However, the information from these checks on pupils' progress is not consistently used by all teachers to modify the plans for the next lesson to meet the needs of pupils with different levels of ability. As a result, lessons are not always sufficiently challenging.
17. There is now a good school policy for marking written work, that encourages the frequent use of feedback to pupils, which is related to the aims for learning in the lesson. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully, usually giving them clear advice on how to improve. All teachers also employ the green and red traffic light system at the end of lessons to check with the pupils how well they think they have learnt. These arrangements motivate pupils, encourage positive attitudes to learning and promote good progress. Homework is used appropriately to support pupils' progress throughout the school.

The curriculum

The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are very good. The accommodation is very good and resources give good support for the curriculum, except in ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and curriculum co-ordinator have a clear vision for the curriculum the school is providing.
- The overall curriculum is broad, interesting and practical and interests the pupils.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Extra-curricular activities greatly enhance and enrich the curriculum,

Commentary

18. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to improve the curriculum. There is a consistent approach to problem solving in mathematics, and to investigation and enquiry in science, that is helping to provide more challenge to all pupils and to raise standards, especially of the more able pupils. All subjects are part of the carefully

structured curriculum plan to support the pupils' learning. There is a clear framework for developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, which is usually adapted well to pupils' needs to ensure that pupils of all abilities make good progress. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection when some subjects were not planned for systematically.

19. The headteacher has ambitious plans to continue developing and improving the curriculum so as to ensure it meets the needs of all the pupils. In managing the time available the headteacher wants to ensure pupils are given a good programme of physical education and the arts. The curriculum for pupils throughout the school meets their needs well in mathematics. The learning opportunities are based effectively on the National Numeracy Strategy with an emphasis on a problem-solving approach. The developments in English, and the focus on writing, are having an impact on the standards pupils achieve. Good opportunities are provided for speaking, listening, reading and writing in English that contribute to pupils making good progress in these key areas. Handwriting is not developed so as to enable pupils to write fluently and neatly. In other subjects, pupils' needs are being met well. In science the emphasis on investigation and a practical approach makes learning very active and is having a significant impact on standards. The creative and imaginative lesson plans excite the pupils and make them want to learn. Literacy skills are being promoted satisfactorily through other subjects such as science and history.
20. There are sound opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills when working in the computer room in specific timetabled lessons but insufficient use is made of classroom computers. The school has an innovative approach to curriculum planning to provide for setting in Year 2. The flexible approach to planning provides for the allocated time to be used carefully so as to provide the opportunity for more in-depth study as well a wide variety of experiences that enrich the curriculum.
21. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is well organised and carefully managed. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress with additional support in class or in small groups withdrawn from class. The very good support from teaching assistants helps them to achieve well. Targets on pupils' individual education plans are clearly focused, and the regular review meetings help to monitor the pupils' progress and promote a positive home-school partnership. Pupils identified as gifted and talented are carefully nurtured and their progress monitored.
22. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. The approach to the provision for sex education and drugs' misuse awareness are organised well and contribute to the personal, social and health education curriculum. There is very good use of personal and social education to help pupils develop their awareness of others and to help them respond appropriately. The school promotes a very positive approach to a healthy life-style and personal well-being.
23. There is very good extra-curricular enrichment of the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to attend after-school activities, including various sports and dance. These activities are well attended. They motivate and interest pupils and help develop positive attitudes to school and to learning. Visits to places of interest, special days in school, such as the Carnival Day, school performances and visitors to the school add enrichment to the curriculum and make learning exciting. The school places a high value on music, dance and the arts.

24. The school building provides very good accommodation. The resources are good and support the teaching and learning in all areas, except in ICT. The recently acquired interactive whiteboards are being used very effectively and are having an impact on the pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school has good procedures for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare. Very good relationships with adults in school ensure staff know pupils well and are able to give good and relevant advice and guidance. The school has good arrangements for consulting pupils and involving them in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have confidence to approach an adult for advice or guidance.
- Good standards of pastoral care provided by the school ensure pupils can work and play in a safe environment
- Effective arrangements for consulting pupils give them opportunities to modify the routines of the school.

Commentary

25. This is a caring school where every pupil matters and every pupil is respected. Staff know their pupils as individuals with particular needs. Induction into the reception classes and transfer on to the Year 1 classes are carefully planned to ensure children can quickly settle in and begin to make progress. Children are informally assessed before commencing school and again shortly after entry to help identify their needs at an early stage. Teachers and assistants continually monitor pupils' academic progress and achievement and also assess their personal development characteristics as they proceed through the age groups. The headteacher is able to maintain regular contact with all pupils and this provides a well-informed overview of how each one is developing. The very good relationships developed give pupils the trust and confidence necessary to enable them approach an adult for help and advice if they have worries or concerns. The personal knowledge acquired by the staff ensures that the advice and support offered are both appropriate and relevant to pupils' individual needs.
26. The school and the governing body work well together to ensure that a good level of pastoral care is provided. Pupils with special educational needs are very well cared for and supported by the school's own staff and visiting specialists to provide a good range additional support. Personal care begins early in the supervised Breakfast Club and ends with the after-school club activities Pupils are carefully supervised in the classroom and in the playgrounds. Safe practices are followed during lessons, especially where health and safety could be an issue, such as physical education, science and design and technology, and there are strict rules about safe access to the Internet. Control of the afternoon dispersal arrangements ensures pupils are always met by known parents or carers. The required health and safety inspections and equipment tests are carried out and regular fire drills are held and evaluated. The governing body are involved in regular site and premises inspections to identify potential hazards. Risk assessments are prepared. First aid arrangements are good; all staff are trained. The school meets child protection requirements well.
27. Using a questionnaire based on the Ofsted format, pupils have recently been consulted on their opinions of the school and their likes and dislikes. A suggestions box is

prominently placed by the reception desk. The class discussion sessions, known as circle time, are also used to encourage pupils to express their concerns or suggestions for problem solution. The recent election of a school council, made up of eight pupils covering all age groups, has provided an effective means of pupils being able to bring problems or suggestions to their class representative for discussion in a school-wide forum. The council meet as a group to discuss the merits of each matter raised and put decisions to the headteacher for final consideration. The group have already discussed the school and class rules and the need for them. They have successfully gained the establishment of the 'playground friends' and are currently looking at new ways of pupils being able to help others. Members keep notes to enable them give feedback to classmates. The initiative ensures pupils can have a voice in school and is a good example of promoting personal development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good and parents are very supportive of the school. The developed links with the community are very good and used well to provide benefits for the school. Provision of extended services is very good. There are very good links with other schools and colleges and these are used well to support learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good extended services offered by the school are used effectively to meet local needs.
- Very good links with parents enable them to provide help with learning at home and at school.
- Very good links with other schools and colleges are used well to support staff development and pupils' learning.
- Very good links with the local community enable the school to provide additional stimulus to learning.

Commentary

28. The school actively seeks parents' interest and involvement in improving the quality of their children's education. To achieve this, the school provides a range of activities and services designed to meet differing needs. Parents can bring children into school at eight o'clock for the Breakfast Club meal and activities. Twenty-one pupils are currently enjoying these sessions supervised by the home/school liaison officer. Parents have already been circulated to test the need for the new 'wrap around' facility. A 'drop-in' session with a trained counsellor is provided for parents having social or other problems. Parents are invited into school for 'book and biscuit' sessions and computing skills' development where they can work alongside their children and discuss any problems with the teacher. One-to-one reading support is offered. The school organises a weekly play hour for toddlers combined with a well-baby clinic for mothers, conducted by the community nurse and dietician. Courses in parenting, early years help, literacy and numeracy are organised and provided. Community access to computers and the Internet is to be offered.
29. Through these services, regular consultation, and through the genuine 'open door' policy, parents have become very supportive of the school and the number of regular helpers is increasing. Parents help with supervision for off-site visits, come into school to demonstrate national costume and help with translation matters. Parents helped erect the large adventure play equipment. The parent/teacher association is active in

fund raising and has made a significant contribution this year for new equipment in the school's swimming pool.

30. Membership of the Beacon Schools Partnership has provided additional funding and promoted the school well. Membership of the local cluster of twenty-three schools provides very good opportunities for staff development through sharing common problems, best practice initiatives and joint training. Transfer of pupils into the junior school and later into secondary school is significantly helped by the co-operative approach of these schools. There are good links with two local colleges and with the university. These provide tuition for national vocational courses and higher level teaching assistants, both of which the school has taken up for staff. The link with the university provides additional adult support in the classrooms as graduate teachers are given work experience placements.
31. The school has developed a very good range and variety of links within the local community. The premises are made available for local groups. Three local businesses have donated resources. Visitors are welcomed and include the community relations officer, community police, nurse and fire service personnel to talk to pupils about home and personal safety and hygiene matters. The local authority gives sessions on environmental issues such as the benefits of re-cycling. The link with the church is strong. Visits to local sites such as the churches, heritage centre, theatre, allotments and the town are used well to stimulate pupils' interest for their topic work and extend their knowledge well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership by the headteacher is very good. The management and governance of the school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership by the headteacher drives the school forward very effectively.
- School improvement planning establishes development priorities and action very clearly.
- Very good arrangements for performance management and good training opportunities ensure a strong and effective staff team.
- Governors are very committed and provide good support in leading the school forward.
- Good management systems and very good financial planning support improvements very well.

Commentary

32. The quality of leadership and management has improved and is now very good overall. The headteacher continues to provide very strong and effective leadership in successfully pursuing the school aims and the drive to raise standards. Her outstanding commitment to the inclusion of all pupils, whatever their background or ability, is evident in the very good arrangements for pupils with learning difficulties and the time and energy spent in supporting those with emotional and behavioural difficulties so that they do as well as they can. Due to her very effective leadership, there is a very happy atmosphere and strong sense of teamwork in school so that staff absence is kept to a minimum. Staff are constantly seeking new and better ways of working and actively involving pupils so that their learning is as effective and exciting as possible. Considerable improvements in the systems for checking on pupils'

achievements and helping them see what they need to do next have come about as a result of very good leadership by the deputy headteacher.

33. Those staff with responsibilities for aspects of the curriculum provide good and often very good leadership in improving provision, like the successful emphasis on speaking and listening and developing skills to raise standards in writing. There are thorough systems for checking on pupils' attainments through analysis of teachers' records, test results and their work. Staff are very receptive to ways of improving their teaching as regular lesson observations by local authority advisors, the headteacher, subject leaders and teacher mentors all effectively highlight the best practices and areas for improvement.
34. The school improvement plan is a very good tool as it very clearly identifies development priorities and plans improvements on a well-measured timescale. Action plans are linked to clear success criteria that are firmly focused on raising standards and improving the learning environment for pupils and staff, like the attractive Acorn Room that provides a welcoming and calm area for work with pupils with special educational needs. Judicious use of Thinking Skills, Brain Gym and Accelerated learning initiatives are all examples where school improvement planning is having a substantial impact on pupils' attitudes, the way they learn and their achievements.
35. Very good arrangements for staff professional development and performance management are closely linked to school development priorities. The way staff confidently and very effectively use the interactive whiteboards provided by a generous donor in lessons demonstrates the quality and success of staff training. Performance management targets are a good balance of whole-school targets and personal professional needs. The inclusion of learning support assistants in this process is something not usually found in schools. This means that there is very good delegation of responsibilities because staff are well informed, enthusiastic and skilled in taking on new roles. The school administrative staff make a very effective contribution to the management of information and to the smooth daily running of the school. Parents value the warm welcome they are always given and the individual care their children receive from the office staff. The site supervisor plays an important role in the day-to-day running of the school. The very well maintained building and grounds are evidence of the close attention he and his colleagues give at all times.
36. The governance of the school has improved, and is now good. Governors are well organised through their committee system and ensure their statutory duties are fully met. Many of the governors are new to their roles, but are very committed and supportive of the school. Most have benefited from training that is helping them develop the skills needed for their particular roles. The chair of governors is a very frequent visitor and provides a good listening ear for the headteacher. He, along with other staff, takes on extra responsibilities for aspects like the payroll. Governors have a good view of the school's successes and current priorities. Their role as critical friends is developing well, as seen when one governor questioned new arrangements for the Internet café, making sure that the best rules and security arrangements fully protected pupils.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	624,123
Total expenditure	642,790
Expenditure per pupil	3,105

Balance from previous year	56,207
Balance carried forward to the next	37,540

37. Financial management is very good and money is used well. The bursar monitors expenditure very well and prepares financial reports for governors. Minor issues raised in a school audit have been addressed. Very good financial planning ensures that school developments run smoothly and that good resources are available. Governors question expenditure, as in the case of the purchase of ICT equipment, and monitor its impact. Principles of best value are applied well so the school makes the most of the money it has.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

38. Most children begin school with below average knowledge and skills for their age. Attainment is particularly low in language skills and children's knowledge and understanding of the world. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their reception year. Regardless of the class they are in the teaching is consistently good and assessment is used effectively to identify children's needs and for tracking their progress and so children learn well. Another reason for the good achievement is that the curriculum in all three classes is well planned, with different areas of learning being integrated and therefore reinforcing learning. There is a good blend of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities, which are appropriate to the age and abilities of the children. The school is now looking at ways in which the organisation of the three classes could be adapted to use the particular skills of the teachers and staff to best effect. This in turn will enable them to meet the needs of individual children even better.
39. Leadership and management are good, leading to effective teamwork and a high level of care, guidance and support for children. The outdoor area is used well to support the work in the classroom and there are plans to extend the outdoor opportunities for learning. All adults manage children very well and this ensures that the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs, are well met. Children achieve well but most will not reach the goals expected in the areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Children do particularly well to reach the expected standards in personal and social and physical development at the end of the reception year due to the consistently good provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are positive relationships throughout the three classes.
- Adults provide very good role models
- There are good opportunities for children to develop independence.

Commentary

40. The good teaching and learning in this area of development are based on adults' high expectations of politeness and good behaviour that are constantly reinforced. Children's independence progresses well, as does their ability to work and play alongside others and most children will achieve the expected goals by the time they leave the reception classes.
41. Classrooms have a warm, welcoming, atmosphere in which young children feel safe and secure. Children's confidence develops very well and they very quickly learn to abide by class rules and follow routines. When working together on tasks, they show interest and share resources. Children play happily with the many stimulating activities in the classrooms, and are careful to change activities for themselves by choosing from

the many tasks on offer. Children learn to tidy away efficiently and with the minimum of fuss. The staff create a supportive atmosphere where each child feels very special. During the inspection children were purposefully engaged and showed consideration and respect for property and each other in all classes. Constant encouragement of every step of learning ensures that all children are learning to their capacity and they enter Year 1 able to take part in the National Curriculum regardless of how long they have been in the Foundation Stage.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The home-school reading system is well established.
- Creative play areas are used well to promote learning.
- Well-structured activities lead to children achieving well.

Commentary

42. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve a good standard of speaking, listening, but are below average in reading and writing when they enter Year 1. In all reception classes the good teaching is characterised by a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and the very well organised and exciting activities that motivate them. Children listen attentively to stories, and join in excitedly when their teachers ask them to. The use of a class shop with the children stimulates their imagination and this develops their speaking and listening skills well. Adults devote time to encourage children's speaking and listening skills and to develop and extend their vocabulary. Children practise the sounds of words well and this helps them to write new words.
43. In all three classes, teachers have taken care to provide many opportunities for children to learn to write. The development of reading skills has a high priority and is well supported by parents. Children become confident in handling books and have different initial sounds to learn. They enjoy the support of one of the governors who acts as school librarian who helps them change their books each week. Some children have already embarked on a systematic reading scheme and all make very good progress with their reading.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good and results in children achieving well.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to use numbers in a range of contexts.
- Children show considerable interest in number activities.

Commentary

44. Children are taught well and achieve well but most will not reach the early learning goals by the start of Year 1. Teaching is consistently good and all available resources are used well and this helps children to develop their mathematical understanding and vocabulary. Teachers plan well and use a good range of teaching methods. The use of number rhymes, games and songs is enjoyed by all and reinforces counting, recognition and understanding of numbers. Children are encouraged to apply what they know to practical problems, for example counting the number of children at registration. Some children correctly identify and put into order numbers up to 10 and can identify numbers that are one more than or one less than the given numbers. They

recognise basic shapes and gain knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. Some more able children describe objects by position, shape, size, colour and quantity.

45. In a very good lesson, the variety of activities meant that children practised numbers in many ways as they tried to buy sweets from the teacher's 'shop'. There is effective adult involvement in children's activities and useful timely assessments made of the individual children's progress. For example, they can recognise coins and use them in their role-play when giving change at their 'Post Office'. Children use their investigation skills well as they process requests in their 'Animal Hospital'. Group activities relate particularly well to number work as well as other aspects of the curriculum. Mathematical language is emphasised and is woven into everyday activities as adults support children's learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are keen and eager to find out about the world around them.
- There is a good range of well-planned opportunities to learn about the wider world.
- The teaching assistants provide good quality, valuable support in lessons.
- Adults encourage all children to ask questions, about how and why things happen.

Commentary

46. Teaching is good and focuses well on exploring and investigating. Children achieve well as a result of good teaching but many do not reach the standards expected for their age by the end of their reception year. Children enjoy learning and remain totally absorbed in the range of activities inside and outside. The activities, such as recycling different products, are well developed with an imaginative use of resources and appropriate questioning. The support staff make effective interventions in activities and extend children's responses. Other stimulating activities for developing children's knowledge of growth and their use of senses for learning include the imaginative use of boxes to make cars and lorries.
47. Resources of a good range and quality are used well. Children thoroughly enjoy the experiences of working with sand, water and malleable materials such as play-dough in the splendid Rainbow Room. They use paint and mix different colours well, and most are able to name basic colours correctly. Children enjoy using their senses as they taste, smell and feel different fruits which they are going to draw. Children continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world as they engage in play in the well-equipped outside play areas. Children are given many opportunities to play with a range of small toys and building bricks. Skills in ICT are reinforced as children use prepared programs on the classroom computer. Children have plenty of chances to learn about different cultures and faiths. They are introduced to Hanukkah and celebrate the Christian festival of Christmas by re-enacting the Nativity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of exciting activities.
- Teachers are very involved in well-structured role-play.

Commentary

48. Children develop their skills well and make good progress. The good teaching ensures that children have a good understanding of their learning, but most children do not achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. Children express their feelings through a range of materials and media, music and movement, story making and imaginative play. In all classrooms children are surrounded by very good displays of their work. The use of colour and different textures stimulates children to produce high-quality painting and collage work.
49. In their music, children sing songs and rhymes and develop and extend their learning. In a good lesson the part-time music teacher really inspired the children to represent 'sparkling waves, lapping waves, the breeze and sunshine' with their instruments and voices. Children join in enthusiastically with traditional rhymes and songs with actions, and they enjoy listening to music and respond well to different moods it creates. Staff are careful to set up a good range of exciting activities that are equally appealing to boys and girls; this attracts children to play imaginatively, encourages co-operation with others and extends their language.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a wide range of activities that enable children to develop physical skills well.
- Very good opportunities are provided for children to respond to rhythm and music.

Commentary

50. Children use the school hall and the outdoor areas well and this ensures that they make good progress, and most will achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. Teaching is good in this area of learning and this ensures that children make good progress and their achievement is good. In lessons seen children were encouraged to use space well and to move their bodies into space so that they could play games safely. The use of an individual plastic shape on the hall floor for them all to 'park' in works very well. Children enjoy their learning as they develop their skills of changing speed and direction and stopping on the beat of a tambourine. Children develop an awareness of space and learn to move with confidence, imagination, control, co-ordination and an awareness of others. They are encouraged to initiate new combinations of movement, in order to respond to feelings, ideas and experiences. Their ability to negotiate space successfully, adjusting speed and changing direction to avoid obstacles, improves well.

51. All children enthusiastically played different games in their outdoor areas. Children extend and develop their skills as they play on the large equipment and ride their wheeled toys. They develop their manipulative skills as they handle dough, scissors and small toys. Teachers and teaching assistants carefully develop children's fine manipulative skills. In all classes teachers give children many opportunities to work with a wide range of tools.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well due to good teaching in English.
- A rich and well-planned curriculum means that pupils enjoy lessons and work very hard.
- Pupils do not develop and consistently use a neat and joined handwriting style.
- There are good systems for checking how well pupils are doing but the information is not always used well enough in planning lesson activities.
- Very good leadership and good management have successfully developed the subject and raised standards.

Commentary

52. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average overall and in each aspect of English. Compared with schools with a similar background, standards are above average in reading and well above in writing. This represents good achievement in view of the below average starting points of many pupils, and is an improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen overall, and particularly since 2004 when the results of national tests were considerably lower due to the higher number of pupils in that year group with special educational needs. Teaching is good and sometimes very good with many of the strengths noted at the time of the last inspection still evident. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and plan their lessons well. They, and the strong team of knowledgeable and well-deployed learning support assistants, provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs that helps them confidently make the small steps towards achieving their targets. Adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work rate and have very good strategies, like the use of clapping, physical activity and rewards and sanctions, so that pupils concentrate and work very hard.
53. Teachers employ a variety of lively teaching methods, with effective use of good quality resources and a strong emphasis on ensuring that learning is fun. Pupils do particularly well in speaking and listening, which continues to be a key focus in staff and curriculum development. Teachers make good use of talking partners and drama as a stimulus. Speaking and listening skills develop well in such activities as questioning the teacher as she takes on the role of a sleepless pupil who is worrying about his transfer from infant to junior school. Teachers make very good use of interactive whiteboards to involve and motivate pupils. They display and discuss learning objectives so that pupils know what they are to learn. Before the lesson ends a system of green and red 'traffic lights' successfully involves pupils in checking that they have achieved them. Pupils use the whiteboards confidently, too, for example sliding an 'e' to the end of simple

words and then reading the new words they create and generating a list of alliterative words that are later used in writing tongue twisters. Teachers make sure that pupils understand new words, and these activities all help them develop confidence and accuracy in reading and writing words.

54. There have been good improvements in writing this year and the most recent tests show that the majority of pupils reach the levels expected for their age. The introduction of a new system for marking pupils' work is improving the content, structure and punctuation of their work. Teachers' use of green and red coloured pens highlights the effective features of writing and aspects like errors in spelling and punctuation that need to be improved. Writing is often interesting as teachers point out the importance of using expressive words and the need to vary the way they start sentences. However, pupils do not always take enough care in presenting their work. A neat, joined handwriting style is taught, but pupils do not practise it enough in their daily writing and their handwriting is sometimes untidy. Teachers do not model it consistently enough when writing on the board or remind pupils of its importance when they write.
55. Leadership of the subject is very good, with the English coordinator playing a key role in moving the subject forward. There is a strong commitment to providing the best teaching to move pupils forward in their learning and good improvement has resulted. Regular, thorough checks on teaching and learning have identified the right priorities and action is very well planned. Its success can be readily seen in the many initiatives the school has taken on board to improve pupils' skills and their enjoyment in learning like the 'Read On Write Away' initiative that boosts writing skills through a good emphasis on spelling and reading. Celebration assemblies clearly show the good writing skills that result. As a result of recent whole-school developments, there are thorough systems for checking, recording and tracking pupils' achievements. Teachers now know their pupils very well and are clear about which pupils need to be challenged and those needing a boost. This information is put to good effect in the setting arrangements established in Year 2 over the past year. This has clearly identified the more able pupils, and challenging work means that more reach the higher level in reading and writing than did in the last inspection. This is a considerable improvement. However, teachers do not always use this information as well as they might. Sometimes, when tasks are too hard pupils lose interest and time is wasted. Whilst many valuable developments are underway, staff with management responsibilities could be more rigorous in evaluating their impact when observing lessons or examining and marking pupils' work and completing their records.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop their language and literacy skills in work in other subjects. Good examples, like taking on the role of a seaman sailing with Christopher Columbus and writing a letter describing life on board the ship, are occasionally seen in subjects like history. In science, pupils label diagrams and write carefully structured simple reports. However, opportunities are sometimes missed because the school does not have a clear plan to guide teachers in their planning.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and the National Numeracy Strategy is planned well and followed closely.
- Assessments are thorough; each pupil is tracked carefully.
- There is good leadership and management of the subject.

Commentary

57. Standards in mathematics for pupils in Year 2 are in line with the national average and standards are improving throughout the school. Achievement is good because of consistently good teaching and well-behaved pupils, who are independent learners. There has been considerable improvement in all aspects since the last inspection.
58. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 learn well and make good progress in acquiring number facts to 10, in identifying properties of some regular shapes such as triangles and rectangles, and in using some simple standard measures such as centimetres. In a well-organised lesson, lively Year 2 pupils counted in twos and tens successfully, and then went onto number facts to 99. Their work on establishing whether a number was a multiple of three was impressive. Over time pupils become much more independent, confident mathematicians, able to work individually, or as a group, on a variety of tasks. They are able to apply their number knowledge to solve everyday problems.
59. All teachers are very calm and courteous in their approach. They are good role models for pupils. They use encouragement and praise very well to reward pupils when they ask and answer questions. Classrooms are attractive; there are good quality displays of mathematical language, resources and ideas to help pupils learn. Homework is set regularly to build on class work. Teachers have developed a very good balance between intervention and independence by giving close support to lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs, but challenging higher attainers and those pupils who are gifted in mathematics to do more for themselves. As a result of good assessment procedures, including self-assessment by pupils of how they are doing in lessons, there is a wealth of information about pupils, and teachers are able to plan individual targets for them all. Those pupils with special educational needs who have targets set in their individual education plans, and pupils who are gifted who have their own planning and targets to achieve, learn particularly well.
60. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator, working with the headteacher and governors, is leading and managing the subject effectively. She is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and very well organised. The action plan shows she has identified the right areas for improvement. She is determined to drive up standards further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory overall. There are good examples of problem solving in numeracy lessons across the school which consolidate pupils' learning well. In some subjects in some classes there are good opportunities to use mathematics more widely, for example in the use of ICT to explore multiples in Year 2. It is part of the school development plan to provide systematic planning of mathematics into the wider curriculum so that pupils are able to use their skills learned in numeracy lessons more often to solve problems. In most classrooms a good start has been made.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The emphasis on investigative work in Years 1 and 2 contributes strongly to very good achievement and pupils' enjoyment.
- Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 with higher attaining pupils doing particularly well.
- Teaching is very good, particularly the skilled use of questions.
- The subject leader has successfully moved the subject forward
- The curriculum, teaching, standards and achievement have all improved since the last inspection.

Commentary

62. Standards are above average by the age of seven. Pupils achieve very well. Results for seven year olds show that the number of higher attaining pupils is well above average. The emphasis on investigative work, identified as an area for improvement at the last inspection, now provides very good levels of challenge and adds interest and excitement to the curriculum. The setting of pupils in Year 2 enables the teachers to meet the needs of the pupils and add an appropriate high level of challenge. Pupils of all ability benefit from this approach and make good gains during lessons. Boys and girls respond with enthusiasm. They enjoy science, work hard and collaborate well. When pupils discuss their work in pairs, they help to extend each other's understanding, for example in Year 2, when pupils grappled with the idea of how a switch works in a simple circuit. The good resources available to teachers contribute to success in investigative work.
63. Teaching and learning benefit from teachers' good subject knowledge and careful planning. Teaching has improved because of effective curriculum guidelines and the support of the subject leader. There is a strong sense of teamwork and of teachers sharing ideas and skills. Key features of the very good teaching observed in Years 1 and 2 were the quality of teachers' questions, relationship with pupils and classroom management skills. Teachers expect much of pupils, trust them to work independently and challenge them to use a range of skills to solve problems, for example to make an effective switch or test materials to block out sound. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs do well because learning is adapted for them and they receive very skilled and effective support from teachers and teaching assistants, who build their confidence.
64. Leadership and management of the subject are good overall with significant strengths in leadership. There have been significant improvements, since the last inspection, in the way the curriculum is organised and the strong emphasis on a practical and investigative approach. The development of the skills of teachers to use challenging questions has added to the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although resources, like interactive whiteboards, have improved since the previous inspection, there are too few computers and many are out of date.
- The use of word processing throughout the school is good.
- The amount of time allocated to ICT each week does not give pupils the opportunity to develop and apply their skills sufficiently and links with other subjects are developing too slowly.
- The development of staff expertise and confidence is good.

Commentary

65. The improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school development plan has ensured action in those areas highlighted in the previous inspection report. The standards that pupils achieve in most aspects are in line with expectations for their age by the time they leave the school. This represents satisfactory achievement for some pupils and good for others, where standards at the time of the previous inspection were too low. The use of word processing throughout the school is good. The use of the drawing software has also improved well. However, the school lacks enough resources of an appropriate quality to support effective learning. Too often during the week of the inspection, machines in classrooms were not in use, which reduced the quality of learning. The school recognises this and is already planning to upgrade current systems on a rolling programme.
66. The confidence of staff to use ICT has grown since the previous inspection. This is as a result of increased training and the guidance of the subject co-ordinator. Staff now have a good degree of expertise. In the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory with effective use being made of available resources. The teachers' use of interactive whiteboards in their classrooms is good with developing expertise and confidence. This gives pupils access to the curriculum and ensures their close attention. Pupils are enthusiastic and show great interest in ICT; for example, pupils in Year 1 used a simple English program well to reinforce their literacy work. However, of the lessons observed, there was insufficient time allocated to ICT to ensure the discrete teaching of ICT skills; this was compounded by the lack of ICT resources in the suite which meant that not all children could immediately follow up teaching with practical application of the skills.
67. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The effective co-ordinator supports other teachers well and is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about ICT. There is now a clear view of what needs to be done to improve provision and to keep pace with national advances in technology, and the school development plan reflects this.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. Provision is satisfactory. Teachers are keen to use ICT in other subjects and some good examples were seen in English and art lessons during the inspection, but the overall use is limited. The use of painting software in Year 2 is particularly effective and enhances the art and design curriculum well. The school does not yet have any

systems in place for finding out how links with other subjects impact upon their achievement over time.

HUMANITIES

69. **History** and **geography** share the same timetable time with either a history or a geography topic being covered each half term. No lessons were observed in either subject. From a discussion with the co-ordinator and the scrutiny of pupils' work, it is clear that humanities are managed well and that all pupils cover the National Curriculum. There are significant improvements since the last inspection in the organisation and planning of these subjects. There is a clear structure. The necessary resources have been added so they are now good and support the learning.
70. Lessons are well planned and resourced to motivate and encourage pupils. Geography lessons are well structured to take into account the local environment and make the lesson relevant to pupils. A good example of this is the study of the seaside that involves the use of maps, photographs and the pupils' personal experiences of visits. Year 2 visited a nearby village to compare the different localities and the facilities. Pupils demonstrated a good level of awareness of their surroundings and the differences they observed. Teachers have used different learning styles and recording to involve all pupils successfully.
71. In discussion pupils were excited by history and said they enjoy their learning. For each unit of work pupils learn about a famous person, such as Samuel Pepys, an event, such as the Fire of London, and the way of life of those times. Through drama and imaginative teaching the experiences are developed so the pupils respond enthusiastically and record their learning in different ways: pupils wrote a letter from their imagined voyage with Columbus about life on board ship in the fifteenth century. They learn about different times and the sequence of events on time lines.

Religious education

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The organisation and provision have improved since the last inspection.
- The teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- The curriculum is well balanced and focuses on Christianity and teaches about other major faiths.
- Learning is enriched by using visits and visitors.

Commentary

72. By Year 2 the pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education are in line with the standards expected. The pupils' achievements are good. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils can recall important facts about Judaism and Christianity, their sacred texts, customs and the celebrations of the two faiths. The well-organised planning of lessons and the teachers' good subject knowledge make learning interesting. Pupils have a good understanding of places of worship. They visit a local church and use that to learn about Christian artefacts. The minister, from the church, visited a Year 2 classroom and taught the pupils about baptism, Christian belief and then conducted a

service with 'parents' and 'Godparents' drawn from the class. In creating a church in the classroom the pupils showed good recall of their learning from the visit. Throughout the experience the pupils listened, responded and demonstrated their deepening understanding.

73. In the lessons observed teaching was good. The skilled use of questions pursued the very difficult concept of faith. In response the pupils thought deeply and discussed their ideas, developing their speaking and listening skills as well. The teaching is good and obviously engages the pupils and raises standards. Throughout the school, the pupils, including those with special educational needs, are developing a good understanding of Christianity and Judaism and are building up an associated vocabulary with a good understanding of faith and the symbolism in religions. The pupils use their literacy skills to discuss, research and record their learning in a range of interesting ways. The approach to religious education has much improved since the last inspection. Each class has carefully planned lessons taken from the school scheme of work that draws on the locally agreed syllabus. Teachers set out the clear purpose of each lesson and use challenging questions to engage the pupils and extend their understanding. They are good at all the factual information and detail but sometimes fail to ask the key question of 'why', for instance, 'Why is the church so special to the Christians who worship there?'
74. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and provides a good role model. Resources, including pictures, books, videos and artefacts, are good. They are used well and create interest in the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Physical education

75. Only one dance lesson was seen in Year 1 and one dance lesson in Year 2, so it is not possible to make fullest judgements about standards and teaching and learning. In the Year 1 lesson there was a good well-planned link to a music topic about animals and the pupils created their lion dances with considerable enthusiasm. The Year 2 lesson was part of the 'Expressive Arts' session where all pupils in the year have the opportunity to take part in the same well-planned tasks. Planning shows all aspects of the subject are covered in a satisfactory way. Swimming progresses well in Year 2 and pupils receive progress certificates. All pupils make very good progress in swimming and this is a considerable strength of the school's provision.
76. The co-ordinator has worked closely with other class teachers, and outside providers, to make sure there is a very good range of well-resourced activities to enrich the everyday curriculum and to raise standards. All are popular. There has been good support from outside agencies who bring extra expertise into the school. As a result the school offers extra-curricular activities in football, mini leaders, rounders, golf, netball, skipping and athletics. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator knows the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has designed an effective action plan to develop the subject further. She is leading and managing the subject well.

Design and technology

77. No judgements are made about **design and technology** as no lessons were seen during the inspection. Examination of evidence on display and in teachers' planning shows that the subject is taught in line with requirements. The recently appointed and enthusiastic co-ordinator has good plans for further development in line with school

improvement planning that will give it greater and more discrete emphasis in curriculum planning. Already there are innovative developments like involvement in the CAD/CAM (computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing) project in Year 2 that engages pupils in producing a high quality pencil case using a computer-aided design, word processing and digital camera photographs to very good effect.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils are highly motivated and keen to learn.
- Singing is of a good standard.
- The curriculum is enriched by opportunities to perform.

Commentary

78. Standards in music are in line with those expected of pupils in Year 2. All pupils make good progress against their prior attainment and achieve well. Pupils' singing is of a good standard. The active participation of pupils is encouraged on many occasions as lessons and assemblies seen during the inspection showed. These were typical of the good quality and range of learning opportunities. The curriculum is enriched through extra-curricular activities, such as a choir and recorder groups. Provision and standards have improved since the last inspection.
79. Teaching in music is good and leads to good learning for all pupils. The strengths of teaching are the teachers' good subject knowledge, their ability to engage and challenge pupils, their high expectations of work and behaviour, and careful use of time. Strengths of learning are the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, their application and productivity and their capacity to contribute independently and collaboratively. In a very good Year 2 lesson, every pupil had an instrument and learned to combine this very well with a song. In order to use their own efforts to write a score, pupils listened attentively and learned and recalled sounds well. They combined pitch, dynamics, duration, tempo and silence simply and expressively.
80. The enjoyment of music is evident throughout the school. Pupils perform at church services and school productions. Leadership of the subject is good, with both the co-ordinator and the part-time teacher providing good role models. There is a strong tradition of performance that is very much a part of school life.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do very well in art and standards are above average due to good teaching.
- Good leadership and management provide a rich curriculum and promote the subject effectively.

Commentary

81. The good standards and achievements found in the last inspection have been maintained. The quality of work seen in lessons and on display around the school is higher than that normally found in Year 2. Teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. Very good teaching of the Chinese brush painting technique resulted in some very good interpretations by pupils in Year 2. There was good use of different sized paintbrushes to 'flick' the paint on and create simple but effective lines. Pupils were inspired by the very effective use of interactive whiteboards that enabled them to examine examples of the work and then to watch their teachers' demonstrations. Resources were readily available, and teachers encouraged pupils to experiment and practise before producing their final piece of work. Pupils were absorbed and fascinated by this new art work, and took great care and pride in their work.
82. The leadership and management of art and design are good. The subject is promoted particularly well. Many examples of work by pupils and famous artists are displayed prominently around the school. Adults put considerable effort into celebrating pupils' art work. There are attractive displays, with work sometimes mounted in picture frames. The annual art exhibition is another very good stimulus for art. Some examples of work in the style of painters like Lowry show a maturity not typical of six and seven year olds. Good planning ensures a very wide and rich curriculum so that pupils experience art in different cultures, like aboriginal and African patterns. The system for checking how well pupils are doing in art is informal and has been identified as an area for development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

83. Owing to inspection priorities, only one lesson was observed and therefore no overall judgements can be made about teaching and learning. However, from general observations and discussions with pupils and staff it is clear that the school places great emphasis on personal, social and health education. The positive care within classes and by teaching staff contributes very well to the security and welfare of all pupils and plays a strong part in their very positive attitudes to school and staff. All teachers are very aware of the needs of individual pupils and how they can all be a part of the school. The school strives hard to prevent any child feeling alone or vulnerable during the day. There is a very good system of how a pupil's request or wish is taken through the school council, to the head and on to the governing body for consideration.
84. The class discussions, known as circle time, in a Year 1 class seen during the inspection were typical of the care and thought being applied to this aspect of pupils' learning. The theme was 'SORRY'. This was applied especially to taking good care of other people's things. Staff generated a very supportive atmosphere and successfully enabled the more nervous pupils to speak when it came to their turn.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
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	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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