

INSPECTION REPORT

CURRY RIVEL CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Curry Rivel, Langport

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123752

Acting Headteacher: Mrs F Harris

Headteacher at the time of inspection: Mrs L Hunt

Lead inspector: Mr J A Sangster

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 24th November 2004

Inspection number: 266711

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	158
School address:	Church Street Curry Rivel Langport Somerset
Postcode:	TA10 0HD
Telephone number:	01458 251404
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Deacon
Date of previous inspection:	24 th May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a voluntary controlled Church of England village school, drawing its pupils from the villages of Curry Rivel, Fivehead and Drayton. It has 158 pupils on roll, which means it is smaller than most primary schools. It has close links with the local community and church. Pupils come from the full range of social backgrounds, with a significant proportion from more socially deprived areas, although the proportion of pupils registered as entitled to free school meals, currently 16.2 per cent, is broadly average when compared to other primary schools. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, at 12 per cent, is below average. These needs include social, emotional and behavioural, speech or communication difficulties and autism. There is one pupil with a statement of special educational needs. Attainment on entry to the school is generally below average. Because of a reducing number of pupils being admitted to the school, all except one class (Year 6) have pupils from two age groups. There are no pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils joining the school at times other than in the first year is broadly average. The school received an Achievement Award in 2002, holds 'Investors in People' status, and is also recognised as an 'Eco' school for its environmental work.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20010	Mr John Sangster	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Physical education Religious education English as an additional language
32814	Mrs Jeanie Boldero	Lay inspector	
22805	Mrs Jo Greer	Team inspector	Science Music The Foundation Stage curriculum Special educational needs
20846	Mr Alan Wilson	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Personal, social and health education Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Curry Rivel CE Primary School provides a sound education for its pupils and gives satisfactory value for money. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage¹, as do pupils in Years 1 and 2. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Standards in English and mathematics are currently below the national average in Year 6. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good throughout the school. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, although the headteacher's own leadership is good. The governing body exercises its responsibilities well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The standards in English and mathematics achieved in Year 6 are below the national average.
- Provision for the youngest children in the school, in the Foundation Stage, is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school does not provide pupils with sufficient opportunities for pupils to write extensively in all subjects.
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of activities.
- The school cares for its pupils well, and has good links with the local community.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to understand other cultures within British society.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is similar to what it was then. The key issues from the last inspection have been resolved, except that the monitoring of teaching and learning has not yet had a sufficient impact upon pupils' attainment and progress. Attendance has improved, as has the accommodation, including the outdoor provision for the youngest children. Because of the small numbers in each year group, there are variations in results from year to year, but the overall trend of improvement since the last inspection is broadly in line with the national trend.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, as do pupils in Years 1 and 2. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage children's attainment is currently below that expected for their age, but, because of good teaching, many of them are likely to reach the expected goals by the end of their reception year. The pupils currently in Year 2 attain average standards in English, mathematics and science. In the present Year 6 standards are below the national average in English and mathematics and average in science. This is an improvement on the standards achieved by Year 6 in 2004, when test results were well below average for English and below average for mathematics and science:

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

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

¹ The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

Standards in information and communication technology and religious education are as expected in Years 2 and 6. It was not possible to make judgements on standards in other subjects during the inspection.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development, is satisfactory. Pupils do not yet have sufficient opportunities to appreciate the diversity of cultures within British society. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall; however, it is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. They use resources well, and teaching assistants give effective support, particularly for those pupils who have special educational needs. However, some lessons go on for too long, so that a minority of pupils lose interest. Methods for assessing pupils' progress are sound, but the information gained is not yet always used effectively to set individual targets for pupils, or to match work closely to their particular needs. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced and the school also provides very good opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular activities, visits and other initiatives, such as creativity sessions or theme weeks. The curriculum is also enhanced by the school's effective links with other schools and the local community.

The school takes good care of its pupils, providing a secure environment in which they can work and feel that their views are listened to. The school's links with parents are good. Some parents feel that the school has not communicated sufficiently with them, for instance, over the unavoidable change to mixed-age classes, but the inspection team's view is that the school provides a good range of information to parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision and provides good leadership. Other adults give good support. Leadership in the core areas of the curriculum is satisfactory; however, the measures taken have not yet had sufficient time to be effective in raising the levels of achievement of the older pupils. The management of the school is satisfactory; the school has a good improvement plan. The governing body fulfils its duties well and all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are mostly positive. They believe it helps their children settle in well, that teaching is good and that pupils are treated fairly. Pupils like school and appreciate the fact that their views are listened to.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in mathematics and English, making better use of assessment information and giving greater opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across other subjects.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the diversity of cultures represented in British society.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is good; in Years 3 to 6 it is satisfactory. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school because of the good support they receive. The standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology in the current Year 2 are average, in Year 6 they are below average in English and mathematics but average in science and information and communication technology. In religious education, pupils achieve the standards expected by the local authority's agreed syllabus. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, but standards of attainment in Year 6 are below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are below average.
- Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Commentary

1. Children's attainment on entry to the school varies because of the small numbers involved. However, it is generally below average, and this is so in the case of the present reception year. These children are already making good progress in the short time they have been in the school, because of the good teaching they receive. Progress in their personal, social and emotional development is very good.
2. In the national tests in 2004, taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, results in reading were below average and well below average in writing and mathematics. However, over the last five years results overall have been improving at a greater rate than nationally. Pupils currently in Year 2 are achieving the standards expected in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. These pupils entered the school with below average attainment, and their achievement so far has been good, which reflects the good teaching they receive.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.1 (14.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.2 (14.7)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.3 (15.9)	16.2 (16.3)

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

3. In Year 6, standards in national tests in 2004 were below average in mathematics and science and well below average in English. However, the attainment of these pupils at the end of Year 2, as measured in national tests, was below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics. Compared with other schools where attainment in Year 2 was similar, these results are average for English and above average for both mathematics and science. Over the last five years, the school's results have improved at broadly the same rate as nationally. Pupils currently in Year 6 are now achieving standards which are below average in English and mathematics, and average in science and information and communication technology. Taking into account their previous attainment, the level of challenge presented to them, and the progress they are making in lessons, the achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.0 (26.7)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.0 (26.7)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	27.5 (28.0)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- In religious education, pupils meet the expectations of the local education authority’s agreed syllabus. It was not possible during the inspection to make judgements on standards in other subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their previous attainment because tasks set are appropriate to their needs and they receive very effective support from dedicated teaching assistants.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities are good. Behaviour is good. Attendance is very good. Provision for moral and social development is good; provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are keen to learn and behave well in almost all lessons and about the school.
- Attendance is very good.
- Classroom assistants and midday supervisors command the respect of pupils.
- The school’s ethos promotes pupils’ moral and social development well.
- There are not sufficient opportunities for pupils to learn to appreciate the cultural traditions of others.
- The training and use of peer mediators is effective in promoting good relations.

Commentary

- Attendance has improved since the last inspection and it is now very good. The school has taken active steps to implement a system that differentiates between types of absences and to promote full attendance, including discouraging holidays being taken during term time. The system ensures accurate recording of pupils’ attendance and also supports good care for pupils by requiring parents and pupils to report to reception when leaving and returning from part day absences. Punctuality is integral to this system and is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.0	School data	0.3
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.

- Pupils like school and take part in the many activities the school offers them. Most pupils find their lessons interesting, work hard and try their best. Pupils show respect for school and classroom rules, so that behaviour in and around school is good. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong. The well-trained classroom assistants and midday supervisors

command the respect of pupils, so that behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes is good. Older pupils are trained to act as 'peer mediators': they are effective in defusing incidents of unfriendliness, especially with younger pupils. There is little occurrence of bullying. On the rare occasions when problems arise, they are dealt with quickly and efficiently. During the previous academic year, fixed-term exclusions were applied to three pupils.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	137	2	
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background	8		
Mixed –White and Black African	2	1	
No ethnic group recorded	1		

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

8. Those pupils who display challenging behaviour and emotional difficulties are generally treated firmly, but sympathetically, so that they usually cause minimum disturbance to other pupils in lessons and around the school. The school's positive ethos contributes well to developing their self-esteem.
9. All pupils have opportunities to accept responsibilities in classrooms and around school by undertaking routine tasks, such as preparing the hall for assemblies, and keeping classrooms tidy. All pupils have an opportunity to show enterprise and responsibility, through membership of the school council, acting as peer mediators, supporting eco-school activities, and taking part in joint village events. When pupils make their own requests for fundraising, such as Blue Peter events, they take full responsibility for organising them.
10. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about and experience their own cultural heritage through literature, music, art, craft and drama. They learn country dancing, including Maypole dancing, and take part in the Wells folk dancing festival. Pupils also participate in events organised by the local music club. An understanding of major world faiths forms part of the religious education syllabus, but there is too little opportunity for pupils to learn about the cultures of others in order to prepare for life in modern, multicultural Britain. The school is aware that this is an area for improvement.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The school takes good care of its pupils. The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and balanced and also provides very good opportunities for enrichment. The school's links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The quality of assessment and the use of it to respond to pupils' needs are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is good.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and use resources well.

- Teaching assistants give good support in lessons.
- Greater use could be made of assessment to match work more closely to the needs of all pupils.

Commentary

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The teachers work well together with classroom assistants and voluntary helpers, and there is a good balance between activities initiated by an adult and those chosen by children. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall. In Year 1, pupils who work with the reception-age children are provided well with tasks that are appropriate to their needs and make good progress in their learning. In the mixed-age classes for pupils in Years 1 and 2, teachers match tasks well to pupils’ abilities, and, as a consequence, pupils become involved in their learning. Marking of pupils’ work in these classes is constructive and pupils respond to it well by following the suggestions made, for instance, about the use of capital letters.
- In Years 3 to 6 teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Sometimes tasks are not matched sufficiently closely to the needs of all pupils. For instance, in a mathematics lesson some of the younger pupils in a mixed-age class were unable to work independently on the task set for them, identifying halves, quarters and eighths, and the teacher had to go back and set them a preliminary task to enable them to understand what was required. When teaching is very good, challenging questioning makes pupils think and they achieve very well in devising an investigation into changes between solid and liquid states. In this lesson the teacher gained pupils’ attention quickly and they were motivated to learn. Sometimes, however, behaviour is not managed well and pupils do not become involved in the lesson as a consequence. Some older pupils do not feel that the marking of their work always helps them improve.
- Teachers throughout the school have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. Good use is made by the school of the expertise of a physical education specialist, who, supported by the class teacher, teaches each class for one lesson. Teachers use resources well. For instance, in science lessons all that is required for an investigation is ready for pupils. In Year 6, good use is made of an interactive whiteboard to speed up demonstration of calculation strategies in mathematics. The information and communication technology suite is used well for half class groups to work with a skilled classroom assistant to develop their computer skills. In religious education lessons, teachers use religious objects, such as statues of Hindu gods, and candles, to create a good atmosphere for learning. Teaching assistants are used well to support groups in a range of lessons, including guided reading sessions. They know what they are doing and contribute well to pupils’ learning. Sometimes, however, English and mathematics lessons are too long for all pupils to maintain their interest, and teachers do not always take the opportunity to develop pupils’ writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because tasks are matched well to their needs, and they receive good support from the class teacher and classroom assistants. Although good records are kept, pupils’ progress carefully monitored, and reviews held regularly, the special needs co-ordinator is currently researching ways to develop more explicit ways of measuring these pupils’ progress through very small indicators.
- The school has developed effective methods for assessing pupils’ progress. Pupils are set targets, although not all are able to talk about them and they are not always followed up, for instance, in teachers’ marking. Sometimes, as a consequence, work is not sufficiently well matched to the full range of ability within the class.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3	11	11	1	0	0

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

16. The sample of lessons seen is small, and judgements on teaching are also based on other factors, such as the analysis of pupils' written work. However, the overall quality of teaching is similar to that observed at the last inspection.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum for the Foundation Stage. A satisfactorily broad and balanced curriculum promotes the academic and personal development of its pupils in Years 1 to 6, enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities and very effective partnerships with associated schools. The school has maintained a well-established staff of suitably qualified and experienced teachers who are assisted by a capable team of learning support assistants. The exterior and interior accommodation is good, and resources are at least satisfactory, and sometimes better, in subjects across the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong team of support staff who provide effective additional help for pupils who need it, including those with special educational needs.
- Teachers make good use of much improved accommodation and strong links with local schools to provide interesting and exciting activities for pupils of all abilities during and beyond the school day.
- There is too little emphasis on the development of writing skills across the curriculum.
- There is a good curriculum for information and communication technology.
- Some lessons in mathematics and English are too long.

Commentary

17. There has been satisfactory improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection and the school has addressed any issues that were raised. New strengths have emerged in several areas, whilst some weaknesses have developed in others.
18. The school has successfully maintained a good curriculum in the Foundation Stage which prepares children well for the national curriculum. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to enhance the curriculum, through positive initiatives, such as weekly creativity sessions in reception, Years 1 and 2, and for some pupils in Year 3, and whole-school theme weeks. It has continued to build very effective links with partner schools and other institutions, which enhance the curriculum, prepare pupils well for the next stage in their education, and make a positive contribution to their personal development. These links enable pupils to benefit from regular gymnastics coaching from a specialist teacher, science lessons and master classes at a neighbouring secondary school, and history projects working alongside Year 9 students. In addition, teachers generously give their time to provide a very wide range of after-school clubs and sports activities. These are well attended and strongly reflect the school's commitment to providing equal access for all pupils to a broad and enriched curriculum.
19. On the other hand, the organisation of the school timetable, particularly in the mornings, results in an uneven balance in the time available for teaching the full range of subjects. Mathematics and English lessons are often too long. This sometimes has a negative impact on the concentration and behaviour of a minority of pupils and also uses up time which could be devoted to sharply focused teaching in other subjects. As a consequence, pupils are currently given little time in which to write extensively in other subjects and there are insufficient links made between different areas of the curriculum. The school recognises these as areas in need of improvement.
20. There is appropriate planning for personal, social and health education which enables pupils to explore moral and social issues, guides them towards a healthy life style, and gives them opportunities to discuss their own physical and sexual development. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Learning support assistants work well with

teaching colleagues to plan work and create realistic and achievable targets for pupils who need extra help.

21. There is a good ratio of adults to pupils throughout the school and there is an experienced member of staff responsible for each class and curriculum area. Learning support assistants work well with class teachers, their professional development is managed well by the headteacher and they form an effective and well motivated team.
22. Since the last inspection, the school has brought about considerable improvement in the quality of the accommodation, which is now good. Through a variety of initiatives and with good support from parents, the school's surroundings have been developed into an attractive feature which makes a significant contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school. In addition, pupils' involvement in maintaining and cultivating the environment makes a very positive contribution to their personal development. The addition of a new hall since the last inspection has had a beneficial impact on the quality of education provided, not least by removing the need for classes to cross a main road for physical education lessons. The hall and the school as a whole are used well by staff and the local community to enable a wide range of initiatives and activities.
23. Another positive improvement since the last inspection has been the addition of a computer suite. This, along with new technical resources and good teaching of skills by a capable learning support assistant, has resulted in a strong information and communication technology curriculum and good achievement for pupils throughout the school. The school recognises the need to replace some outdated classroom resources in order to improve the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. A new and well stocked library, not yet fully in operation, has the potential to make a positive impact on standards in reading. The school building is very well maintained by the caretaker/cleaner.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. There are good assessment procedures which enable pupils to receive relevant support, advice and guidance. The involvement of pupils in the life of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school looks after its pupils very well by promoting healthy living and ensuring that they work in orderly, caring and safe surroundings.
- There are comprehensive arrangements for responding to pupils' social and emotional needs that trigger effective multi-agency work.
- Pupils know that their views matter and there are a variety of ways that they are incorporated into the life of the school.
- Induction arrangements are good.
- Not all pupils are set, or aware of, their targets.

Commentary

24. The school has succeeded in maintaining and, in places, improving the secure and constructive environment noted at the time of the last inspection. This addresses pupils' academic and pastoral needs and enables them to learn and enjoy their time in school. Staff and governors give very good consideration to health and safety and child protection matters. They have initiated liaison with external agencies and parents that provides care for the whole child. Pupils are treated equally and their learning is supported by awareness of and timely attention to their welfare needs. The ambience in the school is that of caring vigilance and staff are trusted by pupils to help them with their work or personal worries by nearly all of those asked. The care and provision at lunchtime are very good. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the quality of care provided by the school, and regard their children as being treated fairly and encouraged to become mature. The induction of children when they start

school is caring and implemented well and the school has excellent links with the on-site, but independent, pre-school provision.

25. The new hall, family room and playground equipment have improved both the facilities and fabric of the school and its safety. Pupils no longer have to cross the road at lunchtime and better use has been made of recreational space.
26. Although the school has in place effective systems for tracking pupils' progress, these have not yet been translated into sufficiently individual targets for all pupils, and pupils are not always fully aware of their own targets. As a consequence, tasks set by teachers are also not always sufficiently closely matched to the needs of pupils.
27. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are reviewed regularly. They are discussed with the pupils concerned, so they feel confident that the targets are within their capabilities and to give pupils an opportunity to make their own contributions. The targets are shared with parents.
28. Achievements in all aspects of school life are rewarded and announced within the school and to parents. Pupils like the 'Five Star' and good attendance awards, knowing that they can excel in different areas. The school encourages pupils' social development and all pupils are expected to fulfil responsibilities appropriate to their ages and maturity. Throughout the school, guidance and support for pupils is characterised by positive reinforcement.
29. Pupils are proud of their contribution to the life of their school. The school council is active, and pupils are an integral part of the eco school meetings, the whole-school review day and the family learning day. There is a peer mediation scheme that operates at lunchtime and is supported fully by staff and parents. The peer mediators themselves are confident and enthusiastic, and share the view of some parents that the scheme is underused.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, other schools and the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is an effective partnership between home and school that makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The school does all it can to communicate well with parents and the provision of information is good.
- The school is an active and valuable community resource.
- Pupils benefit from the good links with other schools.

Commentary

30. The school has maintained its good partnership with parents and the community since the last inspection. Most parents hold the school in high regard; they believe it teaches their children well and is sensitive to their needs. The range, quality and timeliness of information provided by the school to parents are good. Pupils' annual reports to parents are clear; contain information, assessments and targets about academic and personal achievements, and, in the case of the reception year, the reports incorporate parental views. Previous shortcomings in the governors' annual report to parents have been redressed and this is now a clear and comprehensive document, as is the school prospectus.
31. A significant minority of parents felt that the school should have been more communicative and responsive to their views regarding the change from single to mixed-year classes. However, the inspection team judged that the school communicates well with parents and is clear and consistent about its position on all educational issues. The school has an open-door policy to parents and makes them welcome. Those parents who are involved with the life of the school speak very highly of it. Policies for handling complaints are clear and implemented effectively.

32. The school holds a central position in its community; is outward-looking and with its pleasant new facilities is rapidly increasing its involvement with local activities. Of particular interest and benefit are the music club, country dancing, and gymnastics and dance group. The supportive links with the Anglican Church enrich the life of the school, but these are not exclusive of other religious associations.
33. There is an active parent-teacher association that organises several popular activities. An example of the way it is integral to the school is its involvement in the End of Year Ceremony where it presents every pupil in Year 6 with a book of their choosing. Fundraising is organised systematically with the school to maximise on both effort and expertise and this has resulted in many successful competitive bids. Pupils have also achieved a high level of satisfaction in playing their part in negotiating for their priorities, for example, new taps as part of the eco school project.
34. Pupils benefit from the links with the federation of local primary schools and the transition to secondary school is very good. These links strengthen the curriculum provision for pupils, notably the gifted and talented.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership, and that of other key staff is satisfactory. The management of the school is satisfactory. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school.
- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning has not yet made its full impact on standards.
- The provision for special educational needs is managed well.
- Strategic planning is now good.
- Financial management is good.

Commentary

35. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. This is articulated well to governors and staff, and mostly to parents, although there is a minority of parents who do not respond to the information the school provides. This vision is expressed clearly in the school's prospectus and manifests itself in the good level of care provided. The school is committed to inclusiveness, and good support is offered to those pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils from minorities, such as travellers, are integrated well into the daily life of the school. There is also a commitment to high expectations for teaching and learning, which have not yet been fully realised. The monitoring of teaching and learning has not yet made a full impact on what goes on in the classroom. The headteacher has dealt firmly with inappropriate behaviour from pupils when it has occurred.
36. Other key staff give good support, but their own effectiveness has been limited by a variety of circumstances, including absence through illness or the relative recentness of their appointment. Co-ordinators of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science show satisfactory leadership of their subjects. Although strategies have been identified to raise achievement in these areas, there has not yet been time for these to have a sufficient impact. The headteacher's leadership of information and communication technology is good; this is an area where provision has improved considerably since the last inspection. Good leadership is also provided in the Foundation Stage. The opportunity of other co-ordinators to monitor provision in their subject is limited by constraints of time.
37. The special needs co-ordinator has good background knowledge and understanding of pupils with special educational needs. She is highly committed to ensuring that these pupils receive appropriate and adequate support so that they can access the full curriculum. She has

regular meetings with teaching assistants to share information on individual pupils and ensure that the whole team is fully up-to-date with initiatives and training opportunities.

38. The school now has a good improvement plan, to which all members of the school community contribute, and the progress of which is monitored regularly by the headteacher and governors. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when the school development plan was too short term and governors were not sufficiently involved in its preparation.
39. The school's governing body ensures that the school meets all its legal requirements. They have an effective committee structure and good communication between meetings; many of them are directly involved in the work of the school, but they are able to provide a sufficiently critical view of the school's performance, as well as appreciating its strengths, such as its involvement in the community. They have already identified the need to reach out to some parents who do not involve themselves in the work of the school and fully support the headteacher in her attempt to do this.
40. The school manages its finances well. A recent auditor's report showed no cause for concern. The school is successful in obtaining funding from a range of sources, for instance to fund the building of the new community hall. The large balance which appears to have been carried forward from the last financial year is due to a number of factors, including holding funds on behalf of the local cluster of schools. The usable carry forward of 3.6 per cent of the budget is a reasonable amount to hold as a contingency.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	498,848
Total expenditure	526,924
Expenditure per pupil	3,136

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	99,378
Balance carried forward to the next	71,695

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching is always good, with some very good features.
- Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development.
- There is a good balance between adult- and child-initiated activities.
- All play activities have a planned learning objective.
- Teachers and assistants know the children well and cater effectively for their individual needs.
- Children could be given more explicit direction for some activities.

Commentary

41. Children enter reception class in September following their fourth birthday. Most children have had some previous pre-school experience. For the first half term children attend in the morning only, beginning full-time attendance in November. Attainment on entry is below expectations for their age, particularly in social development. Children make good progress in the reception year and many are likely to achieve the early learning goals when they enter Year 1.
42. There are good induction arrangements, particularly through liaison with the pre-school playgroup, which is on the same site. Parents are invited to a meeting where the organisation and Foundation Stage curriculum are explained. Parents are welcomed into school every morning to help their child settle at the beginning of each day.
43. Teaching is always good with some very good features. There is a good balance between adult- and child-initiated activities. More formal lessons are planned carefully so children do not spend too long sitting on the carpet. Lessons are matched well to children's interest, and questions adapted to individual children's different ability levels. Follow-up activities are carried out in small groups, with good adult supervision, so that children consolidate their learning and develop skills successfully. Child-initiated activities are taken from a limited selection, all of which have a specific learning objective.
44. The reception class teacher organises and manages the class well. She has frequent useful discussions with the classroom assistants and voluntary parent helpers, so that all teaching is fully effective and children learn as well as possible. There is a good ratio of adults to children. Adults are constantly aware of incidental achievements of individual children and note these for inclusion in their ongoing records. There are good arrangements for more focused assessments. Assessments identify children who are causing concern, in either their academic or social and emotional development; their progress is then carefully monitored so that any special educational needs can be properly identified and appropriate provision made.
45. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in the provision of a secure outdoor play area, which is interesting and stimulating, and the provision of large wheeled toys. Children are now taught in a dedicated reception class, although there are a few Year 1 children learning alongside them, during the mornings, when there is a greater emphasis on language and mathematical development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

46. Children enter reception with social skills below those expected for their age. Many find it difficult to share and take turns. A few exhibit unkind behaviour towards other children. Adults are firm but fair. They use frequent praise and the school's positive behaviour

management procedures, so that children quickly learn what is expected of them. At the time of the inspection, the children had been in school for only a short time and had already made very good progress. Lessons are well ordered, behaviour is good, and the atmosphere is one of happy, busy learning, both in structured lessons and through play. Children achieve very well in a short time because all adults share a common practice, set high standards of expectation, and establish very good relationships with each other and the children.

47. Behaviour at playtimes is generally good, with most children playing happily together, sharing and taking turns. Occasional incidents of over-boisterous behaviour are managed very well by adults, who explain carefully to children why their behaviour is unacceptable. There is good liaison with parents or carers to support their children's social development and to help those few children who find it particularly difficult to be friendly, especially at playtimes and lunchtimes.
48. Children are encouraged to be independent from the beginning. They learn to make choices from a limited range of activities. They are taught to use equipment sensibly, play nicely together, and clear away properly at the end. During structured play activities, children learn to be part of a social group through sharing toys and talking together. A few children were seen engaging in good co-operative play where they talked about how to construct a pirate ship and worked together building it from large wooden blocks. Most children use equipment sensibly but play alongside each other. There was little evidence of children flitting from one activity to another, or of any child drifting aimlessly.
49. Children are taught to undress and dress themselves with minimal adult help and to take care of their own belongings. They learn social skills through snack time and eating together at lunchtimes. They know it is important to wash their hands before meals.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

50. Children begin reception with language skills below those expected for their age. A significant minority have underdeveloped speech patterns. The satisfactory language skills of pupils in Year 1 indicate the good progress children make during reception year. Teaching is good because the good ratio of adults to children and the skill of adults in engaging children in conversation encourage them to develop their speaking skills well. Children also develop speaking and listening skills well, through talking to the whole class during 'circle time'², as well as through adult-initiated conversations during group work and interactions during play activities. A particularly good practice during 'circle time' is the selection of random everyday objects which children take turns to draw from a 'feely bag'; they are then encouraged to name the object and describe it, thus developing their vocabulary as well as speaking skills. Adults provide good role models for correct sentence construction and enunciation.
51. Children develop a love of books through frequent story times. They are enthused, because teachers use good vocal and facial expressions, and encourage children to join in repetitive words and phrases. Children learn a great number of songs and action rhymes, which they enjoy. Incidental opportunities are used well to introduce children to letter names and sounds. More able children begin to acquire a small sight vocabulary. All children enjoy looking at picture books and 'telling the story'.
52. In the short time since starting school, many children have begun to write their own name independently and legibly. Some are ascribing meaning to the marks they make, less able children trace and copy letter shapes and begin to form letters correctly. Good emphasis is placed on pencil grip and letter formation.
53. The constant interaction between adults and children, the many incidental opportunities to practise early writing skills, initial phonic understanding and contact with stories and rhymes means children learn through direct experience and play. Their achievement is good.

² 'Circle time' is a session provided for pupils to discuss a wide range of personal issues as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

54. Children begin school with little number awareness or counting skills. The children learn well through the many incidental opportunities teachers and other adults use to practise counting and number recognition. They make rapid progress in learning to count to ten and to count out a given number of objects correctly. They begin to form numbers correctly when counting objects on simple worksheets. More structured teaching is very good. Teachers use stories very well to develop an understanding of counting on one more than a given number so that children pay good attention and enjoy learning.
55. Photographic evidence shows the many interesting opportunities provided for children to learn about shapes and simple comparisons of measurements, such as size and length. Teaching is good so children learn well through direct experience. Their achievement is good so most children are on target to succeed in the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

56. Children begin school with a knowledge and understanding of the world around them, and beyond their home, in line with that expected for their age. Teaching extends this knowledge and understanding in planned structured activities and through using incidental opportunities as they arise. Children learn about the local village environment through direct experience. Each week they are taken on a walk in the local area which has a particular focus. They have visited the local park, the church and the village shops, and taken a bus ride to the nearest library. During the visits adults talk to the children about what they are seeing, ask them to describe features and ask good questions to stimulate their thinking and develop their speaking skills. Structured play activities further enhance learning. An intricate 'canal' system made from guttering stimulates children to explore floating and sinking. They investigate the power of water by experimenting with water wheels.
57. Children have very good opportunities to develop skills using information and communication technology. They are helped to take digital photographs of structures they have created, and they are, subsequently, shown how to use the photo printer to print out their photograph. They use the classroom computer. Children listen to stories using a listening centre. Children are fascinated when introduced to simple programming of a floor robot.
58. Teaching is always good and sometimes very good because it enables children to learn effectively through direct and hands-on experiences.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

59. There was little opportunity to observe direct teaching in this area of learning. There are good opportunities for children to use their imagination during play activities. Children made a dinosaur cave from a large groundsheet and played with model dinosaurs; a very withdrawn child particularly enjoyed this. Other children made a pirate ship with big building blocks, used cardboard tubes as telescopes and engaged in good imaginative role-play. The teacher had prepared coloured rice (using food dyes) so children could choose to make patterns in jars and pictures or patterns by sticking the rice onto paper. Other children created simple sculptures in sand using shells, starfish and gourds. One afternoon each week is given over to a 'carousel' of creative activities including art, craft, music, dance and drama.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

60. Although children begin school with their physical development at the expected level, their stamina is well below that expected for their age. The regular weekly village walks are making a significant difference to this. The first time children walked to the park, they had only a couple of minutes left to play on the equipment; after half a term, they have ten minutes time. This is good improvement.

61. A specialist teacher teaches formal physical education lessons. In these, children learn to move with control and to balance by doing a pirouette on a bench and bending to pick up a ball from the floor. Their control improved considerably during the lesson observed. Less formal opportunities are provided, during free choice play times, when children play on the attractive adventure equipment on the main play area, use small games equipment and ride on the large wheeled toys. Children make satisfactory progress in large muscle control; however, children could make more progress in some of these riding activities if they were given more direction in the use of steering or braking. Many children are ready to learn to ride bikes without stabilisers.
62. Children make good progress in fine muscle control, through carefully monitored pencil work, writing, colouring and painting. Cutting and pasting tasks and opportunities for using malleable materials to model letter shapes and creative ideas all contribute to manipulative development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 2 achieve well in all aspects of English because of the good overall quality of teaching. Pupils in Year 6 achieve well in reading.
- There are too few opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills through teaching in other subjects.
- Better use could be made of the good target setting systems which are in place to show pupils how to improve.

Commentary

63. Standards at the time of the last inspection were judged to be in line with national expectations in Year 2 and above national expectations in Year 6. However, results in the national tests for that year were below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6. In the intervening years, standards have risen at a faster rate than the national trend, and were broadly average in Year 2 and in Year 6 in the 2003 tests. However, results fell sharply to well below average in both Year 2 and Year 6 in the 2004 national tests. This can be explained, to some extent, by the statistics produced by the school which show that the attainment of both of these groups was lower than usual on entry to the school. Additionally, the fall in standards coincided with the long term absence of the coordinator, which had a negative impact on the quality of leadership and, subsequently, on teaching and learning. The inspection findings strongly indicate that her return from absence has stabilised the situation and re-established an upward trend.
64. Standards in Year 2 are in line with national expectations in all aspects of English. Pupils are achieving well, given their lower than average attainment on entry to the school, due to the good overall quality of teaching in the Years 1 and 2 and Years 2 and 3 classes. Standards in Year 6 are in line with national expectations in reading and below average in speaking and listening and in writing. This represents good progress in reading, and satisfactory achievement, overall, for this particular group of pupils, and reflects satisfactory teaching and learning, overall, in Years 3 to 6. The good quality of support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress throughout the school. Girls tend to achieve better than boys in writing. The school has recognised this issue and has set up initiatives to improve boys' attitudes to writing, but there is a need to establish a means of assessing the impact of these initiatives on standards.
65. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and below expectations in Year 6. Teachers of pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good use of the introductory sessions at the beginning of lessons to ask sharply focused open questions, such

as, 'What do you think happened next?', which encourage full and clear replies. Consequently, most pupils in Year 2 are confident about addressing friends or adults and some do so with consistent clarity. A more able pupil in Year 2, when discussing the whole-class reading book, for example, suggested, 'It's nice to read a book again because you might have forgotten what the story is about'. A small minority, on the other hand, need to be prompted or helped by an adult at this stage. The majority of pupils in Year 6 answer questions with reasonable clarity, when asked, reflecting similar standards to those found in most schools. More able pupils occasionally pose thoughtfully framed and articulate questions of their own, in some cases achieving above national expectations for their age. A significant minority, on the other hand, restrict their answers to short phrases or single words and some are reluctant to join in class discussions.

66. By Year 2, most pupils confidently read familiar stories without help. This is due to regular guided reading sessions, which are carefully structured and led well by teachers and support staff. Some more capable pupils achieve above-average standards because they read with expression, are developing an interest in a favourite author, and have firmly established independent reading habits. Less able pupils are more dependent on adult support because they still have difficulty with some initial letter sounds and blends, but achieve well because they enjoy a lot of help from teachers, support staff, volunteer helpers and from parents at home. Reading diaries are particularly well used and enable very positive dialogue to take place between teacher and parents about their children's progress. There is continued emphasis on the development of reading skills in Years 3 to 6, through group reading and initiatives, to promote the enjoyment of literature, such as book weeks and a book club. Consequently, the vast majority of pupils in Year 6 have sound technical skills in reading and only a very small minority occasionally need adult support. Research skills are adequately developed and pupils are used to finding information on the internet, or from reference books. Good additional support is provided for pupils with special educational needs which builds confidence and self-esteem.
67. Standards in writing are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and below expectations in Year 6. In Year 2, most pupils organise events in their right order, for instance to send information about themselves in a letter to a pen friend, using clear, recognisable sentences with capital letters and full stops. Some more able pupils write accurately at greater length, reflecting above average standards for their age. Most pupils' handwriting is clear, consistently formed and properly spaced, although some have difficulty in keeping their writing level or uniform in size when using unlined books. In Year 6, some pupils write stories independently, organising their work into paragraphs and all pupils are familiar with writing for different audiences. More able pupils sometimes produce standards at the higher than expected level for their age, although they have difficulty in maintaining accuracy all the way through their work. Similarly, the work of many pupils of average ability reflects the expected standards in terms of the content of their work, but does not meet the required level in relation to the quality of punctuation and spelling. The quality of handwriting is also inconsistent at this stage, particularly in subjects across the curriculum.
68. The quality of teaching is good overall in the Years 1 and 2 and Years 2 and 3 classes and is satisfactory in the school as a whole. A consistent strength of teaching throughout the school is that teachers carry out regular assessments of pupils' progress and set targets for improvement. Another, though less widespread, strength is that teachers plan work for groups of different abilities in their class and provide support where it is needed. These are very positive strategies which clearly have the potential to raise standards in writing. In some classes, teachers very conscientiously mark written work with the expectation that pupils will read and act upon their comments. This practice is having a positive impact on standards of writing by Year 2. Nevertheless, the quality of pupils' previous work and the writing seen in lessons in Years 3 to 6 strongly indicates that insufficient use is made of marking and assessment to set work which is more closely linked to writing targets and which more accurately meets individual needs. Progress is satisfactory but slower than it could be because pupils are unfamiliar with their writing targets and do not know what they need to do to improve.

69. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The coordinator has a clear sense of direction and a strong commitment to improvement in the subject. Since her return from absence, she has begun to reverse the downward trend, through initiatives, such as work sampling and lesson observations, although there is a need to ensure that colleagues have a clearer expectation of the standards that they should expect of pupils in the age group they are teaching. She has also developed a new, well stocked library which is now ready for use and has the potential to raise standards in reading throughout the school. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

70. The school satisfactorily promotes the development of speaking, listening and writing in subjects across the curriculum. Many teachers make good use of the introductory session in lessons to ask sharply focused questions or to enable pupils to share ideas in discussion with a partner and this has a positive impact on achievement. In order to raise standards, there is a need for all adults in the school to encourage and expect clear and articulate communication from pupils at every opportunity during the school day. A positive aspect of writing across the curriculum is that teachers encourage pupils to express themselves in their own words. However, opportunities for extended writing are not formally included in teachers' planning and the expectations of the amount and quality of pupils' writing varies from subject to subject and class to class.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2, where teaching is good.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are below average.
- More opportunities could be provided for pupils to carry out investigations.
- Work is not always matched appropriately to pupils' needs.

Commentary

71. In national tests in 2004, pupils achieved standards which were well below the national average in Year 2, and below average in Year 6. However, because of the small numbers in each year group, comparisons between different years are difficult to make. The pupils currently in Year 2 are achieving standards which are broadly as expected for their age; this is good achievement for these pupils, whose attainment on entry to the school was below average. Pupils in Year 6 are achieving similar standards to last year's, broadly average, and this represents satisfactory achievement for these pupils.
72. Pupils in Year 2 are able to use two-digit numbers reliably in addition and subtraction. They have begun to use grams, for instance, to measure mass. They also use Venn diagrams to classify items as greater than, less than or exactly ten centimetres. They have used graphs to demonstrate the different results obtained when throwing three dice. More able pupils are able to explain why the total will not be 19. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 understand halves and quarters. Pupils make good progress because of the good teaching they receive in Years 1 and 2. The objectives of the lesson are made clear to pupils, and checked again at the end of the lesson, and good support is provided for both higher and lower attaining pupils.
73. Pupils in Year 6 use co-ordinates confidently. They have also used data to plot, for instance, the frequency of different shoe sizes in their class. They can convert centimetres to metres or centilitres to litres; however, their work is not always set out clearly enough to make calculation easy, and there are not sufficient opportunities, particularly for higher-attaining pupils, to solve mathematical problems, giving explanations of their own reasoning.

74. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and use teaching assistants well to work with small groups of pupils. However, lessons sometimes go on for too long, so that pupils lose interest; in one lesson it was 45 minutes after the beginning of the lesson before pupils had the opportunity to work independently. Also, tasks are not always matched appropriately to the ability of pupils. For instance, in one lesson observed a younger group of pupils was unable to do the task they were set; as the teacher was working with another group, this was not picked up for some time. They were then set a more appropriate task. In another case, the task for lower-attaining pupils had no link to the previous work in the lesson.
75. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has not been long in the role. He has had some opportunity to monitor teaching and learning, but has not, so far, been able to make full use of the data obtained from the tracking of pupils. Although pupils have targets, these are not yet sufficiently adjusted to individual needs and pupils cannot always recall them. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, with standards of attainment and teaching and learning maintained at a similar level.

Mathematics across the curriculum

76. The opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in other subjects are satisfactory. For instance, measurement is used in science, where pupils produce graphs to show data they have collected. However, these opportunities are not planned regularly or explicitly in other subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information and communication technology is used well as a tool for teaching.
- There are good links with the local secondary science and technology college.
- Opportunities to use literacy and numeracy as tools for learning are not sufficiently well planned.

Commentary

77. In 2003 results of teacher assessments of pupils in Year 2 were well below the national average. In 2004 there was considerable improvement; the proportion of pupils judged to have reached the expected level was still below average, but the proportion reaching the higher Level 3 was average. In 2003 national tests the standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 were below average. The results of the tests in 2004 showed a small improvement on 2003. Standards were still below average, but above average when compared with schools where pupils' attainment was similar in Year 2. The school has set ambitious targets for the current year. Inspection evidence suggests that by the end of Years 2 and 6 most pupils will attain the standards expected for their age. Higher-attaining pupils will exceed these. Since 2000, standards have been improving faster than nationally in Year 6 and are now approaching the national average.
78. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good. Activities are planned well, and good support is provided for less able pupils. Teaching and learning are very variable in Years 3 to 6 but are satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, the pace is brisk, pupils behave well and have very good opportunities to undertake first-hand investigation; as a consequence their learning is effective and they make good progress. In these lessons, teachers challenge pupils well by setting interesting tasks and asking probing questions, so that all pupils achieve as well as they might, and otherwise reluctant learners are motivated and engaged. In other lessons, the planning is inappropriate, the pace pedantic and pupils do not pay proper attention to the teacher. Occasionally a significant minority of pupils behaves inappropriately, and the teacher does not manage this successfully, so that others are prevented from learning

and making the progress of which they are capable. Sometimes lessons are dull because the teacher spends too much time giving pupils factual information. Sometimes relationships between the teacher and pupils are such that a few pupils are reluctant to approach their teacher when they do not fully understand work and this adversely affects their learning so they do not make sufficient progress; these pupils know they are not achieving as well as they might. In some lessons practical work is too prescriptive, so pupils do not develop investigative skills sufficiently well.

79. Information and communication technology is used well as a tool for teaching. In Year 6, pupils photographed examples of decomposition found around the school grounds, which were immediately transferred to a computer and projected, as were photographs showing the progressive decomposition of a piece of apple.
80. The leadership of science is satisfactory. There have been problems in recent years ensuring that pupils cover the full programme of study and do not repeat work unnecessarily because of the varying mixed-age classes. The subject leader has reorganised the programme to ensure that this no longer happens. It now covers all the required elements for all pupils, but does not yet identify the specific opportunities for developing and using literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills as tools for learning. There are sound procedures for assessing pupils' progress, although it is not clear how well the information is used as a tool for planning. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.
81. A good initiative is the partnership with the local specialist science/technology secondary school. Teachers from the secondary school visit regularly to teach pupils in the upper junior classes, with the aim of raising standards. This should help pupils reach the ambitious targets set for them for the national tests. Additionally, theme days and weeks and visits to places with a science focus all support learning in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have regular access to computer technology, the teaching of skills is good and achievement throughout the school is good.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Some classroom equipment needs to be updated and this restricts opportunities to plan the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

Commentary

82. Standards in Years 2 and 6 meet the national expectations for pupils in those age groups. Given that the expectations of standards have risen since the time of the last inspection, this represents good improvement. Pupils in Year 2 use computers regularly, for example to edit and publish stories they have written by changing the size of the text and adding images. Most are competent at correcting any mistakes that they make when they are working. Keyboard skills are adequate and pupils save, file and access their work competently. Pupils in Year 6 have regular opportunities to use computers and recognise that they are an efficient means of organising and presenting information, for example to plan a trip to the museum or calculate the cost of a party. They are confident in using information and communication technology as a tool for finding information, or as a means of displaying and saving information from other types of equipment, such as electronic microscopes or digital cameras.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most lessons in the computer suite are taught by a capable learning support assistant who has good subject knowledge and expertise. Sessions are well planned, and she makes good use overall of ongoing assessment to provide helpful encouragement and advice to pupils, usually with the support of a colleague. Most pupils respond well, appreciate the guidance she gives them, and have positive attitudes

to learning. On the other hand, her assessment could be used to provide more challenging tasks for more able pupils and is an area for future consideration.

84. Leadership of the subject is good. Since the last inspection, the subject coordinator has substantially improved the overall quality and range of equipment available to pupils and this is having a positive impact on achievement throughout the school. The new computer suite is in regular use and resources have also been provided to ensure that all aspects of the national curriculum are covered in the scheme of work.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. Class teachers often make good use of a range of information and communication technology resources to support teaching and learning. A good example of this was seen in a Year 6 science topic in which pupils used a digital camera to record the gradual decay of an apple. On the other hand, some classroom computers are out of date and this makes it difficult for teachers to plan the use of computers as an integral part of day-to-day learning. Teachers compensate to some extent by arranging extra sessions in the computer suite, but the planning and use of information and communication technology in the classroom remain areas for future improvement.

HUMANITIES

Too little evidence was gained from the inspection to make secure judgements about provision in **geography** and **history**.

86. Pupils' work in **history** was sampled during the inspection. The work seen in the books of pupils in Years 3 to 6 was of a reasonable standard, showing adequate coverage of national curriculum topics using an appropriate range of strategies for recording evidence. Pupils in the Years 1 and 2 class have been studying the history of the local area. The subject coordinator's file, however, contained examples of planning which lacked detail and provided brief notes on what was to be covered rather than any proposed learning objectives.
87. Because of the way the school organises its timetable, very little work in **geography** has been completed this term. The examples of teacher's planning made available in the subject coordinator's file, however, contained very little detail of teaching methods, resources to be used or expected learning outcomes.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for pupils to consolidate their learning in writing are limited.
- There are few opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship of or to listen to visitors from faiths other than Christianity.

Commentary

88. Pupils achieve the standards expected by the local authority's agreed syllabus. During the inspection, pupils in the Years 1 and 2 and Years 2 and 3 classes were looking at aspects of Festivals of Light in Judaism and Hinduism. In both lessons, the teacher created a good atmosphere by the use of lights and religious objects from the particular religion. After listening to the story behind the festival, pupils then drew aspects of the story. Because they did not immediately put down their ideas in writing, some pupils in Years 2 and 3 found it difficult to recall that the story they had listened to carefully related to the festival of Diwali. There was no opportunity to observe pupils from Year 6 being taught during the inspection and there was little recorded evidence of their work, but, from discussion with pupils, it was clear that they had a broad knowledge of the major world faiths and were currently preparing for a visit to the local church. In a lesson with pupils from Year 5, they showed a sound understanding of a story from the New Testament about the healing of lepers, and were able to make appropriate links with the problem of leprosy in the modern world.
89. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and use resources, such as religious artefacts, well to make learning more interesting. However, the school does not regularly undertake visits to places of worship of other faiths or have visitors from these faiths to talk to pupils, which would give them a greater understanding of what it means to be a follower of a faith.
90. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject and has provided appropriate sheets for teachers to use to record pupils' progress. However, she has had few opportunities to monitor teaching or pupils' work throughout the school. No overall judgements were made on progress, teaching or attainment at the last inspection, so it is not possible to make a judgement on improvement since then. However, resources appear to have improved, with good use being made of loans from county sources.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were not a focus of this inspection and, therefore, no judgements are made about provision in these subjects.

91. There was no opportunity to observe **art and design** or **design and technology** being taught during the inspection; however, inspectors looked at coordinators' files, pupils' sketchbooks and displays around the school, as well as holding a discussion with pupils from Year 6. Pupils' sketchbooks in Year 6 portrayed movement in human figures by using ovals. A display also showed art work based on photographs taken around the school. Discussion indicated that pupils are familiar with the work of famous artists, such as Picasso and Monet. In design and technology, pupils in Year 6 had designed and made moving toys, evaluating their finished work. Schemes of work are in place for both subjects and both also form part of 'creative workshops'. However, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards.
92. In **physical education** only gymnastics lessons were observed and in these lessons pupils achieved the standards expected for their age. In the lessons taken by a specialist teacher, who has one lesson with each class, pupils make good progress because of the encouragement and challenge provided by the teacher. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to swim, using a local pool, and the records kept indicate that, by the time pupils leave Year 6, the majority are able to swim and have an understanding of safety in the water.
93. Only one lesson was observed in **music**, which was a singing practice for the Christmas production. A choir practice was also visited, the subject leader's file examined and a brief discussion held with her as well as with a group of pupils. The planned curriculum meets the requirements of the national curriculum. The school has a good range of tuned and untuned

percussion instruments, recorded music and resources for teachers. Pupils have opportunities to learn various musical instruments with a visiting commercial company. There are good opportunities to take part in village musical activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

No lessons with **personal, social and health education** as a principal focus were seen; therefore, no overall judgement can be made on provision.

94. There is a satisfactory programme for personal, social and health education which enables pupils to explore a range of social and moral issues, discuss their own physical growth and development and to make important choices about their contribution to both the school and the wider community as they grow older. This is achieved through a number of initiatives. For example, the school organises regular visits by key members of the local community, such as police and fire officers, and the owner of the village post office, to raise pupils' awareness of issues which directly affect them. Pupils of all ages also have the opportunity to become an active member of a democratically elected school council, a role which encourages and develops a sense of individual responsibility and citizenship.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
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	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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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