

INSPECTION REPORT

**WORKSOP PRIORY CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED)
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Worksop

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122823

Headteacher: Mr R Woodhead

Lead inspector: David Mankelow

Dates of inspection: 21st - 23rd June 2004

Inspection number: 258510

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	277
School address:	Holles Street Worksop Nottinghamshire
Postcode:	S80 2LJ
Telephone number:	(01909) 478 886
Fax number:	(01909) 501 145
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Father Andrew Wagstaff
Date of previous inspection:	27 th April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average-sized Church of England voluntary aided primary school serving the south and south-east of Worksop. It has 277 pupils, with equal numbers of boys and girls. It is situated in an area that experiences considerable social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Nearly all pupils are of white British origin and none speaks English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage unit is well below that expected nationally but is in line with the expected level on entry to the main school. The proportion of pupils identified by the school as having special educational needs is broadly average and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Pupils' special educational needs include visual impairment, communication difficulties and physical disabilities. In the last school year, 16 per cent of pupils joined or left the school at times other than the usual time of admission. The school gained the 'Investor in People' award and the 'Schools Achievement Award' in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23095	David Mankelow	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography
19322	Judi Bedawi	Lay inspector	
27826	Andrew Parsons	Team inspector	Mathematics History Physical education Special educational needs
3751	Trudy Cotton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Art and design Music English as an additional language

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI
Barley House
Oakfield Grove
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 2BN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637 833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 9
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9 - 13
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13 - 15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	16 - 25
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The **overall effectiveness of the school is good and is improving**. It provides **good value for money**. Teaching is good overall and much of it is very good or excellent. Pupils achieve well and reach expected standards in most subjects by the time they leave the school. Leadership and management are very good and pupils are cared for very well.

THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage Unit (FSU) is very good.
- Teaching and learning are very good in the FSU and good for pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- The breadth and balance of the curriculum are good.
- Pupils are very happy, behave very well and enjoy coming to school.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.
- Schemes of work for non-core subjects (subjects other than English, mathematics and science) do not ensure consistent progression of skills.
- Pupils are cared for very well.
- Links with parents and the community are very good.
- Levels of attendance are unsatisfactory because too many families take holidays during term time.
- Homework diaries are not used consistently across the school.
- Assessment information is not readily available to all who may need to use it.
- Standards of writing and spelling by the time pupils leave the school are below expectations.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. It has successfully addressed all of the key issues identified at that time and there is now much more teaching that is good or very good. The combined skills of the headteacher and his deputy, ably supported by other staff with responsibilities, provide very good leadership and management.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	C	D	C
mathematics	E	A*	D	C
science	E*	D	B	A

Key: A – very high; A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E* – very low. Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals. The mobility between Year 2 and Year 6 is high and data is unreliable.*

Pupils' achievement overall is good. It is very good in the Foundation Stage, good in Years 1 to 4 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since 2001 but this improvement has not yet had time to take full effect on the achievement of the older pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because a team of very effective teaching assistants that is well led by the special educational needs co-ordinator, supports them well.

Children enter the Foundation Stage unit with standards well below those expected. They achieve very well and are expected to reach national standards (the early learning goals) by the end of the Reception Year, and to exceed them in personal and social development and in language and literacy.

By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly in line with those expected nationally in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Overall standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science but below expectations in writing and spelling. In recent years, the school has focused successfully on raising standards in writing by extending opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes. However, this work has not yet had time to be fully effective for the older pupils.

Pupils' personal development is very good. Their behaviour is also very good. Pupils are keen to please and they work hard. They very much enjoy coming to school but attendance overall is unsatisfactory because too many families take holidays during term time. **Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and their cultural development is good.** There is a strong Christian ethos and school assemblies make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good with some very good features. **Teaching and learning are good overall.** Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage unit and good in Years 1 to 6. Teachers use a very good range of teaching strategies to match pupils' individual learning styles. They have very good relationships with pupils and expect very high levels of behaviour. The school's curriculum is good although schemes of work for non-core subjects do not ensure consistent progression of skills. Provision for curricular enrichment is very good. Teachers make good links between subjects and this maintains high levels of pupil interest. There are good assessment procedures and teachers use assessment information well to plan future work. However, this information is not stored in a way that makes it available to all those who might need to use it. Care and support are very good and pupils are actively involved in the school's work. Links with parents and the community are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The complementary skills of the headteacher and his deputy have been very effective in improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement in recent years. They are ably supported by other staff with responsibilities and form a team that ensures the school constantly strives to raise standards, whilst maintaining a positive and happy community. Governors visit the school regularly and support its work effectively.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very positive about the school and particularly appreciate the very good care and support that pupils receive. Some parents are concerned that homework is not set consistently and, whilst homework is satisfactory overall, inspection judgements support the parents' view. Pupils are very positive about their school and pleased to take responsibilities as pupil-negotiators, first-aiders and members of the school council.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE ARE:

- Raise standards of writing and spelling by Year 6.
- Ensure the progressive development of skills in non-core subjects.
- Improve attendance.
- Ensure that assessment information is readily available to all who need to use it.
- Implement the homework policy and use homework diaries consistently across the school.

AND, TO MEET STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS:

- Ensure that attendance registers are always marked.
- Ensure appropriate reporting of racial incidents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Achievement overall is good. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are broadly in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6, except for standards of writing and spelling in Year 6 which are below expectations.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Achievement in Years 1 to 4 is good.
- Standards of writing and spelling in Year 6 are not as high as they should be.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Commentary

1. Children enter the Foundation Stage unit with standards well below those expected nationally in all areas of their learning. The children currently in the Reception Year will reach nationally expected standards by the time they enter Year 1 and are likely to exceed them in personal and social development and language and literacy. However, this has not been the case in the past. Children's achievement is now very good because of the reorganisation of the Nursery and Reception classes into a Foundation Stage unit where staff work very effectively as a team. They know the children well and plan practical activities which get the best out of them. They make full use of the excellent facilities and children find learning fun.
2. In Years 1 and 2 pupils reach expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in national tests for seven-year-olds in 2003 were broadly average in reading and mathematics but below average in writing compared with all schools nationally. Results were above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing in comparison with similar schools (schools with a similar proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals.) Inspection judgements are that similar results are likely to be achieved in this year's national tests, except that pupils are now doing better in writing. This is because the school has focused on improving writing skills and the quality of teaching has improved. Pupils in the current Years 1 and 2 achieved standards that were below those expected nationally when they entered Year 1 and are now achieving well. Results of teacher assessments in science for seven-year-olds in 2003 were in line with the national average. Improvements in test results in recent years have been in line with the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.6 (16.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.0 (14.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (17.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Results of the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2003 were below average in English and mathematics, but above average in science compared with all schools. Results were average in English and mathematics and well above average in science in comparison with similar schools. Comparisons have again been made with schools with a similar proportion of free school meals because high numbers of pupils enter and leave the school at times other than the normal times of entry. The cohort of pupils who took the Year 6 tests in 2003 was significantly different from the cohort at the school who took the Year 2 tests in 1999. This would make comparison with schools whose pupils achieved similar results when the pupils were in Year 2 unreliable. When looking at the value added to the average points scores for individual pupils, from their results in Year 2 in 1999 to their Year 6 results in 2003, the school was above the average for similar schools. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 3 and 4 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6 because the improvements in teaching seen across the school have not yet had time to take full effect for the older pupils. However, improvements in Year 6 test results in recent years have been above the national trend.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.7 (27.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.1 (30.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.4 (27.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Standards in the current Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science but are below expectations in writing and spelling. This is because, whilst teaching has improved and the school has focused on different types of writing, these improvements have not yet had time to be fully effective.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6. This is the same judgement that was made at the time of the last inspection but represents an overall improvement because changes in curriculum mean that expectations are now higher.
- Standards in all other subjects are broadly in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6. There was insufficient evidence to judge standards in art and design in Year 2 and in music and physical education across the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress and meet the well-defined targets set at their review meetings. In national tests, boys have performed better than girls in English and mathematics in recent years but no differences between their attainments were found in lessons or in the work analysis.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and like being at school. Their behaviour is usually very good. The development of their personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral and

social development is very good, overall. Cultural development is good. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils work hard at school, generally behaving very responsibly.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of what is right and what is wrong.
- The school has very high expectations of pupils' conduct.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory because there are too many term-time family holidays.
- There are strengths in pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- There are minor breaches of statutory requirements with regard to the reporting of racist incidents and attendance registers are very occasionally not marked.

Commentary

8. Pupils relish learning and work hard. Children in the Foundation Stage unit delight in discovering new skills through very well planned play and learning activities. They listen carefully and enjoy the challenges set by their enthusiastic teachers which keep them interested and involved. They are all likely to exceed the nationally expected level in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Foundation Stage.
9. Older pupils show sustained concentration and work well in class and in smaller groups. Pupils want to do their best and respond particularly well to their teachers' encouragement and praise. They behave very well in lessons and settle to their work purposefully. At play, they mix together easily, with the majority being very responsible and caring towards others. A small minority of pupils do not always behave as well as they could towards others but such incidents are fewer than at the time of the last inspection. The school has enabled pupils to train as '*pupil-negotiators*' so that minor disputes are usually settled very effectively without the need for adult intervention. This very good practice has contributed significantly to the improvements in behaviour. More serious issues, including rare incidents of bullying, are dealt with promptly, in line with rules negotiated with pupils, and parents are kept informed.
10. The school council takes its responsibility seriously and provides pupils with a strong voice. School councillors act as very positive ambassadors for the school, having debated their code of behaviour at the county council chambers and hosted a return visit from the chairman of Nottinghamshire County Council. School council members are eagerly anticipating their visit to the Houses of Parliament as guests of their local member of parliament.
11. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good which is an improvement since the last inspection. Staff focus strongly on developing pupils' personal qualities so that they have positive views of themselves and others. Their spiritual development is very good in the broadest Christian sense and pupils' awareness of other faiths, celebrations and beliefs is very good. This is seen very clearly in the way that visitors, staff and pupils are greeted in different languages, including signing, during a whole-school assembly. Teachers very successfully provide opportunities for pupils to question '*How? Why? What if?*' so that values and beliefs are challenged in different lessons, including science.

12. Pupils' moral development is very good. Moral principles are based on positive family values and pupils are reminded of the school's extremely high expectations of behaviour, honesty and respect in all aspects of school life. There was one fixed-term exclusion last year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Asian or Asian British – Indian

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
269	1	0
2	0	0
4	0	0
2	0	0

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

13. Social development is very good. Pupils build firm friendships and they are generally caring and considerate. Residential visits develop pupils' personal qualities and their understanding of the value of teamwork. Pupils of different ages mix well in assemblies and during school lunch, resulting in good social harmony.
14. Pupils' cultural development is good. They gain knowledge and understanding of the richness of different heritages and cultures through appropriate displays. A 'creative arts day', an 'Africa week' and the expertise of visitors support pupils' understanding of different styles of music, dance and art. Pupils learn about Japanese numbers and Ancient Egyptian mathematics. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about their own culture, particularly in relation to music, art, and their own local cultural heritage and history.
15. Attendance is unsatisfactory and has declined since the previous inspection. This reduces pupils' achievement. There has been a small improvement in the level of authorised absence over the last year but it is still above the national average because too many family holidays are taken in term time. The attendance policy does not deal satisfactorily with this practice. Most pupils arrive at school in time for lessons.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (92.9%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.0	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

16. Some incidents of racist name-calling have been recorded but the governors are not meeting their statutory responsibility to ensure that all such incidents are reported appropriately. Attendance registers are very occasionally not marked according to statutory requirements. This could have serious implications in the event of having to evacuate the building in an emergency.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. The quality of teaching and of the curriculum is good. There is very good provision of extra-curricular activities. The school provides very good levels of care. Links with parents and with the community are very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and much of it is very good or excellent, especially in the Foundation Stage. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The use of assessment is good but there are weaknesses in how the school stores assessment information.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use a very good range of teaching strategies and good, open questions to deepen pupils' learning.
- Lessons are pacy and interesting so pupils try hard and behave well.
- Teaching assistants, effectively led by the special educational needs co-ordinator, give good support to pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessment information is not readily available to all who may need to use it.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (6%)	9 (29%)	17 (55%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

17. Teaching in the Foundation Stage unit is very good. Children, including those with special educational needs, settle into school routines very quickly and achieve very well. Teachers plan consistently exciting activities which link learning in several areas of development, making very good use of the excellent resources, indoors and out. Nursery nurses and teaching assistants make a significant contribution to children's learning, ensuring that they are well motivated and remain on task.
18. In Years 1 to 6, teaching and learning are good. A significant feature that contributes effectively to the quality of learning across the school is the wide variety of teaching strategies used by all staff. Their extensive use of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic strategies ensures that teaching matches all pupils' individual learning styles and results in them learning well. An example of this was in a mathematics lesson about telling the time in Year 1. Pupils stood up and clapped their hands together above their heads to represent the hands of a clock showing the hour and bent to clap between their feet to represent half-past the hour. In Year 2, pupils use clapping and finger patterns to help learn multiplication tables. Role-play is also used effectively across the school to help pupils remember what they have learnt. For instance, in Year 5, pupils acted out mini-dramas based on the story of Daedalus and Icarus which showed that they had a good understanding of the Greek legend. This lesson also contributed well to the pupils' spiritual and moral development as they discussed the ethical issues involved in the story.

19. Another significant feature that generally contributes effectively to the quality of teaching is that teachers plan lessons that support learning in more than one subject. An example of this is an excellent English lesson in Year 4, where pupils linked their geography topic about India with the composition of a radio advertising jingle. A mathematics lesson in Year 6 very effectively caught pupils' interest, linking the Japanese number system with poetry that pupils had written in a Japanese style. In Year 5, pupils link poetry writing with their science work about the need to eat fruit and vegetables in order to stay healthy.
20. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. They plan lessons that have appropriate learning objectives and they make these clear at the outset. They use good management strategies, expect very high standards of behaviour and lessons move with good pace. As a result, pupils generally behave very well in lessons and any minor incidents are quickly picked up and corrected. Teachers make good use of whole-class sessions at the end of lessons, to assess whether the original learning objectives have been met and to prepare the way for the next lesson. An example of this was a history lesson in Year 2 looking at holidays in the past. The teacher's questioning at the end captured pupils' excitement and harnessed it well, leaving them looking forward to the next session.
21. Teachers use teaching assistants very well to support the learning of all pupils. The assistants are particularly effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs, ensuring that they achieve well. In whole-class sessions they unobtrusively support individuals or groups of pupils, ensuring that they gain as much as possible from the teacher's input. In group sessions, they generally employ skills at the same level as the teachers. They follow the directions given to them by the teachers but also take the initiative themselves when they see a need arising. For instance, when a pupil arrived late for a lesson following a doctor's appointment a teaching assistant intervened immediately to provide the learning that he had missed. Overall, the effective use of teaching assistants makes a significant contribution to the school being very inclusive, ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities and access to learning.
22. Overall, teachers make satisfactory use of homework to support pupils' learning but this is inconsistent across the school. Pupils' homework diaries are not used well enough to record what they should be doing and they are not always an effective means of communication between home and school.
23. Teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly and accurately. They keep a great deal of assessment data for individual pupils in English and mathematics and sufficient information in other subjects to track pupils' progress effectively. Teachers use assessment information well to plan future lessons and to decide whether topics need to be re-visited. At the end of the school year, teachers pass this information on to the next teacher. However, during the year, this information is not stored in a way that is easily accessible to all those who may need to use it, such as supply teachers. Work is generally marked helpfully, so that pupils know how well they have done. In English, almost all marking shows clearly what pupils need to do in order to improve but this is not the case in other subjects.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall and meets statutory requirements. Enrichment opportunities are very good. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Schemes of work in the non-core subjects (subjects other than English, mathematics and science) do not ensure that skills build up progressively.
- Visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning very well.
- The expertise of teachers and support staff meet the demands of the curriculum are very well.
- Innovative links with learning across subjects help to create a more exciting curriculum.

Commentary

24. The school provides a comprehensive curriculum, with good breadth and balance. An exciting range of experiences in the Foundation Stage gives children a very good start to school. Teachers use the excellent accommodation and resources in the Foundation Stage unit very effectively.
25. Schemes of work, an issue at the last inspection, are now in place. Innovative work in English provides a firm foundation for links with learning across other subjects. Writing, reading and drama are the keys that unlock and enliven learning in all subjects. The school is looking to ensure that this approach identifies specific skills in the non-core subjects and builds them up progressively year on year in order to improve pupils' achievement in those subjects.
26. Provision for curricular enrichment is very good. Pupils benefit greatly from a range of visits and visitors, which support and enrich their learning. For instance, the school's work as National Trust Guardians of Clumber Park effectively enhances learning in science and art and design. History topics benefit from visits to a Victorian workhouse and an Elizabethan manor which help to bring learning to life. The school offers good sporting and artistic opportunities to pupils, including, visits to the theatre and to puppet plays and opportunities to perform in music festivals and to elderly residents. Football, netball and dance clubs are also popular with pupils and help to raise achievement in those areas. The school received the 'Quality in Study Support' award in 2004 in recognition of its very good extra-curricular provision.
27. All groups are included in the work and life of the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Work is well targeted within the classroom and linked to everyday lessons. There are no pupils who need extra help with learning English as an additional language.
28. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. It includes very effective sex and relationships education and pays good attention to drug misuse. Pupils discuss and reflect on important issues, both at a personal and at a wider level. From an early start in the Foundation Stage, children learn to take turns and share amicably. Good links with the local community help develop a sense of citizenship and responsibility. Pupils' active role in the school council develops their social skills effectively.
29. There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum. The school makes best use of their expertise to develop the curriculum in interesting and exciting ways that help all pupils to learn.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' pastoral care, welfare and personal support are very good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Arrangements for health and safety are good. Staff give pupils very good guidance on their personal development. The school acts very well on pupils' suggestions.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a strong focus on pastoral care, welfare and guidance.
- Teachers monitor pupils' progress well.
- Pupils' views are very important to the school.
- There are good arrangements to settle new pupils into school.

Commentary

30. Staff have a thorough understanding of their pupils' strengths and weaknesses. They have a very good awareness of the different circumstances and life experiences of pupils and their families and are very proactive in supporting pupils so that they can overcome any personal, social or academic barriers. Staff provide pupils with very good personal guidance, often informally and one to one. There is also a very good formal programme for personal, social and health education, involving visitors who provide specialist knowledge such as the 'DARE' drugs education programme. Pupils have confidential access to a children's counsellor. He supports them through times of crisis, or helps to raise low self-esteem, with considerable success. Arrangements for health and safety and for child protection are good. All staff and several pupils have first-aid qualifications and provide good care for minor playground injuries. The designated person for child protection is well trained and has very good awareness of related issues. However, the school's policy does not offer sufficient guidance on some aspects of the procedures for child protection, such as those about disclosure or appropriate action should allegations be made against staff.
31. Arrangements for the monitoring of pupils' attainment, achievement and progress are good, aided by the considerable individual knowledge that teachers have of their pupils. Teachers keep detailed records in English and mathematics with well-established targets for the class and for individual pupils. In the Foundation Stage classes, academic monitoring is consistently good with individual profiles regularly amended to reflect children's progress and their pace of achievement. Academic monitoring is closely linked to the areas for learning and to the early stages of the National Curriculum, so that children of all abilities are quickly identified and are enabled to achieve very well.
32. Pupils' views are very important to the school. Teachers have very good, trusting relationships with pupils. Pupils know that their opinions and ideas are valued and so find it easy to speak to staff about any ideas or concerns that they may have. All staff listen to pupils so they feel secure and know that they will get help and that their suggestions will result in action if possible.

33. Arrangements for introducing new pupils to the school are good. The Foundation Stage staff have a thorough, well-established programme that includes parental visits to school to exchange and receive information. As a result, children settle well. The headteacher is also readily available to meet prospective or new parents. Older pupils arriving at other times during the school year are provided with a 'pupil buddy' and enabled to make good new friendships, so that they settle to learning with minimal disruption.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a very good partnership with its parents and carers. Community links are very good. Links with other schools and colleges are good. Year 6 transfer arrangements are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school values the support and interest of parents and carers.
- Community involvement enhances pupils' learning.
- There are good links with other schools and colleges and Year 6 transfer arrangements are satisfactory.

Commentary

34. The positive partnership with parents has continued since the last inspection. The school is very successful at encouraging and gaining the support and involvement of its parents and carers. They find the school to be welcoming and very helpful. The parents' association is well supported and runs many welcome fundraising and social activities throughout the year. The school keeps parents well informed about its work through very regular newsletters and a useful notice board. Parents have very good informal and formal access to staff to discuss any aspect related to learning or to resolve any problems that may arise. Reports on pupils are satisfactory but give little detail of individual progress in subjects other than English and mathematics, with sometimes rather general targets. Foundation Stage reports focus on the six areas of learning but only provide targets in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. This means that parents and their children do not get a well-rounded picture of overall progress across the curriculum. There is good practice in the way that pupils and their parents have the opportunity to record their views of progress in learning. Pupils have homework diaries but they use them inconsistently to record homework and this reduces their effectiveness as a means of home/school communication.
35. Community links are very good and very effectively support pupils' personal development. Church links are very prominent, with regular involvement of the local clergy in school-based services. The school has a good reputation for its work within the local community. It is very open to new initiatives to enhance the life-long learning and workforce opportunities for pupils and their families. The headteacher uses his considerable skills as an entrepreneur to secure additional finance from many local and wider sources which results in pupils and parents becoming involved in many different academic, environmental or pastoral projects. For example, school resources benefit

significantly through funding for computers and for computer-linked whiteboards. The school is looking forward to celebrating ten years of guardianship for the National Trust Clumber Park, supported by a national insurance company. Pupils support local and national charities, most recently raising over £600 for the National Children's Homes.

36. There are good links with other schools and colleges in the area, including involvement with the local Hartland Family cluster group of schools, which offer good opportunities for professional development and regular meetings to discuss local educational initiatives and plans. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities, such as, inter-school sports and music. College students gain experience during work placements at the school as do trainee teachers from the local teacher training college. Arrangements for Year 6 transfer are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and senior staff are very good overall, and excellent in the Foundation Stage. There is a secure basis for further improvement in future years. Governors are effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a strong commitment to continuing improvement and his leadership ensures an ethos that contributes very well to learning.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are excellent.
- The school's evaluation of its own strengths and weaknesses is accurate.
- The headteacher and senior staff identify areas for development and they manage plans to move the school forward very effectively.
- The management of finances is very efficient and the deployment of resources benefits all pupils in the school.
- The headteacher's entrepreneurial skills secure significant additional funding for the school.
- The governing body has a very good appreciation of the school's strengths and areas for development and governors make an effective contribution to the strategic management of the school.
- There are minor breaches of statutory requirements in the reporting of racial incidents and, very occasionally, in the completion of registers.

Commentary

37. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He is very open and caring and values all pupils in the school so that all are fully included and have equality of access to all that the school offers. He is a constant reassuring presence around the school and his active involvement in all that the school provides is a major factor in maintaining the school's excellent ethos. Pupils feel secure and confident because they know that the headteacher is aware of what they achieve and appreciates their efforts. All adults in the school are valued in the same way and they have every opportunity to contribute to learning and to the general life of the school. The excellent working relationship with his deputy is helping to transform and improve teaching and learning in a variety of ways from the increasing emphasis on cross-curricular topics to the use of different teaching styles.

38. The Foundation Stage manager and the headteacher have developed excellent provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Every detail, from the range of facilities in the outside environment to the planning for lessons and the use of different rhymes and songs, makes teaching exciting and reinforces learning. The children make very good progress and reach standards that are in line with or exceed national expectations, despite their poor skills on entry. The school's management of special educational needs ensures that all members of staff have the confidence to meet new needs. The school's ability to respond quickly to changes in the pattern of those needs is a strength of this provision and grows out of the clear commitment to inclusion by the senior management team and governors.
39. Since the school was inspected previously, it has successfully addressed the key issue to develop the roles, responsibilities and effectiveness of subject managers. These staff now play an increasingly important role within the school and generally provide very good leadership and management in their subjects. They accurately evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and formulate effective plans for improvement. The professional development of staff has a high priority, receives careful management and is available to all adults in the school. As a result, all members of staff feel that they are valued. Lunchtime assistants, for example, know that they play a significant role in the life of the school and in the provision for pupils, not least in the development of good manners. The two most recently appointed teachers value the very good support available to them. This carefully managed professional development of staff means that the headteacher has developed an impressive unity of purpose which focuses on giving pupils every opportunity to increase their potential while growing into confident and caring young people.
40. The school has addressed in full the key issue from the last inspection about monitoring the quality of teaching and it now has an effective range of systems to monitor teaching, evaluate planning and assess pupils' progress. The school improvement plan is a highly effective working document in which different annotations record achievements and suggest the next steps that set new objectives. The senior management team's grasp of long-term strategy enables it to plan the school's development over time so that a range of initiatives in teaching and the development of the curriculum contributes systematically to the goal of raising standards. This has resulted in good improvement in the school's effectiveness since its previous inspection.
41. The headteacher's entrepreneurial skills enable him to draw considerable extra funds into the school on a regular basis. This additional income is well used to develop all aspects of the school's environment and resources for learning. For example, there are now computer-driven whiteboards in every classroom as one outcome, while the school council's request for funds to develop the playground has resulted in the construction of seats around trees. The principles of best value are applied very effectively with regard to every spending decision. The school's finances are managed efficiently by the school administrator and closely monitored by the governors.
42. The headteacher passes on some of his entrepreneurial skills and business acumen to the pupils. After a complaint about the quality of the rubber erasers in school, the headteacher suggested that the pupils follow up their concerns in the way that he and businesses did with similar issues: carry out their own 'best value' analysis of the alternatives. With some initial support, the pupils organised this themselves and tried out a wide range of different erasers under different circumstances before comparing their

prices. The final outcome was a rubber that pleased all the pupils and gave such good value for money that the supplier sent a year's supply as a reward for all the pupils' hard work.

43. Governors are an important part of the school's management team and they play an appropriate part in its strategic development and the monitoring of its progress because they have a good appreciation of its strengths and potential for development. Governors are closely involved in the life of the school and in the wider church community to which it belongs, so that they are in close touch with a wide range of opinions about the school. Many of them are also familiar to the pupils because of their frequent visits and their support for its activities.
44. Parents are very appreciative of the school's leadership and management. They respect the school's values and the quality of the learning experiences that the school provides so that many keep their children in the school even when they move away from the area.
45. The development of very effective leadership and management has started to make a real impact on pupils' achievements, particularly in the Foundation Stage but also in the lower part of the school. As this improvement feeds through to the rest of the school, standards are improving. Given this change, together with the very good quality of the care that pupils receive, the good teaching that they enjoy, and considering children's attainment levels on entry to the Foundation Stage unit, and below average unit costs, the school gives good value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	629,377
Total expenditure	625,495
Expenditure per pupil	2,792

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	51,948
Balance carried forward to the next year	55,830

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 very good and is a strength of the school. It has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching, learning and achievement are very good.

The recently established Foundation Stage unit consists of a combined Nursery and Reception class. Children start Nursery at three years of age, and simple checks show that on entry their skills are well below expectations in all areas of learning. The majority of Reception Year children are five years old. They achieve very well and are expected to reach the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year, and to exceed them in personal and social development and in language and literacy. Leadership and management in the Foundation Stage are excellent. Accommodation and resources are also excellent.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between adults and children are very good.
- The children are happy and well settled.

Commentary

46. Teaching and learning are excellent and children achieve very well. They are expected to exceed the national goals by the end of the Reception Year. Teachers forge good links with parents and build successfully on the learning started at home. The children are happy, and settle in well. There are very good relationships between adults and children: teachers know the children well and quickly monitor areas of difficulty. Teachers value children's suggestions and they encourage children to try out new ideas, such as, testing out a range of different techniques in order to stick materials together. Children make decisions about which activities they are to visit, take turns and share equipment with others. They are proud of their achievements, such as writing sentences on their own, and show real pleasure when others do well. The children's behaviour is very good. Teachers make sure less-confident children join in activities. They provide good models of fair play, and so a sense of right and wrong develops well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Stories, songs and role-play activities enhance learning.
- Most children are beginning to read and write independently by the end of the Reception Year.

Commentary

47. Teaching and learning are excellent and children achieve very well overall. The children are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Teachers make good use of exciting experiences to motivate speaking and listening and encourage children to ask and answer questions. Children communicate confidently in role-play activities, plan together and speak clearly so others may hear. Reception Year children have good pencil control, link letters with their sounds and begin to write words independently. Teachers provide good opportunities for incidental learning. For instance, in the café, all age groups write out menus for the day.
48. Achievement in reading is good. Nursery children enjoy reading along with puppets and join in with repeating word patterns. Older children turn readily to books when they have completed activities, and often read quietly or to each other. In teacher-guided experiences, work matches children's needs well. For instance, younger children begin to link letters and sounds while older children sequence stories and recall the main points. More capable readers read simple stories with understanding.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of incidental learning.
- Teachers plan learning experiences clearly and effectively.

Commentary

49. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well. Children are in line to reach the national goals by the end of the Reception Year.
50. Teachers use incidental learning well to develop mathematical understanding and they build firmly on what the children know and can do. Reception Year children count back from 30 to see how many children are present at the start of school. They understand 'more' and 'less' and know that adding on increases the total number. Nursery children count the characters in their story, and sort and match small groups of toys. Children recognise and use basic shapes and alternating patterns in work in art and with construction toys. They experiment with water and sand and test out the concepts of 'full' and 'empty' and 'heavy' and 'light.' Children learn how to form their numbers correctly and to count and order to ten and beyond.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have opportunities to experiment and build in three dimensions.

Commentary

51. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve well. They are expected to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year.
52. Work with a local builder has spurred the children on to explore making bricks for the 'Little Pig's House' and to construct simple designs by themselves. Children develop a sense of the passing of time as they sequence the days of the week and talk about yesterday's work. Children's skills with the computer and knowledge of the use of a digital camera develop well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good use of the outdoor area.

Commentary

53. Teaching and learning are very good and children achieve very well. They are expected to reach the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year. Teachers plan outdoor and indoor experiences well to develop confidence and skills. Nursery children learn how to move with others in the large hall space. They use small apparatus and throw balls and bean bags from increasing distances. High quality provision for outdoor experiences enables all age groups to guide and peddle wheeled toys and to develop their balancing and co-ordination skills well, using a range of large toys. Children are confident when handling small apparatus, and gain in dexterity with their cutting, gluing and joining skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links between creative aspects and other experiences.
- Resources are readily accessible and children create through a range of different art media each day.

Commentary

54. Teaching is very good and children achieve very well. Most children are expected to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year.

Example of outstanding practice

Teacher makes very good use of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic strategies so children create imaginatively after a lively telling of a favourite story.

The Three Little Pig puppets lead the way into some exciting work on story planning. A group of four- and five-year-olds chorus their favourite song, with the pigs trotting down the lane to an adventure. The children plan

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

Due to the school's cross-curricular approach to teaching and their blocking of subjects on the timetable, the range of subjects available to observe was restricted. Out of 24 lessons observed in Years 1 to 6, 13 were in English and mathematics. One lesson was seen in science and in ICT, two in history, physical education and personal, social and health education and three in art and design. Lesson observations, discussions with pupils, analysis of teachers' planning and records and a detailed analysis of pupils' work form the basis for judgements in each subject.

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading, writing and drama provide good links with learning across the curriculum.
- Pupils achieve well in spelling lessons (PIPS), because work is well matched to their needs.
- The quality of extended writing is below national expectation by Year 6.
- Marking is good and this helps pupils to improve their work.
- Some good teaching and learning ensures that pupils achieve well.
- Spelling is below the standard expected nationally by Year 6.

Commentary

55. The national comparative data for the 2003 tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 showed that standards in reading were average but standards in writing were below average. For pupils in Year 6, the data showed that standards in English were below average. Pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 have standards in speaking, listening and reading similar to those expected nationally. Standards in writing are broadly in line with national expectations by Year 2, an improvement when compared with national test results in 2003. By Year 6, writing and spelling are below national expectations.
56. Achievement in English is good. Pupils now achieve well in Years 1 to 6 because teaching and learning have improved significantly in recent years and are now good. An innovative style of teaching, linking reading, writing and drama across all subjects, motivates pupils to learn and to do their best. Pupils' achievement is good in spelling

lessons (PIPS), because work is well matched to their needs, and so they gain a good grasp of the basic skills. However, pupils in the present Year 6 have made less-even progress over time because of staff changes. Analysis of their work over the last year shows that they have achieved well but had too much ground to make up to reach nationally expected standards.

57. Standards in speaking and listening are broadly in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6, but achievement is good. Exciting use of drama and role-play encourages pupils to develop greater confidence and competence as speakers. Lessons involve collaborating with others, talking about ideas and putting over points of view. At all ability levels, pupils are eager to ask and answer questions and they talk confidently to adults in a mature way. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language who need extra support in lessons.
58. By Year 2 and Year 6, standards in reading are broadly in line with levels expected nationally. In Years 1 and 2 pupils state that they *'Enjoy reading and like to read to someone.'* By Year 2 reading is accurate, but average and less-able readers lack fluency. More-capable readers are reading well and *'Can't wait to hear more'* of their favourite stories about 'Space Dog.' Pupils are not clear about the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Year 6 pupils have not benefited fully from the change of teaching style in English over the last two years and their enjoyment and skills in reading are mixed. Most pupils read with understanding and have preferred choices of author. Less-able readers do not have a sufficiently wide range of vocabulary and this holds back their fluency and understanding. All enjoy guided reading time because they read books they would not otherwise choose. Teaching assistants (TAs) skilfully help pupils who struggle with their reading.
59. Standards in writing are improving and achievement is good overall. The wide range of purposeful writing now undertaken in English and in other subjects is a strength. By Year 2, standards are similar to those expected nationally. Teachers teach basic skills well and this enables younger pupils to spell words by themselves, to write sentences and join them together. Effective modelling of writing by teachers links the spoken and written word and helps pupils to organise their ideas and thoughts. In Years 3 to 6, pupils learn how to structure stories and non-fiction writing. They keep the reader in mind as they read through and improve their work. Teachers have high expectations of the standard of completed work. However, in the current Year 6, writing standards do not meet national expectations because:
- Uneven progress in the past has left gaps in pupils' learning.
 - Pupils do not produce enough longer pieces of writing which allow them to use and draw together different writing skills.
 - Despite strategies for support, spelling skills are below national expectations.
60. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pockets of very good and excellent practice occur when teachers have very good subject knowledge and challenge pupils, expecting the most of them. Pupils' work is marked well and clearly shows what needs to be done to improve. Work in lessons meets the pupils' needs well so they are able to concentrate on the task set and achieve well. Teachers have very good relationships with their classes and this encourages pupils to try their hardest. Learning is relevant and fun so behaviour is good in lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when pupils were not so committed to learning.

61. Teachers take care to include all pupils in lessons and they monitor progress carefully. Pupils with statements of their special educational needs make good progress and benefit from the skilful support of TAs in lessons. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
62. Leadership is excellent and management is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A dynamic approach to the curriculum has improved teaching and learning. Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment has improved in Years 1 and 2 and, in all year groups, pupils listen attentively and are keen to work. Information from assessment guides planning and target-setting well and is helping to raise standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. A variety of forms of writing are used very effectively to support learning in other subjects. For example, poetry is used in science and history. Year 6 pupils use their research skills and develop their knowledge of non-fictional writing in English and this helps them to achieve higher standards in geography. Drama is used very effectively to support learning in other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory** and improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 and this provides a secure foundation for them to develop further as they move through the school.
- Teaching and learning are good because the use of different teaching styles increases the interest and involvement of pupils.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good and particularly effective in monitoring trends, identifying needs and taking appropriate action.

Commentary

64. The 2003 national test results show that pupils reach average standards in Year 2 but below average standards in Year 6. Inspection findings show that standards of attainment are now in line with national expectations throughout the school. This was also found at the time of the last inspection. Achievement is good overall, good in Years 1 to 4 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Achievement is improving because the quality of teaching has improved but this has not yet had time to be fully effective for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils learn well because of teachers' good knowledge of the subject and the emphasis throughout the school on developing understanding and using the language of mathematics. As they grow older, pupils gain the confidence to switch between the skills they have in representing numbers in different ways and this helps them to work faster and more productively. Pupils with special educational needs make clear progress because they have appropriate targets, which act as a focus for support, and well-trained teaching assistants who understand their needs and how to promote learning. Pupils with particular abilities in mathematics develop their skills well.
65. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and this contributes to the very high standards of behaviour as well as to pupils' learning. Teachers are energetic and lessons have good

pace so pupils work hard. Teachers use a wide variety of strategies and this makes lessons more accessible to pupils. Where these strategies are firmly embedded, pupils' achievement is improving further. Teachers emphasise the correct use of mathematical language and use many different ways to reinforce and consolidate learning. The well-chosen activities for the period after the national tests in Year 6 make a very good contribution to pupils' cultural awareness. This work also deepens pupils' awareness of mathematical processes as they learn to move between Japanese and English ways of writing numbers down. All of these initiatives help to make lessons interesting and exciting and, as a result, they improve pupils' learning and the quality of their understanding.

66. Leadership and management of mathematics are very good. The subject manager has a clear understanding of teaching and learning throughout the school and is working very well to develop the subject. Starting with a thorough analysis of strengths and weaknesses two years ago, the subsequent action plan gave rise to a comprehensive training programme followed by rigorous evaluation of the impact of the different initiatives undertaken. Such good work still influences the monitoring of teaching and learning and the scrutiny of pupils' work during the current year and provides the basis for the next objectives to raise standards. Work with parents is also good and has successfully addressed the differences between the way that parents and pupils tackle the same problems. Parents now understand more about the work in school and pupils' learning improves because they receive identical messages from parents and teachers.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. Mathematics supports work in other subjects well and, in turn, these subjects support learning in mathematics. Handling data in information and communication technology and science makes a good contribution to mathematics, while time lines, using different scales, help pupils to understand the passing of time in history lessons. Pupils' ability to explain their work clearly and accurately is starting to make a useful contribution to their understanding and use of mathematics to solve real-life problems but, as already identified by the subject manager, this is an area that requires further development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising and achievement is good in Years 1 to 4.
- Curriculum planning provides an appropriate balance between investigative work and the knowledge and understanding of science that pupils need to develop.

Commentary

68. Due to the timing of the inspection, and the school's timetabling arrangements, judgements are made on the observation of just one lesson in Year 1, discussions with pupils, a detailed analysis of test results over time and of pupils' work since September 2003.
69. Results of teacher assessments for seven-year-olds in 2003 were in line with the national average. Results of national tests for 11-year-olds in 2003 were above the national average. This was a significant improvement on the previous year and was a result of

very effective booster classes in science. Standards in the current Years 2 and 6 are broadly in line with national expectations, as was found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 to 4 and is generally satisfactory in Years 5 and 6 for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. There have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning during the last two years. These improvements have not yet had so much effect on the older pupils. Standards are the same for boys and girls.

70. In Year 1, pupils carry out effective investigations to decide what material is best to use to repair an umbrella. In Year 2, they know that humans need food and water to stay alive and that exercise is very important in order to stay healthy. They know that for a test to be fair, only one criterion must be changed. They use this knowledge when devising a test to see how far cars will roll under different circumstances, changing just the height of the ramp.
71. In Year 4, pupils investigate which parts of their classroom are the warmest and they know about which materials keep us warm and how a vacuum flask works. In Year 5, pupils know about the different stages of plant growth and they investigate what conditions are required for a seed to germinate. By Year 6, pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding have developed well. They know that shadows are formed when light is blocked by opaque objects. They know that micro-organisms cause food to decay. One group sensibly predicted that a cucumber would begin to decay after nine days if left on a radiator.
72. Only one lesson was observed so an overall judgement on the quality of teaching was not made. However, from talking to pupils and looking at their work, there is a strong indication that teaching and learning are good across the school. The quality of teaching and learning in the Year 1 lesson seen were good. The lesson was taken by the science curriculum manager who engaged the pupils well. As a result, they concentrated well and learnt the component parts of a plant: root, stem, leaves and flower. Teachers provide a good balance between lessons that cover scientific knowledge and those that involve investigations. The investigations help pupils to understand the scientific principles being taught. ICT is used satisfactorily to support learning in science, particularly the use of data-handling programs, for example, to record the favourite foods of pupils in Year 2.
73. The subject is very well led and managed. The subject manager effectively monitors teaching and standards of attainment. He carries out a detailed analysis of how well pupils do in national tests and this information is used to plan future work. He ensures that resources are well maintained and he supports other teachers well in their planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are good.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

74. Due to the timing of the inspection, and the school's timetabling arrangements, judgements are made on the observation of just one lesson in Year 5, discussions with pupils, and a detailed analysis of pupils' work since September 2003.
75. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6 and all pupils achieve satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs. Similar judgements were made at the time of the last inspection. In Year 1, pupils put simple instructions into programmable toys. In Year 2, pupils use data-handling, word-processing and drawing packages at an appropriate level. For example, they create bar charts about their favourite foods. In Year 3, pupils find information about water creatures on the internet and they send e-mails. In Year 4, pupils develop their control technology skills by programming computers to draw different shapes. In Years 5 and 6, pupils use spreadsheets to explore mathematical models.
76. Only one lesson was observed so an overall judgement on the quality of teaching was not made. However, from talking to pupils and looking at their work and photographic evidence, there is a strong indication that teaching is good across the school. In the lesson seen, the teacher used his very good knowledge of the subject to give clear explanations about how simple devices can be controlled by ICT. This was all the more necessary because a hardware failure on the day prevented a full demonstration being given! Across the school, pupils are confident in the use of ICT. For instance, pupils in Year 5 excitedly describe how they use word-processing, graphics and data-handling programs and they know how ICT is used in the outside world.
77. Leadership and management in the subject are very good. The subject manager has used his entrepreneurial skills very well to gain additional funding to provide a laptop computer for each teacher and a computer-linked whiteboard and data projector in each classroom. At the time of the inspection, staff had received just one training session on the use of the whiteboards and already they were being used to raise standards. The teacher used the whiteboard well to fully engage pupils in a Year 1 mathematics lesson about counting in twos and threes. Each class has a good quality digital camera which teachers and pupils use effectively to record their achievements and publish their work. The school uses the nationally recommended scheme of work for ICT but this is not yet fully adapted to ensure that pupils' skills in the subject develop progressively as they move through the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. ICT is used effectively to support learning across the curriculum. Data-handling programs are used in science to display the favourite foods of Year 2 pupils, linking with their work on healthy diets. Also in Year 2, graphics programs are used well in art and design to create pictures in the style of Mondrian and a 'spray tool' is used to make firework pictures. The internet is used extensively to research topics. For instance, in Year 3, pupils found out who was buried at Sutton Hoo in their history lessons. In Year 5, pupils use spreadsheets in mathematics lessons, preparing a budget for an imaginary journey into space. Word-processing is used in many subjects, particularly to publish work done in literacy lessons.

HUMANITIES

Geography was sampled during the inspection but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. No lessons were seen. Teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that full curriculum requirements are met. Pupils' work and teachers' records show that standards are broadly in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6 but geographical skills are not consistently developed across the school.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Historical topics provide a strong basis for much of the cross-curricular work in school.
- Lessons are challenging and stimulating and make a positive contribution to standards in English.
- Pupils' understanding of the methods and processes of history is underdeveloped.

Commentary

79. Throughout the school, standards are in line with national expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Similar judgements were made at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 know that favourite holiday destinations are different now from 50 years ago. Groups of pupils work well on different aspects of the 'holidays' topic. Some find out information from eyewitnesses, others investigate photographs and dress up in period clothes. By Year 4, pupils evaluate accurately how much they have learnt about the Tudors. In Years 5 and 6, they carry out independent research on the Internet into the Ancient Egyptians and write with empathy about the life of poor children in Victorian England.
80. Teaching and learning were good in the two lessons observed. Teachers prepare lessons that interest their pupils and they reinforce key information well. Educational visits stimulate a good range of work and give pupils first-hand experiences of artefacts in locations as varied as an old workhouse and a part of the secret background to the Second World War. History makes a good contribution to English and literacy because of the range of reading and writing of different kinds that the pupils undertake and the amount of information that they share with one another during whole-class sessions. The use of the internet by the older pupils means that their research skills develop well. However, pupils' success in these areas tends to emphasise secondary rather than primary sources of information. Although visits and visitors take pupils back to original documents, artefacts and sites, the importance of such visits does not register strongly enough to develop their skills as historians.
81. The established scheme of work for the subject forms part of the basis for the very good cross-curricular work that the school now undertakes as part of its plans for raising standards. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and make good assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different topics studied. However, the development of historical research skills is insufficiently incorporated into the curriculum.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology, art and design, music and physical education

These subjects were sampled during the inspection but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. No lessons were seen in design and technology or music.

82. An examination of teachers' planning and pupils' work in **design and technology** indicates that National Curriculum requirements are met. Standards in Year 2 are in line with national expectations and pupils understand the relationship between design and product. They designed and made puppets and used them to give a presentation to Year 3 pupils, supporting their literacy work. Standards of finished products in Year 6 are also in line with national expectations. Similar standards were also found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' skills in the subject do not develop consistently as they move through the school.
83. Work in **art and design** was scrutinised, and three lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 so there is insufficient evidence to support overall judgements. By Year 6, standards of work are similar to those expected nationally. Work on display and in portfolios indicates good cross-curricular links between art and design and other subjects. For instance, Year 2 pupils visited a local nature reserve and learnt how to record natural forms, with the help of an expert from outside school. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 varies, but is sound overall. There is no established manager for the subject. As yet, assessment procedures in art and design are not used well enough to track the progressive development of skills, year on year.
84. There was insufficient evidence available to support overall judgements in **music**. Scrutiny of teachers' planning indicates that the requirements of the National Curriculum are covered. Recorder groups and a small orchestra perform in assemblies and pupils sing and perform for elderly residents and at festivals and celebrations. Pupils benefit from peripatetic instrumental tuition if they so wish.
85. Only two lessons were observed in **physical education** so there was insufficient evidence to support overall judgements. Teachers' planning and records indicate that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The subject manager is fully aware of the issues that need attention, in particular the low skill level of many of the older pupils. Work is well underway to enhance the skills and knowledge of other members of staff and the subject manager has provided training opportunities and demonstration lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. This area is a key part of the school's provision and very successfully supports pupils' overall development towards maturity and good citizenship. Teachers' planning is very good and embraces many different topics including drugs awareness. The school also makes good use of the life education bus to support the curriculum in a variety of areas. Pupils and staff monitor their own fluid intake well in order to maintain focus and fresh fruit is widely available every day as part of the school's response to healthy eating initiatives. Discussion times make an effective contribution to pupils' development through the focus on a 'thought for the day.' There is also a strong spiritual element in some of these sessions because of the sensitive way that members of staff talk about their own thoughts and then respond to the feelings that emerge from the pupils' responses.
87. All adults in the school provide very good role-models and the way that they thank pupils for their ideas and contributions to lessons reinforces the school's emphasis on polite

behaviour. Assemblies deal regularly with questions about citizenship, and with issues that concern life in school. Older pupils talk with confidence about a range of issues. The way that the school encourages mixed-age groupings at lunchtimes and during assemblies means that younger pupils are led by the good example of older pupils. The school uses the emerging confidence of different pupils very well in the way that it creates opportunities for them and trains them to act as playground negotiators, first aiders and lunchtime helpers. Members of staff are on call and on pastoral care duty at the same time so these pupils are never unsupported and the welfare of all pupils is safeguarded, in line with the school's mission to provide a disciplined and supportive environment.

88. Pupils take over the training of playground negotiators. Established just over a year ago, pupil-negotiators represented one way that the school responded to some of the everyday upsets that can occur between pupils at different times. Pupils volunteered for training and, if they passed the different tests, they took on the responsibility of mediating between their peers. One year on, the pupils who worked the system decided that they needed more practical help. The deputy headteacher, reflecting the school's excellent practice in giving more responsibility to the pupils, challenged them to devise a system themselves. In response, a Year 5 pupil wrote an entire training manual in her spare time. That manual was accepted by her fellow negotiators and is now in daily use as the next group of volunteers, covering all years from three upwards, learn the guiding principles. These include the importance of remaining detached, recognising the different forms of bullying, and seeing how things work in practice with established negotiators. All pupils recognise the success of the scheme and monthly business meetings (the pupils' phrase) with the deputy headteacher ensure that staff and pupils stay in touch with the way the scheme is developing.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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