

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S C of E FOUNDATION PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Stansted

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115269

Headteacher: Mrs Wendy Wood

Lead inspector: Mr Philip Martin

Dates of inspection: 20th - 23rd June 2005

Inspection number: 267883

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Foundation
Age range of pupils: 5 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 140

School address: St John's Road
Stansted
Essex
Postcode: CM24 8JP

Telephone number: 01279 812212
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Rosemary Minshull

Date of previous inspection: 30th June 2003

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- St Mary's Church of England Foundation Primary School is a small primary school with 140 boys and girls aged between 5 and 11 years of age.
- Nearly all pupils come from a white British background.
- The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, about 17 per cent, is about average.
- Just over 4 per cent of pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. This is above average.
- The percentage of pupils who take free school meals, nearly 9 per cent, is low in comparison with the national average.
- Pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are average.
- There is a wide range of attainment on entry, but this is about average overall.
- The number of pupils leaving and joining the school at other than the usual times last year was about average.
- The school is involved in the Sure Start initiative, a national project that helps children to get off to a good start to their school career, and received a Healthy Schools award in 2002.

- The headteacher took up post at the start of the term immediately following the previous inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team		Subject responsibilities
23262	Philip Martin	Lead inspector English as an additional language; science; information and communication technology; music; physical education
13784	Jane Chesterfield	Lay inspector
14842	Stephanie Cook	Team inspector Foundation Stage; English; art and design; design and technology
20009	David Cann	Team inspector Special educational needs; mathematics; religious education; geography; history; personal, social and health education

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **satisfactory and improving** school which provides satisfactory value for money. Leadership and management are good and have led to a good level of improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in the quality of teaching and learning.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Good leadership and management have resulted in a good level of improvement.
- The school's partnership with other schools in the area has had a positive impact on the quality of education provided.
- There are imbalances in the curriculum in English for older pupils and in science for the younger ones.
- Although achievement has been improved, improvements have not had a full impact on pupils at the end of Year 6.
- Good quality marking found in English is not used consistently in other subjects.
- The school actively and successfully promotes pupils' personal and social development, resulting in good attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress.
- Pupils achieve well in history.

The school has made a good degree of improvement and has dealt successfully with the key areas for improvement identified in the previous report. The school is no longer underachieving. Teaching has improved well, leading to improved learning. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection and there was a significantly improved proportion of good and very good teaching. The quality of writing has improved. Pupils' use of writing in other subjects is satisfactory and the use of worksheets that do not promote learning has been successfully eliminated. The quality of writing is satisfactory overall, although older pupils do not have enough opportunities to write and develop longer pieces of work. There have been good improvements in leadership and management. The headteacher, who took up post just after the previous inspection, has worked hard to overcome the issues noted at that time. Her work has also led to improvements in subject leadership and the impact that co-ordinators have on provision in their subjects. There has been a satisfactory degree of improvement to the school's assessment systems. Teachers

now take a consistent approach to these. Pupils' achievements in English and mathematics are regularly checked and targets set for further improvement. The headteacher has a good overview of the results and a clear focus on how well pupils are doing. A minor issue of the previous inspection, to improve the use of numeracy and information and communication technology across other subjects, has also been successfully dealt with.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004 ¹
English	C	A	D	D
mathematics	C	A	C	C
science	B	B	C	C

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Achievement is **satisfactory**. Children start in the reception class with average attainment overall and by the time they start Year 1, they have reached satisfactory standards in the areas of learning. However, a number of children demonstrate lower social and learning skills than might be expected for their age. By the end of Year 2, boys and girls reach average standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics and achievement is satisfactory in these subjects. However, standards are below average in science because pupils do not learn enough about life and living processes in Year 2. Nonetheless, they achieve satisfactorily in the work they do. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average in English, average in science and above average in mathematics. Achievement in these three subjects is satisfactory overall. However, although achievement is satisfactory in English, improvements have not fully overcome the impact of underachievement on pupils who are now at the end of their primary school career. They have, however, developed a satisfactory range of writing and literacy skills, but have not had enough opportunities to use these at length. Pupils at the end of Year 6 reached above-average standards at the end of Year 2 and have maintained this level. Standards in information and communication technology and religious education match those expected from pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in history are above those expected by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well. The very few pupils from ethnic minority groups and those for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils with special educational needs receive a good degree of carefully planned support and achieve well as a result.

The school successfully promotes good attitudes and values. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development, is **good** overall. Pupils enjoy being at school and their positive attitudes and good behaviour have a positive impact on learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. The **satisfactory** quality of teaching and learning includes a number of good features and results in satisfactory achievement. Teachers set sufficiently challenging work for all, including the higher-attaining pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory. However, there are too few opportunities for

¹ No comparisons are available for the 2005 national tests at the end of Year 6

older pupils to write at length and the current organisation of the science curriculum has meant that Year 2 pupils have not studied living things at a suitable level. Also, whilst marking in English offers useful advice and guidance for pupils about how to improve their work, this practice is inconsistently used in other subjects. A good range of enrichment activities, particularly in the different visits that pupils make to places of interest and the visitors to school, enhance provision in different subjects. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, receive good personal and academic guidance and support based on a clear understanding of their needs. This leads to positive attitudes and behaviour. A particular strength lies in the work done by the teaching assistant with pastoral responsibility in developing social skills. The school has good links with parents and very good links with other schools. These links have been a significant factor in the school's improvement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher has worked hard to overcome the weaknesses noted at the previous inspection. She is successfully translating her vision for the school's development into effective systems and strategies for further improvement. Governors now have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and offer a good level of support and challenge. Subject leadership is satisfactory with some good elements and subject co-ordinators are sufficiently involved in monitoring and improving subject provision. Statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Both parents and pupils are happy with the school. Parents expressed very few concerns at the parents' meeting held before the inspection. Through the pre-inspection questionnaire, a few expressed concerns about aspects of the quality of education and the level of information provided. However, inspection findings do not support these views. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their positive attitudes and behaviour support their learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve and raise achievement still further are:

- Ensure that all pupils have enough opportunities to practise writing skills in longer pieces of writing.
- Reorganise the science curriculum so that pupils in Years 1 and 2 encounter the skills and knowledge at a suitable level.
- Extend the good practice in marking to other subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects

Boys and girls of all ability levels achieve **satisfactorily**. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, standards are below average in science. By the end of Year 6, standards are below average in English, average in science and above average in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing show that the school is no longer underachieving.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well.
- Standards in mathematics and history are above average by the end of Year 6.
- The imbalance in the science curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 makes it difficult for them to reach the expected standards.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Children start the reception class with standards that match those expected from pupils of that age. They experience a satisfactory quality of learning and achieve satisfactorily. They reach satisfactory standards in the early learning goals² in the areas of learning.

Key Stage 1

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004³

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.9 (16.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (15.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.6 (17.0)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In 2004, the school was involved in national trials to gauge performance at the end of Year 2 through teacher assessment rather than through the national tests and tasks. The results of these⁴ show that pupils' performance in reading and writing was above average compared with all schools nationally.

² Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the areas of learning which are: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning. For example, in language and literacy, children should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences

³ No comparisons are available for the national tests at the end of Year 2 or Year 6

⁴ Comparative data for tests at the end of 2005 were not available at the time of the inspection.

Performance was average in mathematics. Teachers judged pupils' performance in science to be below average overall. The improvement over the last few years has been above the national trend. Compared with schools with similar free school meals figures, standards were well above average in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching at least the expected level, Level 2, in science was well below the average for similar schools. In each of these subjects, the proportion reaching the higher level, Level 3, was well above the averages for all schools nationally and for similar schools. This indicates that pupils with higher ability are catered for well.

3. Inspection findings show that pupils achieve satisfactorily and agree with these results in mathematics and science. There are, however, fewer higher attaining pupils in English this year so standards in reading and writing are average. Nonetheless, this represents an improvement in writing since the previous inspection when standards were reported to be below average. Standards in science are below average because pupils have not had the opportunity to learn enough about the required curriculum at a suitable level. In science, pupils achieve satisfactorily in the work they do. Standards in information and communication technology match those expected from pupils of this age, as do standards in religious education.

Key Stage 2

4. National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2004 show that pupils' performance in English was below average compared to all schools nationally. In mathematics and science, performance was similar to the national figures. Compared to performance in schools with similar prior attainment, pupils' performance in English and science was below average, but performance in mathematics was average. The trend in performance from 2000 to 2004 was above the national trend.
5. Inspection findings show that achievement in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory. Pupils now at the end of Year 6 reach above average standards in mathematics as they did at the end of Year 2, indicating satisfactory progress. Standards in English are below average because there is a fairly high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length. However, there has been satisfactory improvement in writing. Pupils now use their writing skills in a wide enough range of subjects. Their grammatical, handwriting and spelling skills are at the level expected for pupils of this age. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach the standards expected in information and communication technology and in religious education.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004¹

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (28.5)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.0 (28.4)	27.0 (26.8)

science	28.4 (29.5)	28.6 (28.6)
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There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

6. Boys and girls achieve similarly. Although Year 6 girls appear to have performed better in English than Year 6 boys in the three years from 2002 to 2004, this masks years when boys have performed better and does not allow for the imbalance of numbers between boys and girls which can have a distorting effect on such data. The very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, including any for whom English is an additional language, achieve as well as their classmates.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. They are identified early and are provided with good support in class from teachers and support assistants. Confirmation of their good progress is evident in the results of national tests in Years 2 and 6 and in the fact that several pupils move off the register during their school career.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good** in infant and junior classes and **satisfactory** in the reception class. Provision for their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is also **good**. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong emphasis on social and moral issues promotes good behaviour.
- The Christian ethos of the school fosters pupils' spiritual awareness well.
- Although pupils have a good understanding of their own culture, their understanding of other cultures is not as well developed.

Commentary

8. The school sets great store by teaching pupils the difference between right and wrong and developing in them a sense of responsibility for others in the school and the wider community. Staff praise pupils when they behave well, and treat unacceptable behaviour firmly, both in class and in the playground. Pupils are encouraged to play their part in the daily life of the school, as lunchtime prefects, for example, or through the school council. Friendship week in September sets the tone successfully for the whole year. Because of this good focus on their social and moral development, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good throughout the infant and junior classes, though some reception children are still in the process of learning the social skills they need. Older pupils are interested and involved in their lessons and the other activities the school offers them, and are keen to do their bit for other people within and outside of the school. They are particularly good at organising charity fund-raising events on a regular basis.
9. The close relationship between the school and the church underpins the good efforts made to develop pupils' spirituality. Assemblies prompt pupils to think

about the wonders of creation in the world around them, and lessons give them plenty of opportunities to explore these further, such as observing mini-beasts or looking for the habitats of different creatures. Pupils also have the chance to consider and empathise with the feelings of others thanks, for example, to the carefully planned use of visitors. Recent talks from a World War Two evacuee and from a practising Moslem have helped pupils reflect on the uniqueness of the individual and of others' experiences.

10. The attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are good and they take a positive approach to learning. Teachers and learning assistants provide very good support for pupils with behavioural problems. As a result these pupils benefit greatly, respond well and are successfully included in learning.
11. The school has already recognised that aspects of its provision for multicultural education have not been adequate, and has set about making some good improvements to raise pupils' awareness in this area. The school has good means of introducing pupils to Western culture and heritage, for example, through visiting drama groups, trips to the theatre for all the family, and work in class such as that on life in Britain during the Second World War.

Attendance

12. Unauthorised absence has been above the national average because of an increased number of term-time holidays and because of the prolonged absences of a small number of pupils. The school is tackling this through the implementation of its new policy on attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.8	School data:	0.5
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.

Exclusions

13. Last year's exclusions were caused by the poor behaviour of a few individuals. There have been no exclusions during the current school year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Asian or Asian British – Indian
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
138	4	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. The **satisfactory** quality of teaching leads to **satisfactory** learning. The curriculum is **satisfactory**. The school cares for, guides and supports pupils **well**. Links with parents and the community are **good**. Links with other schools are **very good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** throughout the school. Assessment procedures and their use to plan lessons are also **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has successfully increased the proportion of good and better teaching.
- Teachers use information and communication technology well in lessons.
- Support and teaching for pupils with special educational needs help them to achieve well.
- Good assessment procedures in English are beginning to be used in other subjects.
- Some parts of lessons are overlong.
- Marking does not always offer enough advice to pupils about how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

14. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and leads to a satisfactory quality of learning. The table below provides a summary of the teaching seen during the inspection. This shows that teaching and learning were better than satisfactory in a substantial number of lessons. A number of these lessons were aimed at small groups or taught by teachers other than those at the school. The scrutiny of pupils' work also has an impact on overall teaching judgements and evidence from this confirms an overall satisfactory pattern.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4 (12.5%)	16 (50%)	12 (37.5%)	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.

15. There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection. More teaching is good and some is very good. The quality of teaching is more even across the different classes. The improvements in teaching stem from improvements in leadership and management which have helped to improve

teachers' practice. During the inspection, the teaching seen was good in half of the lessons, and satisfactory in just over a third. The quality of teaching in just over one in ten lessons was very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, a definite improvement since the previous inspection when there was too much unsatisfactory teaching and not enough that was good or better. Because of improved assessment procedures, teachers now have a better understanding about the quality of work that all pupils are capable of. This helps to ensure that teachers plan sufficiently challenging tasks for all, including higher ability pupils. Teachers' planning is effective and based on what pupils need to learn, rather than on the activities that pupils will do in the lesson. Teachers ensure that pupils engage in useful tasks that take learning forward rather than completing over-simple worksheets that offer little challenge. For example, higher-attaining Year 3 pupils effectively increased their understanding of number patterns and multiplication through investigated rules for recognising multiples of four. Marking is kept up-to-date and is particularly useful when it offers comments that challenge as well as support, as it does in English and increasingly in mathematics. Sometimes, however, pupils do not respond to questions written by the marker, so opportunities for further learning are missed. Also, the useful comments are not consistently found in all subjects. Homework is consistently set and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Homework tasks are usefully outlined in each pupil's home/school liaison book, so both pupils and parents know what is expected.

16. A key feature in the good teaching is the teachers' use of information and communication technology. The junior classes are usefully equipped with interactive whiteboards. Teachers use these to good effect. For example, the technology was used to display the construction of an Andersen shelter during a design and technology lesson in which Year 5 and 6 pupils were constructing shelters for specific purposes. Teachers make good use of a range of resources, including visits and visitors, to interest pupils. A visitor who had been an evacuee during the Second World War brought this topic to life for Year 5 and 6 pupils. Occasionally, pupils lose interest when introductions to lessons are too long. This can mean that pupils' learning is hindered at these times.
17. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants. Their work is well matched to their needs and they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
18. Assessment procedures have improved and are satisfactory overall. These are now consistent across the school and help in planning the next steps in learning. Those in English are good and used effectively to check pupils' progress and to plan work. This good practice is currently being extended to mathematics. Information from these procedures feeds into a system that provides a useful overview of individual pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Assessment procedures in other subjects are satisfactory, except in religious education. In this subject, although teachers record what pupils have done, these records do not give an accurate enough measure of individual pupils' progress. Firm plans are in hand to improve the procedures further in science and information and communication technology using a commercial scheme.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum. It is enriched by a **good** range of additional activities. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and their preparation for secondary school.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, who are fully included in all aspects of school life.
- The good range of visits and visitors stimulates pupils' learning.
- There is not enough time allocated to developing pupils' writing skills in Year 6.
- There is an imbalance in the coverage of the science curriculum in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

19. Activities for children in the Foundation Stage are satisfactorily planned to cover all six areas of learning. Children undertake a balanced range of practical learning activities which matches their age and attainment. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 follow all the subjects required by the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Current time allocation for literacy in Year 6 does not give pupils enough opportunities to practise writing at a great enough length. For pupils in Year 2 this year, there is not enough emphasis on life and living things in science which limits their learning in this important area. There are increasingly good links between pupils' learning in subjects such as mathematics and geography, design and technology and history.
20. The quality of curriculum is satisfactory, as it was at the last inspection. Improvements have been made in the use of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills across other subjects and in the challenges offered to more able pupils. Teachers are making satisfactory progress in developing the teaching programme to meet the needs of the mixed age classes. The planning of learning is largely successful in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education.
21. A satisfactory number of extra-curricular activities and a good range of visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning and make a valuable contribution to their personal, social and cultural development. Levels of participation and enjoyment are good in sporting, musical and drama activities. Pupils have also been actively involved in art projects for the local playgroup and in exhibitions with other schools. There is an extensive programme of visits to places of interest, which provides a valuable extension to pupils' learning in subjects such as geography, history and art and design. The annual residential trip for Years 5 and 6 also provides pupils with a good start to the academic year and

they develop important personal skills. The daily Breakfast Club provides valuable support for pupils on a practical and social level.

22. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education, including attention to sex education and substance misuse. There are weekly sessions in each class which are planned from a scheme of work that indicates how pupils can gain skills progressively. The school places considerable emphasis on preparing Year 5 and 6 pupils for secondary education and has prepared a good programme for this in conjunction with the local secondary school. The school council meets regularly with representatives from each class and makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of citizenship. Pupils are given responsibilities in class and in the school to help them make a practical contribution to supporting the community. Discussion groups for pupils who need support from their classmates are sensitively managed and led and have a very positive impact on pupils' personal development. The school obtained a Healthy Schools award in 2002 and its own catering staff provide healthy mid-day meals. These are much appreciated by pupils and staff.
23. All pupils are fully included in all activities. Those with special educational needs are well integrated into classes and valued by both staff and other pupils. Their individual education plans are good and include clear and attainable targets that are reviewed regularly. The plans are well used by teaching assistants, under the guidance of the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs and class teachers, to provide effective support for pupils both in class and in withdrawal groups. Support for pupils with behavioural difficulties is well managed and effective.
24. Teachers have a satisfactory range of subject expertise and experience. The number and experience of learning support staff are good and they play an important part in promoting pupils' learning. Resources are satisfactory but several books in the school library are out of date, especially in geography. The school's accommodation is satisfactory. The outdoor area for the Foundation Stage is not yet completely finished. Nonetheless, it provides a useful area for outside activities.

Care, guidance and support

The attention given to pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **satisfactory**. Support, advice and guidance for pupils, based on monitoring, are **good**. Involvement of pupils in the school is also **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good pastoral guidance supports pupils well in their daily life
- Pupils have good opportunities to have their say in the running of the school

Commentary

25. Good relationships between adults and children throughout the school mean that staff are sympathetic to pupils' needs and do their best to meet them. The role of the pastoral teaching assistant in particular is a new initiative which is

proving very successful. Her social skills groups are working very well and plans to develop family tutor groups are an exciting new development. Staff liaise very closely with parents at the end of each afternoon, so that any concerns which arise from day to day can be dealt with quickly and easily. Systems for caring for pupils, such as administering first aid or the induction of new children, are well organised, and proper procedures are in place for child protection. Good provision for personal, social and health education underlines the importance attached to pupils' well-being, and the school leads the way on healthy eating with its well-balanced, home-produced lunches. However, some of the school's daily routines need to be better planned, and a number of health and safety matters have been reported to the governors.

26. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and learning support assistants. Staff are well trained and are fully aware of the needs of pupils through the individual education plans which, in some instances, they have helped to write. All staff, including midday supervisors, are committed to ensuring these pupils are fully included in activities. In most instances, staff allocated to help particular pupils use opportunities well to help other lower attaining pupils.
27. The breakfast club, known by the pupils as the 'Crunchy Munch Club', offers those who attend a good start to the day as well as enhancing their social development.
28. The well-established school council gives pupils a formal voice and enables them to make a difference to what happens in their school. The council is efficiently structured to allow all children in the school to put their views forward and have them heard by senior management. Current priorities include improving facilities and equipment in the playground, which the school recognises as an area in need of attention. Beyond this, the council also gives all the pupils the chance to contribute to the wider community through its regular fund-raising events for local, national and international charities.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** partnerships with parents and the community. Links with other schools are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with other schools have helped improvements since the previous inspection.
- The school has a good range of systems for keeping parents informed.
- Links with the community help to enhance pupils' quality of learning.

Commentary

29. As at the time of the previous inspection, the school has a good partnership with parents. The overwhelming majority of parents who attended a meeting held before the inspection, or who responded to a questionnaire canvassing

their views, have a good deal of confidence in the school. The school provides a good level of information in the form of newsletters, annual written reports and parents' meetings. Parents consider the detail provided in the home/school liaison book about homework, the curriculum and other aspects of the school's life and work to be very helpful. A thriving Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association raises valuable funds. The school also benefits from the philanthropic activities of employers of some parents.

30. The school has a good range of systems for listening to and acting on parents' views. Parents welcome the opportunity to take part in the Parents' Focus Group, finding out about and discussing parents' views such as the school's approach to homework. All parents are welcome to attend. The school has also sought parents' views on matters such as the review of health and relationships education through questionnaires and discussion. The school's approach to teaching mathematics and how parents could help was presented in a well-received evening meeting.
31. There is good partnership with parents whose children have special educational needs. Parents consider that the school meets their children's needs well and support the work of the school where they can. Their views and those of the children are sought and recorded on pupils' individual education plans. The school makes good use of outside agencies to advise parents, pupils and staff on the best way of promoting pupils' achievements.
32. The school makes good use of the community and local businesses to enhance pupils' education. During a recent 'Maths Week', for example, pupils visited the fire service at the nearby airport. A recent 'Science Day' was run in partnership with a regional water company during which all pupils took part in investigations based around the theme of water. There are good links with the local church and pupils attend services. During 'Education Sunday', pupils share their work and ideas with the congregation and this finishes with a visit to school.
33. The school has very good links with other schools in the area, in particular through the work of the federation of local primary and secondary schools. These links have contributed very well to the school's improvement since the previous inspection through curriculum and staff development. For example, Year 6 teachers shared planning and preparation sessions leading to a visit to the local secondary school to study ecological issues. Together, teachers from different schools have looked at how they might best develop pupils' thinking skills and others have been involved in preparing teaching resources using information and communication technology, for example in history. The above mentioned mathematics curriculum evening was a joint venture between this school and another.
34. There are also good links with local playgroups, including one on the school's site, and the school works hard to ensure children's smooth transition through sharing information and activities. There are also good links with the schools to which pupils transfer after Year 6. These extend to Year 5 pupils who have 'taster' days at the local secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher provides **good** leadership and is **well** supported by key senior staff. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision and provides good direction for the work of the school.
- Good leadership and management have led to a good degree of improvement.
- Although staff are clear about what they need to do, not all co-ordinators of subjects have fully developed their role.
- The governors are highly committed to the school and effectively involved in its work.
- The support from the federation of schools and from the local education authority gives very good support to teachers' professional development.
- The provision and management of special educational needs is good.

Commentary

35. The headteacher took up post in 2003 after the previous inspection when leadership and management were judged to be unsatisfactory. Since that time, she has provided clear-sighted leadership that is successfully beginning to raise standards through a whole-school focus on learning. This has led to improved teaching and achievement. However, although achievement has improved, a few pupils at the end of Year 6 have not fully caught up and achievement, overall, is satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and focused clearly on the evidence of pupils' learning. A productive climate for learning based on Christian principles has been established, and significant efforts are successfully made to ensure that pupils of all abilities are fully included in the school's educational provision.
36. The management structure has been reorganised and clear lines of responsibility have been established throughout the school. Senior staff have benefited from taking part in a national leadership programme. This has given them the confidence to tackle and overcome barriers to improvement. The leadership and co-ordination of English, mathematics, special educational needs and information and communication technology are good and contribute well to raising standards and achievement. These co-ordinators lead by example in their teaching and have a clear overview of standards and provision in their subjects. Recently the science subject leader has benefited from the leadership scheme and the co-ordination of science is improving as a result. As this is a small school, staff have responsibilities for more than one subject and are keen to support the headteacher and keep up a good rate of improvement. This process is developing and there has been a necessary focus on core subjects and the development of leadership and management skills. This has meant that the co-ordination of some subjects has not yet been fully tackled.

Although staff share information on an informal basis in subjects such as design and technology and physical education, there is a lack of formal monitoring of provision in these subjects. Nonetheless, provision in these subjects is at least satisfactory.

37. The governing body has a wide range of experience that benefits the school considerably. It makes particularly good use of governor expertise in areas such as special educational needs and finance. Governors are keen to be fully involved in school life and are well-informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are involved in strategic planning, providing good support and constructive challenge. Governors visit the school regularly to monitor progress and then feedback to each other and the school the results of this monitoring. Written reports of these visits, lesson observations and conversations with pupils show that governors are more knowledgeable about the curriculum, teaching and learning than at the time of the last inspection. There are close lines of communication between some governors and staff. For example, the special educational needs governor is very involved in the monitoring of the provision. Statutory requirements are met.
38. Support for pupils with special educational needs is well managed by an experienced and capable co-ordinator. She is given a good time allocation to carry out the many duties associated with the large number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. She is strongly committed to the early identification of these pupils, to their inclusion in all school activities and to providing training for all members of staff to enable them to meet pupils' needs. She is aware of areas that can be developed in the future. The governing body monitors this area well through a member who is experienced in the task. Regular visits and good liaison with the special educational needs co-ordinator enable him to know what is happening and ensure that the school meets the Code of Practice.
39. Financial control is good. The school found itself with a deficit budget because of falling rolls but the implications of this have been carefully thought through. The budget is now on track to be balanced for the next five years as savings have been made in staffing. Careful consideration is given to the notion of achieving the best value for planned expenditure and the budget is judiciously monitored to ensure that expenditure reflects income. A school governor with particular financial expertise keeps a close and watchful eye on spending to ensure that money is spent wisely. The school compares its costs with other schools and as a result has recently made savings of £5,000 on insurance.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	603 672	Balance from previous year	3 642
Total expenditure	573 772	Balance carried forward to the next	33 542
Expenditure per pupil	3 800		

40. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved. There is now a higher proportion of teaching that is better than satisfactory and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. The headteacher has wisely involved the local education authority in helping her improve the provision in the school and resolve the key issues identified in the previous report. This extensive support, together with the help and good level of co-operation from the federation of local schools, has been instrumental in raising achievement and providing continuing professional development and training for staff. The local education authority has been involved in monitoring teaching and learning with the full co-operation of staff. For example, lessons have been observed jointly with teachers and advisers, discussed with co-ordinators, and findings then fed back to teachers. Staff have been able to talk with teachers in other schools about their practice, and see model lessons taken by advisers and visit other schools to observe good practice. This professional training has been effective in bringing about change and improvements in teachers' practice. The key issue with regards to the raising of standards for more able pupils has been satisfactorily addressed. Standards are improving, particularly in writing and the underachievement identified at the last inspection has been satisfactorily dealt with. The school no longer uses undemanding worksheets and pupils write across the curriculum in different subjects. Assessment has improved and is now good in English and mathematics and satisfactory in most other subjects. Pupils' progress and achievement are carefully tracked and the information from assessment is used to target groups of pupils for extra support.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff work very well together to form an effective team.
- The teacher provides motivating resources for children to use and the teaching of music and art is good.
- The questioning of children is good, lessons are taught in a lively way and the activities provided are practically based.
- Early reading skills are taught very well.
- Although staff have effective strategies for promoting good behaviour, they are not always used consistently.
- Writing does not have a high enough profile.
- The provision for outside play is improving.
- Induction of children into school is good.

Commentary

41. The attainment of children on entry to school is average overall this year. Children achieve satisfactorily and by the end of the reception year meet the targets set for them in communication, language and literacy; mathematical and physical development. They are likely to exceed what is expected of them in the creative development and, although many children will meet the goals in the personal, emotional and social area of learning, a few children will not because they are socially immature. No judgement was made in the wide area of knowledge and understanding of the world. The curriculum is satisfactory and suitably inclusive. There is a reasonable balance between those activities chosen by the children and those directed by the teacher, but writing does not have a high enough profile. There are currently no children who speak English as an additional language in the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and is good for children with special educational needs. Assessment and the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.
42. Staff work very well together. There is an openness in their relationships which results in a very good level of communication between them and a willingness to share responsibility for their work. Reception staff plan together well and liaise with infant staff regularly. Teaching assistants work alongside the teacher and are often responsible for teaching particular groups of children. Special educational needs assistants are well briefed and have clearly defined roles which they fulfil well, so these pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

43. Teaching is satisfactory. One of the key strengths in teaching is the skilful way staff question children and build on their answers to extend children's knowledge and understanding. Staff provide a good variety of different and interesting resources for children to use. The teacher has a lively manner and presents lessons in a motivating way. This results in most children listening attentively, behaving sensibly and being keen to learn. However, although staff have good strategies for managing children's behaviour they do not consistently reinforce the rules. As a result, sometimes too much time in the lesson is spent on ensuring children behave and do not call out. Once engaged in an activity, children usually sustain concentration and attend to the task.
44. The outside play area is satisfactory. It has improved since the last inspection and there are firm plans for its further development. The area has benefited from the planting of herbs and flowers and is popular with children searching for mini-beasts. The area has a play house and sand and water trays which are well equipped so they are useful resources for learning about capacity and weight. The area is large, resources are changed regularly and mark making is included in the provision. Children have enough opportunities to engage in outside play.
45. Procedures for ensuring a smooth start to the reception class are good. During the inspection the teacher invited the teacher and a group of pupils from the on-site pre-school playgroup to be part of the morning's activities. This worked well and helped the pre-school children feel at home. Further visits take place where parents and children can attend and parents receive good information about the school. The entry of children into school each September is staggered so that children have time to settle before the next intake.
46. Children achieve satisfactorily in **personal, social and emotional development**. Children have settled satisfactorily into daily routines and show a reasonable degree of independence for their age. This means, for example, that most sit eagerly awaiting lesson introductions, wait their turn to speak, listen attentively and move around the classroom sensibly. Most play and work together co-operatively, sharing ideas and equipment equably and behaving sensibly. However, a few find it difficult to relate well to others, to sit and listen and not shout out and are occasionally impolite. These instances sometimes happen when there is a changeover of activities, in physical education lessons in the hall, or when the staff are not consistent in applying school rules. This is not as good as it was at the last inspection when children's behaviour and attitudes were good.
47. Children's achievement in **communication, language and literacy** is satisfactory. and better than this in speaking and reading. Many children are articulate speakers and are encouraged by staff to answer at length. Early reading skills are taught very well and are instrumental in children attaining good standards in their knowledge of letter sounds. These are practised twice a day for short periods and children enjoy chanting the sounds letters make as they spell out words then put them into sentences. The good teaching of early reading skills has helped children's understanding of the components of a sentence and enabled children to rapidly read an increasing number of

common words. Achievement in writing is adequate but there is scope for it to be better. Although children's early reading skills in learning letter sounds are developed well, not enough links are made between children's knowledge of letters and their writing. There is scope for staff to concentrate children's attention on what they already know about sounds and letters and help them to transfer this to their writing. The classroom, which is small and rather cramped for reception children, does have a writing table which is suitably resourced with pencils, booklets and photographs to stimulate children's interest. However, it is not well enough promoted nor prominent enough to sufficiently encourage the boys to try out their writing skills. Although currently the teaching of writing is satisfactory and most children are keen to write, the scrutiny of past work indicates that early writing skills are not always taught systematically enough.

48. Children's achievement in **mathematical development** is satisfactory. The teacher uses lots of practical activities to help children understand about numbers. Children enjoy counting out loud in unison and predicting what number comes next - odd or even - because the teacher has a lively approach and keeps up a fast pace to the activities. Children learn about capacity from their sand and water play, and gain an idea about weight from hauling sand in the air using a pulley. Often experiences are based on first-hand experience. For example, children measure the growth of their bean plant.
49. No judgement is made about children's achievement in all aspects of **knowledge and understanding of the world** as no lessons were seen and there was little work to examine. Plenty of opportunities are provided for children to improve their skills in information and communication technology and as a result they achieve well in this aspect. They are confident and competent users of the mouse to click and drag, and know how to print out their work. They have used the digital camera to photograph themselves to good effect. Their knowledge of mini-beasts and their habitats is also developing well because they are encouraged to look for these at home and in the school environment.
50. Children's achievement in the **creative area** of learning is good. Teaching and learning are good. Children benefit from the teacher's own expertise and in the provision of motivating resources and activities. They greatly enjoyed drumming and rose well to the challenge of drumming repeated patterns. Children working independently on a mural depicting mini-beasts showed a good level of expertise, indicating they had been well taught. Teaching assistants help children achieve well by their good questioning and by teaching children how to join materials when making models of mini-beasts. The class grocery shop is effectively resourced and used imaginatively by children.
51. Achievement in **physical development** is at least satisfactory. There are good chances for children to regularly engage in outdoor play, and their movements are well co-ordinated and controlled. Children manipulate tools and small equipment competently because they are shown how to use equipment properly. Children benefit from lessons in the hall and in the one lesson observed children's achievement and the teaching was satisfactory.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in writing is improving and is now at least satisfactory in most aspects. However, pupils do not get enough opportunities in the juniors for writing at extended length.
- Partnerships with the local authority and other schools, coupled with the effectiveness of subject leadership and management contribute significantly to pupils' achievements.
- The teaching of early reading skills in the infants is having a significant positive impact on reading.
- Achievement is good in speaking and listening.
- Although assessment procedures are good, there is scope for improvement in target setting.
- The library contains old and outdated books and there are not enough interesting fiction books for Year 6 pupils to read.

Commentary

52. Achievement across the school is satisfactory and reflects the school's continued push on raising standards and the quality of teaching and learning. This is an improvement since the last inspection when achievement was judged to be unsatisfactory.
53. In 2004, the standards attained in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were above both the national average and the standards in similar schools. These results were better than the previous two years. This year group benefited from a larger number than usual of higher attaining pupils. Inspection findings show that standards by the end of Year 2 are average this year, with the majority of pupils attaining the expected level, but fewer than last year gaining the higher level. More pupils gain the higher level in reading than writing because of the good teaching and the impact of strategies to boost this aspect. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well because of the good support from adults. No differences between the achievement of boys and girls were noted during the inspection. The very few pupils from ethnic minority groups, including those for whom English is not the first language spoken, make similar progress to their classmates.
54. On the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was below both the national average and standards in similar schools. Standards were not as high as the previous two years. The school recognised that these results represented underachievement and has worked hard to overcome this. Inspection findings show that, although achievement is now at

least satisfactory and often good in lessons in most aspects of English, standards are still below average at the end of Year 6. An average percentage of pupils will reach the higher level 5 in the national tests, showing that more able pupils are sufficiently challenged. However, a lower than average proportion will attain the expected level 4. The scrutiny of work shows that, although standards in other classes are at least average in most elements of English, there has been too much ground for less able pupils to catch up on in Year 6. The Year 6 class also contains 20 per cent of pupils with special educational needs, including pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Needs.

55. The continuing help and advice from the local education authority and the support from the federation, and the school's own work are having a major impact on raising standards, particularly in writing. The advice and support received focus well on the characteristics of good teaching and learning. They include, amongst other things, visits from advisors, the observation of lessons, providing examples of good teaching and opportunities to visit other schools.
56. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall with a number of good features. Pupils' speaking and listening skills across the school are good because pupils get many chances to discuss their work with each other and to speak at length during discussions. As a result, pupils are confident when talking to the rest of the class, acting out a play script or speaking to the rest of the school in assembly. The school has adopted a particular system for the teaching of early reading skills, and has ensured the staff, parents and a governor have been effectively trained. The scheme is taught well and has led to better standards in reading in the infants and lower juniors. It has not yet had time to impact positively on the upper juniors. The scrutiny of the past year's work shows considerable improvement, particularly in the technical skills of writing such as grammar, punctuation and spelling as well as the structure and content. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils in the juniors to write at length. The school has put in place many initiatives to improve teaching and learning. Those having the most significant impact include effective planning so that the work pupils do matches their abilities, sharing the purposes of lessons with pupils, marking work in a way that helps pupils to improve, the effective use of information and communication technology and regular homework.
57. Strengths in the teaching are in teachers' class management and organisation, their questioning and extending pupils' answers and match of work to pupils' needs. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed, especially those who support pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. In particularly good lessons in Years 2 and 3, teachers were very well organised, provided motivating tasks suitably pitched for all pupils and monitored pupils' work so all children achieved as well as they could. Teachers successfully promote positive attitudes to learning. Consequently, pupils are well behaved, apply themselves diligently to their work and are keen to answer questions. Infant pupils, particularly the boys, are enthusiastic and proud of their writing.
58. Assessment is good. Teachers gauge pupils' standards and achievement regularly. The results are used effectively in tracking pupils' progress and

setting targets for improvement. Targets are set for the whole class and pupils know what they need to do to improve.

59. Because of training and development, the co-ordinator is leading and managing the subject well and is effective in implementing new initiatives. However, although the co-ordinator has recently purchased many more books, the number of suitable fiction books for Year 6 is limited, especially for the higher attaining pupils who bring their own books into school to read. Additionally, the library contains a number of old and outdated non-fiction books.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Teachers ensure that pupils have a suitable variety of opportunities to practise many forms of writing in different subjects. Pupils write to express their ideas and record their understanding in subjects such as history and geography. In science, pupils write instructions and give detailed accounts of their investigations. Their competence in spoken language is developed effectively when pupils are encouraged to voice their opinions, talk about their work and read it aloud in lessons, assemblies and at meetings such as those held by the school's council.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of the current Year 6 are above national expectations.
- Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection.
- More able pupils are well challenged by the work set for them.
- Leadership and management are imaginative and have improved considerably since the last inspection.
- The targets given for pupils to help them improve are not always relevant to the tasks undertaken.

Commentary

61. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 have been above average in most of the last four years and this year pupils are attaining average levels. This is because there are not as many more-able pupils. Performance in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 has varied between average and above average when compared to all schools nationally. This year, pupils are attaining above average standards as they did at the end of Year 2. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls. The very few pupils from ethnic minority groups, including those whose first language is not English, make as good progress as their classmates. There has been a good degree of improvement since the previous inspection. Leadership and management of the subject have improved considerably. The quality of

teaching and learning has been raised and this has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement, particularly for pupils of above average ability.

62. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and have clear aims which are shared effectively with pupils. Tasks are well adapted to meet the needs of pupils in the highest and lowest ability ranges. More able pupils are challenged with good extension activities in most lessons, although sometimes these are too demanding for younger pupils. Teachers and support staff work closely to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils and support staff know the areas on which they need to concentrate and work well together. In a few lessons, pupils of lower ability had insufficient chances to discuss their problems. There is good coverage of all elements of the subject and pupils have a good understanding of number, shape and space. In good lessons, teachers create a brisk and purposeful learning atmosphere to which pupils respond very well. Teachers use resources well, such as interactive whiteboards, to secure pupils' interest and there is good use of information and communication technology as a learning tool and for data-handling.
63. Assessments of pupils' attainment are used well to monitor their progress through the school and to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching. However, the current targets set for pupils are all linked to multiplication tables, which do not link well with activities such as shape and space or using co-ordinates. Marking is satisfactory and encouraging but does not regularly indicate the next step which pupils should take to improve.
64. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader is energetic and enthusiastic and regularly monitors teaching and planning. Training is organised to address teachers' needs and a good level of professional dialogue and support helps to enhance provision. There have been some imaginative developments such as maths week and seminars for parents. Teachers are good at exchanging ideas and practice with colleagues in other local schools. There has been good improvement in standards and achievement since the last inspection. Planning, teaching and learning are better and subject leadership and management has been greatly improved.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Pupils' number skills are well developed in other subjects, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The opportunities are not yet detailed in planning but there is good evidence of pupils using number skills in science, design and technology and geography. Pupils produce tables of their results in science and are competent at presenting findings in graphs and displays. In design and technology they measure accurately in order to cut materials. In geography, pupils use number skills to carry out surveys on buildings and traffic and record their results in tables and graphs which they create by hand and with ICT.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The current Year 2 pupils have not learned enough about life and living processes.
- Teachers effectively base lessons on teaching scientific enquiry skills.

Commentary

66. By the age of seven, standards in science are below average although achievement is satisfactory. This corresponds with teacher assessments at the end of 2004. Pupils do not cover enough of the required curriculum in a systematic enough way. Samples of work indicate that the current Year 2 do not have enough knowledge or understanding of living things by the end of the year. This stems from a rearrangement of the curriculum to try to meet the needs of all pupils in mixed year classes. By the age of eleven, standards are in line with national averages. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 was below average when compared with all schools nationally. In that year, although the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was above average, the number reaching the higher level was below average. This year, more pupils are on target to reach higher levels. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make satisfactory progress in the subject. Boys and girls of all ability levels, including pupils from ethnic minority groups and the very few for whom English is an additional language, make similar progress to their classmates.
67. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, leading to satisfactory learning and achievement. Lessons have clear purposes, which are usefully shared with pupils at the beginning of classes so that they have a clear idea of what they are going to learn. Pupils in a Year 4 and 5 class responded well when given an opportunity to discuss their ideas with a partner. Occasionally, however, parts of the lesson are overlong, so that pupils' interest wanes. Teachers plan lessons based on the development of scientific enquiry skills and this also enhances pupils' learning of scientific concepts. In a good science lesson at a partner secondary school, pupils learned about habitats through practical experience of observation, measurement and recording. In Year 1 and 2, the teacher successfully encouraged observational and recording skills when learning about sounds. Assessment and its use are satisfactory, and the school has firm plans to improve this aspect further so that more specific targets for pupils can be set.
68. There has been a satisfactory level of improvement since the previous inspection. Leadership and management are now satisfactory. The co-ordinator evaluates provision on a formal as well as an informal basis and has identified those areas which need improvement. For example, he has recognised the need to modify the curriculum so that it is more suitable for mixed-age classes. He has improved resources through using funds awarded by the Parents',

Teachers' and Friends' Association. He has made effective use of the school's very good partnership with the secondary school, and advice from the local education authority in improving provision. For example, following joint planning between the science co-ordinator and the secondary school, Year 6 pupils visited the school and took part in a useful range of environmental activities. Pupils use a satisfactory range of literacy and numeracy skills. For example, pupils write clear accounts of investigations, instructions and 'fact sheets'. They take measurements, sometimes using information and communication technology, and display these graphically. Pupils and teachers also make satisfactory use of information and communication technology in teaching and learning. Pupils use the internet to find out about topics they study and teachers use interactive whiteboards to enliven lessons, for example, in Year 3's work on mini-beasts.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is enhanced by a good level of resources.
- The suite is underused.

Commentary

69. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils reach standards that are about those expected from pupils of their age and achievement is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, leading to a satisfactory quality of learning. Lessons and an examination of completed work show that pupils are learning a satisfactory range of information and communication technology skills in a way that builds on their prior understanding. For example, pupils in Year 1 learn to control a cursor giving it commands to move through a simple maze whilst older pupils in Year 5 use a series of commands to write letters.
70. There has been a good level of improvement in provision since the previous inspection. Although standards and achievement are much as they were at that time, there is increased use of ICT in teaching and learning in other subjects. A key factor in this has been the good leadership and management. This has resulted in an improved level of resources. The junior classrooms are equipped with well-used interactive whiteboards. However, the well-equipped suite was underused during the inspection. Another useful development has stemmed from the school's involvement in the local federation. This has helped to develop teachers' skills as well as producing materials for teaching history.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily across the curriculum. There has been a good degree of improvement in this aspect since the previous inspection. At that time, the technology was underused in teaching

and learning in other subjects. The school now benefits from a well-equipped computer suite and interactive whiteboards in the junior classrooms. The school has access to a range of programs that make good use of these in a range of subjects. In science, Year 3 pupils developed thinking and speaking skills well and learned about mini-beasts when selecting information about a dragonfly nymph. Year 4 and 5 pupils watched old-style dancing on video in preparation for making their own dance routine as part of their history topic. Year 6 pupils have prepared presentations with scientific themes.

HUMANITIES

72. Two history lessons and one religious education lesson were observed but no geography lessons occurred during the inspection. A sample of pupils' work in all subjects was scrutinised.
73. It is not possible to form an overall judgement on **geography** provision, but planning indicates that all aspects of the subject are covered well. There are good links between geography and other subjects which successfully develop pupils' learning and skills. Pupils make good use of the local environment to study different housing types and traffic problems in the village. Pupils make very good use of their number and writing skills to present their findings. They work together well to gather information and compare their results. Map work is good throughout the school.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching stimulates pupils' interest and learning.
- Teachers develop pupils' English skills well.
- Teachers enrich pupils' interest very well through visits and visitors.
- Assessment does not yet measure pupils' progress satisfactorily.

Commentary

74. Pupils achieve good standards by Year 2 and Year 6 and take an active interest in the topics covered. Pupils achieve well which indicates an improvement on the levels observed at the last inspection. They benefit from a lively range of activities and develop their literacy skills well in recording events.
75. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils have a good understanding of the different sources of information and have well developed research skills. They make good use of books and the internet as well as appreciating what one can learn from artefacts, pictures and buildings. Teaching develops pupils' writing skills well and pupils make good use of ICT for research and presenting their findings. Older pupils are beginning to understand how to evaluate the reliability of different pieces of evidence. Pupils responded very well to a visitor

recounting her experiences as an evacuee and they developed their speaking and listening skills well. Teaching is good in Year 2 where pupils are encouraged to draw on their learning in English, mathematics and geography to discuss the uses of artefacts from the last century.

76. The subject leaders have only been recently appointed but leadership and management are satisfactory. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enliven pupils' understanding of the periods studied. Teachers use resources well and display them well to promote pupils' interest and understanding. The curriculum is satisfactory and helps pupils extend their learning by linking their studies to other subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education has a high profile in the school.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- There are good links with pupils' personal and social development.
- Systems for assessing pupils' progress are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

77. Standards are in line with those expected by Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve at a satisfactory rate. This is consistent with the levels attained at the last inspection. Pupils cover a well-planned range of learning which includes good links with their personal and social education. There is no significant difference between the achievements of pupils according to ability or gender. All pupils are encouraged to participate in discussions and the quality of written work indicates that pupils are sufficiently challenged by the tasks set for them.
78. Only one lesson was observed but a scrutiny of written work and teachers' plans indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have a secure command of the topics covered and good use is made of pupils' speaking and writing skills to develop their knowledge and understanding of the subject. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have collaborated well to create a class book which relates Bible stories to their own lives. Pupils have a good recall of what they have studied previously. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils were able to recall Muslim prayer rituals in considerable detail. Pupils study non-Christian religions but teaching does not help them fully appreciate how these are often part of the everyday life of communities.
79. The good range of displays around the school indicates that the subject is regarded as an important part of pupils' learning. There are good links between pupils' understanding of beliefs and values and their moral, social and personal education. Year 6 pupils write about the significance of light and dark both in Bible teaching and in their lives and Year 4 pupils connect the story of creation with care for our planet.

80. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The leaders, who have recently taken on the subject, are knowledgeable and have a clear idea of how they want to develop teaching and learning. They have a satisfactory knowledge of what pupils are learning and are working with colleagues to adapt planning in order to meet the needs of the mixed age classes. They recognise that systems for assessing pupils' achievements are not established on a consistent enough basis to record pupils' progress.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. **Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education** were sampled during the inspection but not enough teaching was seen to make overall judgements about provision. No art and design lessons were seen, one lesson was seen in design and technology and two in physical education.
82. In **art and design**, it is evident from the many displays around the school that standards and achievement are good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are very positive about the subject and older pupils were stimulated by their recent visit to the Tate Modern. Year 6 pupils produce bold and colourful still-life paintings and carefully executed landscapes. Other landscapes in pastels, undertaken by members of the Art Club are of a particularly high quality. Year 5 printing work is of a good standard and pupils are enthusiastic about their designs. Year 1 and 2 pupils were encouraged to develop their skills of drawing and painting through the good questioning of the teacher and teaching assistants. Assessment, and the leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.
83. In **design and technology**, discussions with pupils and teachers and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that standards are average and that achievement is satisfactory. Finished products are usually of at least a satisfactory standard. In the one lesson observed in Year 6 the teaching and learning were satisfactory. Pupils had previously planned how they were going to make a model of a shelter designed for a specific purpose. Pupils chose their own materials but tools for the lesson were barely adequate and pupils were using unsuitable small scissors to cut resistant material and dowelling. Pupils tackle model making enthusiastically and their evaluations identify points for improvement. Photographic evidence shows that all elements of the programme of study are satisfactorily covered. Displayed models of World War II aeroplanes are of a good standard and finished well. The subject is in the early stages of development and assessment procedures are satisfactory.
84. In **music**, pupils have opportunities to benefit from instrumental lessons from visiting teachers. Pupils sing tunefully in assembly. The curriculum is enhanced by visits from groups such as rock and African drumming groups. Pupils listen to a good range of music from different cultures in assemblies. These activities make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural development.
85. There is a satisfactory programme of **physical education** and pupils reach at least satisfactory standards in this subject. In a satisfactory games lesson,

pupils showed a good level of throwing and catching skills and a good level of physical activity for much of the lesson. However, this level of activity reduced towards the end of the lesson when the large teams in the rounders game meant that too many pupils were under-occupied whilst waiting for their turn to bat. Pupils take part in a wide enough range of activities. Year 4 and 5 pupils satisfactorily increased their movement skills when creating a sequence of movements based on dancing styles of the Second World War period. By the time pupils are 11 years of age, most can swim at least 25 metres and have participated in water safety activities. Pupils of all ages benefit from football clubs and the school takes part in matches against other schools. In the athletics club, pupils strive to improve their performance in a range of activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. Two lessons were observed and a sample of pupils' work was analysed. It is evident that the school provides a good range of learning activities for pupils and considers this an important part of their education. Pupils' learning is developed through well-organised weekly lessons, class discussions, and assemblies, as well as through other subjects, especially religious education and literacy. The school council is well organised and has a stimulating effect on the way pupils think about their responsibilities as councillors and towards the school environment. Teachers also promote pupils' personal development by allocating responsibilities to them. Adults are good at encouraging and valuing pupils' contributions in class and in discussion groups for older and selected pupils. In one lesson observed, teaching was effective in promoting a considered response from pupils about rules and how they accepted them. The teaching assistant leads useful discussions for pupils on how to cope with difficult situations or other areas of concern. The school is also good at preparing pupils for their transfer to secondary school, a process which they begin effectively in Year 5 with visits and class discussions.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
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The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	4
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	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
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	3
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	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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