

INSPECTION REPORT

LEFTWICH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Northwich

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111137

Headteacher: Mrs S Watts

Lead inspector: Mr P Gadsby

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th March 2004

Inspection number: 260544

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	201
School address:	Old Hall Road Leftwich Northwich Cheshire
Postcode:	CW9 8DH
Telephone number:	01606 42489
Fax number:	01606 331794
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Chair of governors:	Mrs P Lavender
Previous inspection:	13 September 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Leftwich is an average sized primary school situated on the outskirts of the town of Northwich, Cheshire, catering for 201 pupils in the 4-11 age range. Most pupils live in the local area, in council built houses, some of which are now owner occupied, and in property provided by Housing Associations. The social and economic indicators show that there are pockets of relative deprivation. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. Over a quarter of the pupils have special educational needs, mainly for moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. This proportion is above average. Four pupils have a Statement of Educational Need. One pupil, Cantonese, is from a minority ethnic background. No pupils are at an early stage in the learning of English. When they enter the school, the children have a wide range of basic skills, but their attainment on entry is below the average of what is expected for their age. During the inspection, one class was taught by a temporary teacher.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
5281	Phil Gadsby	Lead inspector	Science Foundation Stage
13450	Jenny Madden	Lay inspector	
33648	Catharine Crooks	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Art and design Music Physical education
33263	Phil Beswick	Team inspector	English History Geography Religious education Special Educational Needs

The inspection contractor was:

Parkman Ltd in association with *PkR*
 35 Trewartha Park
 Weston-Super-Mare
 North Somerset
 BS23 2RT

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school, with many good features. Teaching is good throughout and the school is well led by its headteacher. Pupils behave very well and show positive attitudes to their work. Relationships are good throughout the school; staff work well as a team, and are committed to further improvement. The school has good procedures for self-review in place, and is aware that, although pupils are achieving well, standards still need to be raised further. The school has made very good use of the support it has received from its Local Education Authority (LEA) and through its involvement in a national initiative to raise standards. It gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good and all pupils achieve well; they are all fully included in all areas of school life.
- The school is well led by its headteacher, who is committed to improving standards.
- Standards in art and design are high.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- There are good links with parents and the community.
- Standards in speaking and listening are too low.
- Pupils are not made sufficiently clear about what they need to do to improve.
- Skills in literacy and numeracy are not systematically applied and developed in other subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and make good progress in learning.

The school has shown good improvement since its previous inspection. Subject co-ordinators are more effective. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved. Although standards in national tests remain too low, children achieve well and standards are rising. The good systems for assessment which have developed since the previous inspection, in English and mathematics, have made an important contribution to the school's improved effectiveness.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	C	C	C
Mathematics	E	D	E	E
Science	D	E	E	E

*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.*

Overall, pupils' achievement is good. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage, from what is for many a low level of attainment when they enter the reception class. About half of them will attain the national targets for their age in all areas of learning. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is now good, and they are on track to achieve better results in the national tests.

The performance of Year 6 pupils was well below average in mathematics and science in the most recent national tests. The quality of work of pupils in Years 3 to 6, which was seen during the inspection, is average overall, and pupils are achieving well. In recent years, the school's results for Year 6, in the national tests, are rising faster than the national average. An increasing proportion are achieving the higher Level 5. Standards in English, particularly reading, are strongest. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, reaching the targets set for them. Standards in speaking and listening are poor for many pupils, and this affects their achievement in most subjects. Standards in art and design are very good.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. They show a good sense of responsibility and are very clear about what is right and what is wrong. Their attendance is satisfactory; they behave very well and have positive attitudes towards learning in their school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Teaching is good throughout the school, so pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Lessons are well-planned and good relationships between pupils and staff result in a good climate for learning. Pupils' work is assessed regularly so that future plans can meet their needs, although the outcomes of assessment are not shared with pupils sufficiently, so that they are aware of what they need to do to improve. Targets for improvement have been set, but pupils are not fully aware of them. The strong and appropriate focus on English and mathematics has raised standards, but not enough attention is given to how skills learned in these subjects can be applied and developed in others, to raise them further. There has not been enough focus, either, on improving pupils' skills in speaking and listening, the low level of which limits learning in many areas, although the school has just implemented plans to address this. The school cares for and guides its pupils well; it has good links with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management of the school is good overall. The headteacher has a clear vision for how standards can be raised and gives the school a strong sense of direction. There are good systems for self-review and evaluation in place, the outcomes of which are acted upon through well-focused improvement plans. Governance of the school is satisfactory. It has many strengths: governors have close links with the school, support it very well and are clear about its strengths and weaknesses; they practise sound financial management, with spending decisions targeted on raising pupils' achievement. Performance management systems are robustly implemented. The governing body fails to meet some statutory requirements in the way it communicates with parents and how it sets out its policy to promote race equality. Teachers with management responsibility for English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and special education needs perform their duties well and are beginning to make an impact on pupils' standards of achievement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are satisfied with the school. They are confident that it is doing its best for their children. Pupils are very satisfied with their school and very pleased with the way in which they are consulted and have a say in decisions.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve standards in speaking and listening.
- Improve assessment and target-setting, so that pupils are clear about how to improve.
- Use and develop skills in literacy and numeracy more systematically in other subjects.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the school's prospectus and the governors' annual report contain all they should.
- Ensure that the policy for racial equality contains all the necessary elements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in the reception class and in Years 1 to 6 is good. From a base of low attainment, pupils achieve average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. Standards in art and design are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved in English, mathematics and science, although they are still too low.
- Standards in speaking and listening are too low, which affects pupils' learning in some key areas.
- Standards in art and design are very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- There has been good improvement in information and communication technology.

Commentary

1. When children enter the school their attainment is below average, most markedly in their language and communication skills, and for a significant minority in their personal and social development. Within this overall pattern there is a wide range, with a small number of high attaining children and many whose attainment is very low. By the end of the reception year, about half are likely to achieve the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals. Standards overall remain below average, although this represents good achievement, given the starting point of many of the children.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.8 (15.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.7 (12.7)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.0 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The results of the 2003 national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 were below the national average in reading and writing and in the bottom five per cent of all schools in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, defined in terms of pupils' eligibility for free school meals, standards in reading and writing were average. They were well below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was below average in all subjects. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are currently better than those represented by the last tests, with pupils now achieving well. The school, supported by the Local Education Authority (LEA) and through national initiatives to raise standards, has had a major focus on mathematics, and standards are rising.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.2 (27.2)	27.5 (27.7)
Mathematics	25.3 (25.7)	27.5 (27.6)
Science	26.6 (26.6)	29.3 (29.1)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The results of the national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 show that in English they were in line with the national average and well below it in mathematics and science. When compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the 2003 results were well above average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. Taking all three subjects tested together, standards were average. In 2003, the results of the Year 6 tests, for English, mathematics and science taken together, represented a level of progress from Year 2 to Year 6 that was well below average, although it was average for English. The school's performance for the last two years reflects the fact that the classes concerned had large proportions of pupils with special educational needs who, although they made good progress, did not reach nationally expected standards. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in Years 3 to 6 are now achieving well, with standards of work seen showing good improvement. Over the past five years, the school's results have risen at a faster rate than they have nationally. Another positive sign is the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5. This met the national average in English and mathematics, although it was well below it in science.
4. A significant factor affecting standards achieved, particularly noticeable in mathematics and science, is that pupils' attainment in speaking and listening remains low. This often limits their ability to engage in higher order, investigative and experimental activities, where more abstract concepts have to be assimilated and articulated. This is only partly about the technical vocabulary associated with science and mathematics, which the school plans into its teaching. It is more about the language necessary to compare, deduce, generalise and explain. The school is now aware of this, and it is a focus for development associated with a national initiative, called the Primary Leadership programme, in which the school is involved.
5. The school's governing body has set targets for pupils' performance in future English and mathematics tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, as it is required by law to do. These are based upon careful monitoring of pupils' progress through the school. Inspection evidence suggests that, given the improving achievement of pupils now evident, these targets are rather too low, and the school should review them with a view to increasing them.
6. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well as they make good progress towards their individual learning targets. Overall, boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils capable of higher attainment are being suitably challenged and achieving well, including reaching higher levels in national tests.
7. Standards in art and design are very good and satisfactory in all other subjects where secure judgements are possible. There has been good improvement in information and communication technology (ICT), where standards were found to be unsatisfactory in the school's previous inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

There is good development overall of pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory with pupils' attitude and behaviour being very good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are happy in the school and the majority are enthusiastic, keen to learn and take full advantage of the range of opportunities provided by the school.
- The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour and most work hard to achieve the high standards set.
- There are good relationships between pupils and they collaborate effectively in groups during lessons.
- The provision of residential visits for pupils in Years 3 to 6 provides considerable opportunity for them to develop social skills and to increase their self-confidence.
- The learning of a number of pupils is being put in jeopardy by holidays taken during the school year, and some parent condoned absence.
- The school provides limited opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural diversity and the importance of faith based values in the life of many members of modern British society.

Commentary

8. Most pupils attend regularly and arrive in plenty of time for the start of the school day. The school is monitoring pupils' attendance, in cooperation with the Education Welfare Officer and has ensured that unauthorized attendance is now under control. The main area of concern is holidays taken during term time, and some occasions where it is clear that absence has been condoned by parents. This is having a considerable effect on the attendance of a wide range of pupils, and consequently their achievement. In the majority of lessons pupils are actively engaged, enthusiastic and productive, this is also the case in the well-attended school clubs and activities. Behaviour is very good on the majority of occasions in the classrooms and pupils are generally considerate of each other and work well together, all of which has a very positive effect on learning.
9. The range of residential visits from Year 2 through to Year 6, and the programme to develop after school opportunities, ensures pupils have access to an unusually varied range of activities, which extend their cooperation and self-confidence.
10. Overall, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Social development is very good, helped by the positive attitudes that pupils have towards each other, and the good relationships at all levels in the school. Moral development is good, with pupils having a well-developed sense of right and wrong. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils' cultural development, although satisfactory, with good participation in the arts, is restricted because they have limited opportunity to appreciate, consider and discuss cultural diversity or to learn about the values the wide range of ideas present in other people's values and beliefs.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Chinese

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
200	9	0
1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides its pupils with a satisfactory quality of education. Effective teaching is combined with a suitable curriculum, good quality care and guidance for pupils, good links between the school and parents and links with the local community, which are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should work and behave and pupils respond well to this.
- There are good relationships between staff and pupils, in well-planned lessons which lead to good learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and make good progress against the targets set for them.
- Pupils are not always given feed back about how they can improve their work.
- Time is not always used effectively in lessons, which limits pupils' learning.

Commentary

11. Because teaching is good, pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils, which establishes a secure and pleasant context, allowing good teaching and learning to take place. Good teaching in the reception class gives children a good start. The school is striving to ensure that teaching is lively and interesting, motivating and engaging pupils so that they want to learn.
12. Lessons are planned well, with clear objectives for learning, which are shared with the pupils, so they know what they are expected to learn. Lessons take account of the different levels of attainment of pupils, including those with special educational needs, by modifying the tasks set or by skilfully focused questioning. Pupils with special educational needs get further effective support from teaching assistants. These processes are possible because clear assessment systems are now in place in English, mathematics, science and ICT, although they are less well developed in other subjects.
13. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well collaboratively to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all the learning activities. Teaching assistants work effectively with all pupils and provide high quality support for pupils with special educational needs. In some subjects, teaching assistants provide effective teaching, for example in information and communication technology, and design and technology.
14. Pupils' work is marked regularly and positively, seen at its best in English. However, the extent to which it focuses on what pupils should do to improve is very limited. Learning targets are given as part of lessons and are often displayed in classrooms and written in pupils' books. Pupils are often not clear about the extent to which they have achieved their targets or what they need to do to achieve them. Marking does not often relate to learning targets. The knowledge that teachers are now gaining about pupils' learning, through improved assessment, is not yet shared with the pupils to allow *them* to take more responsibility for it.
15. In some lessons, pupils are not given enough time to develop or complete a task during group or independent work because too long has been spent on the whole class session. The balance of how time is spent within lessons needs to be considered. Also, there are times when teachers do not give pupils enough time to discuss their learning, in whole class or group sessions. This is an issue that the school is aware of, and plans for improvement are in place.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	15	9	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.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is enriched by a good variety of additional activities. Accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is inclusive and there is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There are good opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular provision, visits and visitors to the school.
- Art and design is a strength of the school.
- Skills in literacy and numeracy are not systematically applied and developed in other subjects.
- Opportunities for speaking and listening within the curriculum, to allow pupils to discuss what they know, understand and can do, are not clearly identified.

Commentary

16. The school has successfully addressed many of the issues identified in the previous inspection report.
17. Overall the curriculum is weighted towards English and mathematics, in order to raise standards. Other subjects often receive the minimum time allowance recommended, which limits what pupils can achieve. Art and design is a strength of the school and pupils produce high quality work using a wide variety of media, skills and techniques. Provision for personal, social and health elements of the curriculum, such as sex education and drugs awareness education, is satisfactory.
18. While there are some opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, this has not been systematically developed. Nor are pupils given enough opportunity to develop their speaking and listening skills to allow them to use technical vocabulary and to enhance their understanding.
19. The curriculum is enriched by many visits. These include residential visits for each year group from Year 3 onwards and cover a wide variety of curricular areas. For example, the residential visit in Year 5 has an ICT focus while in Year 6 the focus is on literacy and art. Extra-curricular activities are good and the school also has a diverse range of visitors into school to support different aspects of the curriculum.
20. The school is staffed well with qualified and experienced teachers who are well supported by highly competent and enthusiastic teaching assistants. Accommodation is generally good and has improved since the last inspection. While resources for many areas are good, the library stock and the provision for ICT need to be further improved, although financial constraints are a barrier to this.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides pupils with good care, guidance and support, based on effective monitoring. There is good involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All staff are very committed to the well being of pupils and have achieved considerable progress in ensuring all pupils are able to do their best in the school.
- Pupils are secure in the knowledge that adults will provide support if they have any difficulties.
- Induction arrangements for pupils to reception class ensure that the staff is well informed about the needs of the children, and able to provide appropriate experiences from the start of their time in school.

- The school has good procedures in place to seek and value pupils' opinions.
- Child protection works well to fully safeguard pupils' welfare but there is no trained member of staff to cover in the absence of the headteacher.

Commentary

21. Statutory requirements for health and safety are met through the work of the headteacher and designated governor who involve others as appropriate. Child protection procedures work well and pupils are monitored and cared for in the secure environment of the school. There are few accidents as a result of the careful analysis of the records and the taking of appropriate action. The headteacher is the only person to have been fully trained in child protection.
22. Pupils' personal well being is a priority of the staff and pupils know to go to an adult with their problems. Considerable effort is made to support pupils with ongoing problems through the involvement of outside agencies and staff training. This has resulted in increased support for those pupils excluded for behaviour problems and the maintenance of pupils in the school who might otherwise find it difficult to remain.
23. Induction arrangements ensure staff get to know children before they start at the school so that they can be settled in smoothly and receive continuous and informed support.
24. There has been considerable consultation with pupils first introduced through the Healthy School Initiative. Since then pupils have become part of a wide consultation through the House System and the Pupil Council and now feel they are able to influence areas of school life. In the classroom they are listened to and their views are valued by the staff.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and the community are good whilst links with other schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works hard to ensure that parents have the opportunity to understand how their children are taught and how they can contribute to their progress.
- Parents are confident in the school and its ability to do its best for their children.
- The school uses the community as a rich resource to enhance pupils' learning and development.
- There are very effective links with other schools to support the curriculum and staff training, as well as, the transfer of pupils to the secondary school.
- The prospectus is not presented in an easily accessible format for parents and in addition fails to provide information in a number of statutory areas, as does the Governors' Annual Report to Parents.

Commentary

25. Parents are pleased with the provision made for their children by the school. The education provided by the school for parents on areas of the curriculum is very well run and has given parents an insight into their children's teaching and learning. It has further resulted in the recruitment of school governors, teaching assistants and increased general help for the school. Parents of children starting at the school receive appropriate written guidance as well as the opportunity to learn about how to best help their children with reading. However, the school prospectus is not practical, informative and approachable. It does not give parents access to all they should know in a clear and simple way. The prospectus and the Annual Report of Governors do not contain all of the information in order to comply with statutory requirements.
26. Pupils in the school are part of a vibrant network of community activities, which contribute to the curriculum and pupils' personal development. Much of this partnership is based on pupils going out into the community and meeting adults in a variety of situations, for example performances

by the school's steel band and country dancing group, as well as taking part in joint activities to improve the environment.

27. The very well developed partnerships with other schools ensure that pupils benefit from initiatives developed in other schools and the results of good cooperation between teachers. This strengthens the curriculum and increases the skills of teachers in the school. The relationship with the secondary school on the same site is very productive and pupils move to their new school having met and worked with both the children in their new tutor groups and many of their new teachers. As a result, they are confident and assured about the future of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management of the school is good. The governance of the school is satisfactory, as some statutory requirements are not met, although this does not have an impact on pupils' achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher gives the school a clear sense of direction and is focused on raising standards.
- There are good systems of self-review and evaluation in place, and the school monitors its performance well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is led and managed well.
- The overall leadership and management of the curriculum do not provide a sufficient overview of how subjects relate to each other, so that all opportunities to raise standards can be exploited.

Commentary

28. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher is providing the school with a strong and more focused leadership. She has taken advice from the LEA and has been helped in improving standards through the Primary Leadership Programme. The headteacher has the support and confidence of the staff and under her leadership there is a determination to raise standards further. The school ethos is very positive, the atmosphere is warm and pupils are relaxed and enjoy learning. The school has clear aims and they focus on the raising of standards for all. An effective leadership team is developing and moving the school forward. At present, the way in which the curriculum is organised misses opportunities for appropriate connections to be made between different subjects, to ensure that basic skills in literacy, numeracy, speaking and listening and ICT are fully developed.
29. The governing body has clear aims: that all children reach their full potential and barriers to learning are removed. Governors have close links with the school and regularly visit classrooms. They are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses and they know the direction the school needs to go. Their monitoring systems enable them to analyse the school's performance and they see that appropriate action is taken. The governing body is prepared to take difficult decisions where necessary, as they have done when prioritising resources. Some of the statutory information sent to parents is not complete and the prospectus does not set out the school policy on race equality with the required detail.
30. All data the school receives or collects, is analysed thoroughly and the information is used to guide decision-making. Systems for monitoring the work of the school, including teaching and learning, are good. The school improvement plan contains relevant information, is concerned with raising standards and is based upon a sound audit process. The school has well-developed performance management systems and implements them rigorously.
31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well and as a result, pupils make good progress. The co-ordinator maintains effective contact with staff, parents and outside agencies. The necessary documentation is in place and updated regularly. The school

commits a substantial amount of the budget to the employment and training of teaching assistants, which is effective and an example of how the principles of best value are applied. Procedures to ensure that pupils have equal opportunities to learn are good. The school has improved in this area since the last inspection.

32. The leadership and management of the curriculum are not sufficiently developed. Lead professionals in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are not given enough opportunity to work together to maximise learning. The school has not looked in sufficient detail at the skills needed for each subject and how these can be developed across the curriculum. The opportunities for the development of speaking and listening are not clearly identified in the curriculum plan, although the school is aware of the need to raise standards.
33. Financial management is sound and good administrative systems are in place, which ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school. The headteacher, with governors, actively seeks out grants to support school improvements. Spending decisions are taken carefully, with much thought given to their impact on pupils' achievement. There are deficiencies in resources in the library, and limited resources in ICT for learning and these adversely affect standards. Lack of money to address these issues is a barrier for the school.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	420,125
Total expenditure	418,038
Expenditure per pupil	2,131

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	4,876
Balance carried forward to the next	2,132

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

34. When children enter the reception class at the age of four their skills and knowledge are, on the whole, below average for their age. Within this overall pattern, there is a wide range of attainment. A significant minority of children have poorly developed skills in language and communication and in their personal and social development. A few, however, are above average. During the time that they spend in the reception class their achievement is good, although only about half will reach the goals for their age in all of the areas of learning. Children with special educational needs make significant progress, which matches that of other children. The progress made by children is carefully monitored and assessed. The provision made for children's learning in the reception class is good, an improvement on the school's previous inspection when it was described as sound. Teaching is good and the staff work closely as a team, important because there is a job-share arrangement. Planning is corporate and links are made between the areas through the use of different themes, such as transport. There is a strong, and appropriate, emphasis on basic skills in literacy and numeracy, but this sometimes leads to too much adult direction. Children, then, are not allowed enough opportunity to choose tasks for themselves and develop independence. When children are working independently, tasks are not always structured enough to ensure that there are clear and measurable outcomes in terms of what children learn. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed by the co-ordinator, who is keen to make the provision the best it can be. Good relationships are formed with parents, who are helped and encouraged to support their children's learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between children and adults are very good.
- Children work together well in groups and show good co-operation.
- Adults are constantly trying to promote learning in this area.

Commentary

35. Many of the children enter the class with poorly developed personal, social and emotional skills, although the school reports that this is improving since the opening of the private pre-school setting on the campus. Reception staff collaborate well with this provision, although by no means all of its children enter the school. The adults provide good role models as they constantly work to develop the children in this area, encouraging them to take turns in activities, play together and share resources. Praise and encouragement are used well, raising the confidence and self-esteem of the children. Sometimes, in the activities supervised by adults, there is too much direction and children are not given enough chance to discuss and respond to the activities. Children achieve well, and the majority are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Early reading and writing skills are taught well.

- Language development in other areas is not always structured enough to fully exploit opportunities for learning.

Commentary

36. Achievement in reading and writing is good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the teaching of the early skills, and there is a high focus on their development. Activities are well planned, adults guide children through them and their progress is carefully monitored to ensure that provision builds on the children's previous learning. The careful and consistent way in which children are taught to recognise letters and sounds and use this knowledge to read words and sentences is a strong feature of the teaching. Handwriting is taught well with an insistence on correct letter formation. Children are introduced to a range of books and texts, although the provision for them to handle and enjoy books independently is less well developed. Opportunities to extend children's language and literacy in other activities, for example in outdoor play and the structured role play area, currently a bus depot, are not developed systematically. The majority of children are on track to achieve the early learning goals, but a significant minority, who entered the school with attainment well below average, will not.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong focus on numbers and children achieve well in this aspect of mathematics.
- Opportunities for using mathematics in other areas of learning are not exploited well enough.

Commentary

37. Children are taught about numbers well, so they achieve well. Teaching is structured and systematic in whole class sessions and adult directed group work. As a result, children count confidently and reliably, many of them beyond ten. Most recognise numerals and use the correct name. Classroom displays reinforce children's knowledge of and familiarity with numbers. Those with higher attainment have a full understanding of pattern, use the language of comparison accurately and are knowledgeable about both two and three-dimensional shapes. Fewer opportunities are created to extend and use children's developing mathematical understanding in other areas. A majority of the children are on track to reach the Early Learning Goals in mathematics by the end of the school year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in this area is systematically planned for and taught well.
- Interesting activities are practically based.
- Not enough opportunity is given for children to make their own decisions in some tasks.

Commentary

38. Children achieve well in this area because of the practical way in which things are taught. For example, they learned about magnets by handling them, experimenting with them and finding out what they did. From this, higher attaining children were able to begin to make generalisations about which materials were or were not magnetic. In information and communication technology, most children are able to operate simple programs related to the work they are doing, for example in mathematics they could manipulate the mouse to drag and

position shapes as they made patterns. The school grounds and local neighbourhood are used as the basis for sound learning about the environment and the natural world, for example on a winter walk. Children are taught to use a range of tools and materials to design and make things, for example a magnetic board game. Sometimes, their ability to select their own tools and materials and make their own decisions are limited because there is too much adult direction, and because the arrangements and structures necessary for them to be able to choose more widely, are not in place.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in whole class lessons so that children achieve well.
- The outdoor area lacks some equipment, which limits progress.

Commentary

39. In whole class lessons, children achieve well. The majority are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception class. Good teaching enables them to understand the importance of exercise for health, to develop a good awareness of space and to move with good control and balance. They use equipment such as skipping ropes and balls well to increase their co-ordination. It is important in such lessons that time is managed well: some children lost concentration when activities were too long. The lack of permanent climbing, crawling and balancing equipment in the outdoor area means that what is learned in lessons cannot be fully reinforced in ongoing activities. Children use a range of tools, kits and construction materials to develop their dexterity and manipulative skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of children's work in art is good.
- Good links are made between creative development and other areas through the themed approach.

Commentary

40. Children produce good work in art, in a range of media and with a range of materials, stimulated by links to the theme. Their achievement is good. For example, paintings of buses, train scenes using water crayons, three-dimensional model cars made from boxes, as they responded to the transport topic. They also produce collage, marbling and observational drawings of good quality. They use their imagination well in role-play and in using toys, such as the train set. A range of musical instruments was available during the inspection, but there was insufficient opportunity to make a valid evaluation of how children use or respond to this.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in English and make good progress in reading; standards are improving in writing.
- Teaching is good.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs is good.
- Pupil standards in speaking and listening are low.
- Pupils need more opportunity to apply their literacy skills in other subjects.

Commentary

41. Standards reached by Year 2 pupils in the 2003 national tests, in both reading and writing, were below average. Standards in writing have improved in Years 1 and 2 as a result of the emphasis the school has put on it, and pupils achieve well. Year 6 pupils, in the 2003 national tests for English, achieved average standards, and standards were well above the average of similar schools, defined in terms of the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. A large majority of pupils achieved the expected level in reading. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, so that they make good progress in learning. The school has increased the amount of time given to the teaching of spelling and handwriting, and this is improving standards throughout the school. Written work is well presented. Standards in speaking and listening are low, which has a limiting effect on standards in writing.
42. Teaching is good overall. Lessons are planned thoroughly to take account of the progress pupils are making. They build upon the work pupils have previously experienced and the focus is discussed with the pupils at the start of the lesson. The end of lessons is used to revise what the pupils have learnt. Teachers have high expectations of pupils, and they respond by behaving well and working hard. Pupils are generally clear about what they are learning, and become involved in lessons very well. Standards in writing are rising because there are well-chosen opportunities for children to write for different audiences in literacy lessons. The school has not developed enough opportunities for writing in all other subjects, so that their learning can be further applied and developed. ICT is used to develop pupils' writing, but this could be extended and planned in more detail to focus on particular skills. Feedback to pupils about their learning does not always emphasise sufficiently what they have to do to improve further. Pupils are encouraged to read at home, and parents are supportive. Consequently pupils enjoy reading and by Year 6 most pupils are reading fiction and non-fiction books independently.
43. Pupils who have special educational needs benefit from working with skilled teaching assistants. The school quickly identifies pupils with special educational needs and sets out plans to support their learning. Teaching assistants are informed of the plans and support pupils well through good questioning and interesting tasks in reading and writing. Pupils with special educational needs are made aware of their targets by the teaching assistants and are motivated to achieve them. Teaching assistants are well trained in spelling programmes and support pupils so they understand common spelling rules. In all areas, they help pupils to overcome their difficulties.
44. Pupils' achievement in speaking and listening is not as strong as in reading and writing, with a significant number of pupils being below expected standards. Teachers are aware that this is the weakest aspect of pupils' English and are beginning to use a range of different strategies to help them improve. Discussions about stories are instigated in Years 1 and 2, and older pupils are using technical vocabulary in science well. Too many lessons seen, however, did not allow pupils enough time to discuss their opinions with others, or use spoken language to extend and deepen their thinking and understanding. In a number of lessons the teacher dominated the discussion and pupils spent too long listening.
45. Leadership and management of English are good. Much has been achieved since the last inspection, not least the raising of standards in reading and writing. Assessments are thorough and track pupils' progress carefully. The co-ordinator has an action plan which sets out planned

improvements. Targets are set based on careful tracking of pupils' previous progress, but recent improvements in standards mean that these now under-estimate pupils' achievement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory, but opportunities to use language and literacy are not planned systematically and in enough detail. There are good examples in science, of report writing, for example, but overall not enough is done in other subjects. A significant proportion of reference books for older children are old and of poor quality, and this limits the opportunities pupils have to develop reading and library skills for research, although contributions from the LEA's school library service augment this for particular projects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is clear planning with appropriate objectives, which are shared with the pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and teaching assistants are effective in their work.
- Recent improvements in provision are having a positive effect on attainment.
- Pupils are not clear enough about how good they are at mathematics and what they need to do to improve.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to discuss, interact and use mathematical language, which limits learning.
- Opportunities to use and develop numeracy skills in other subjects are not systematically developed.

Commentary

47. Pupils of all ages achieve well while the standards for pupils in Years 2 and 6 are average. Year 6 pupils attained low results in the national tests in 2003 while those in Year 2 were very low. The school has put several measures into place to address this and inspection evidence shows that they are on track to be better this year. At present, the school's targets do not reflect this, and should be reconsidered. In Year 6 the 2003 results for pupils achieving higher levels were at the national average. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the teaching assistants and make good progress.

48. The quality of teaching is good and occasionally very good. Lessons are planned in detail and teachers share the objectives for each lesson with the pupils. Teachers also make clear links with previous work and put the lesson in a context that pupils understand. Lessons start briskly with a warm-up activity, often based on number, involving all the pupils through the use of a variety of practical resources. For example, Year 2 pupils used individual whiteboards to solve a number problem while Year 6 pupils used number fans to answer addition questions. The lessons move smoothly from one aspect to another, with activities changed to sustain pupils' interest. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively but unobtrusively supported by teaching assistants, which enables them to take a full part in lessons. In a number of lessons seen, the whole class were working together for too long which then restricted the time available for group or independent work. Lessons are carefully matched to the needs of different groups of pupils. Towards the end of lessons teachers bring the class together to review their work but they do not refer back to the lesson objectives to encourage pupils to reflect on how much progress they have made, or how they could have done better.

49. Pupils have a very positive attitude towards mathematics and clearly enjoy the lessons. They are keen to show what they know and work well in whole class, group and independent

activities. The pupils are regularly presented with problem solving opportunities and enjoy the challenge of these. For example, pupils in Year 6 enjoy their weekly mathematics challenge and often work on it out of lesson time. However, they do not always have the general language ability to fully explain their thinking. Mathematical vocabulary is a feature of all classrooms and is modelled well by the teachers but many pupils are not yet confident to use technical vocabulary, provision for which is not always built into lessons.

50. A regular assessment system is now in place and data is used to inform the content of lessons and the support required by groups and individual pupils. Pupils' work is marked regularly but there are few comments made to give feedback on progress or to suggest ways in which they could improve. Apart from a few pupils with special educational needs, the pupils have no set targets to work towards. As a result, they are not sufficiently aware of how good they are at mathematics.

51. Resources have improved since the last inspection with a wide range of practical equipment now available. A new lending library of mathematics games has also helped develop home/school links. ICT is not fully utilised in the subject and resources for ICT in mathematics are limited.

52. Good leadership in the subject, along with good support from the LEA and the national strategies has contributed to the good improvement seen in mathematics since the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator has implemented a number of initiatives, which are having a positive effect on attainment, which are becoming embedded in the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Opportunities for pupils to use and develop numeracy skills within other subjects do exist, for example pupils in Year 5 were using a handling data program to graph the results of a questionnaire carried out as part of a joint history and geography project, while younger pupils had needed to measure and cut straws accurately as part of a design and technology project. At present however, numeracy skills are not systematically built into the curriculum and opportunities for their use and development are being missed.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements are good because they are taught well.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic about science, and eager to find out things for themselves.
- The leadership of the subject is very effective.
- Poor language skills limit the attainment of many pupils in investigative and experimental work.
- The feedback given to pupils does not focus sufficiently on what they have to do to improve.

Commentary

54. The school's results in the national tests for Year 6 have been below average in recent years. During the inspection, in lessons, in the pupils' work, and in discussions with them, standards seen were average. This represents improvement from the previous inspection, when they were found to be below average. The curriculum is comprehensively covered and teachers plan good lessons which challenge pupils' thinking and focus on investigative work and an understanding of scientific enquiry. In one very good lesson, focusing on reversible and irreversible change, pupils in Year 6 made very good progress in their understanding of fair testing as they carried out experiments concerned with melting, freezing and evaporation. There was a clear focus on the use of correct scientific vocabulary. In all of the lessons seen, pupils enjoyed their work and

applied themselves well. When required, written work, including diagrams, tables and graphs, is presented carefully and with obvious pride.

55. For a significant number of pupils, however, progress in scientific enquiry is inhibited because of generally poor communication skills. They do not have the language necessary to assimilate and articulate the higher order relationships and causality involved in this part of the science curriculum. Although pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teaching assistants, which enables them to be fully included in lessons, they are sometimes not given enough opportunity to think things out for themselves and to explain them. The language, and not just technical language, necessary to learn science is not given enough emphasis.
56. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and very enthusiastic. She has been very effective in re-organising science, and ensuring that teachers plan systematically to cover the whole of the curriculum. A comprehensive system of assessment is now in place, and teachers assiduously record the knowledge and skills that each pupil has gained. They try hard to respond to the outcomes of their assessments in future lessons. What is missing, though, is enough emphasis on ensuring that the pupils themselves are aware of the outcomes of assessment. Although targets and objectives are pasted into pupils' work books, it was obvious in discussion that they were unclear about their purpose and exactly how they should respond to them. Although pupils' work is marked regularly, feedback given does not make it clear how improvement can be achieved. It does not refer to the targets.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching assistants effectively extend pupils' learning in information and communication technology.
- The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of how the subject needs to develop.
- Lack of opportunity to teach information and communication technology as a discrete subject is having an impact on the development of pupils' skills.
- Pupils are not clear about how good they are at information and communication technology and what they need to do to improve.
- There are some good opportunities for ICT to be used in other subjects, although this is sometimes limited by lack of good quality soft ware.

Commentary

57. Standards reached by pupils in Years 2 and 6 are average overall and, throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress. The quality of work seen displayed around the school is high and includes examples of pupils using a word processor, databases, spreadsheets, the Internet, drawing programmes and musical composition software. The modelling and control aspects of the curriculum are appropriately covered during a residential visit in Year 5, and visits to use the facilities at the local high school during Year 6.
58. Currently, information and communication technology is not taught as a discrete subject but in a cross curricular manner. The objectives for information and communication technology are carefully mapped into other subjects and this is monitored by the subject co-ordinator. Although the facilities for information and communication technology have improved greatly since the last inspection the computer suite is not large enough to allow whole classes to use the facilities at once, this makes it difficult for teachers to introduce new skills or software to the pupils and then give them immediate hands-on opportunities to practice and experiment. Teaching relevant skills to a whole class using a small monitor is also difficult. The school plans to purchase an interactive whiteboard and data-projector within the near future. They also plan to adopt a new scheme of work provided by the LEA, in order to further improve provision.

59. In a significant proportion of lessons, groups of pupils are taught in the computer suite by teaching assistants while other pupils are involved in other work in the classroom with the class teacher. This arrangement works well because the teaching assistants are competent and are able to support the pupils' use of the information and communication technology effectively. There is an appropriate balance between directing the pupils and supporting them but they do not always emphasise the cross-curricular links or reinforce vocabulary. Pupils would benefit from more opportunities to discuss their work with other pupils.
60. Pupils' work in information and communication technology is regularly assessed and each child has their own record of achievement which is completed by the teacher or teaching assistant. However, the pupils themselves do not have a clear understanding of what they can and cannot do nor do they know what they need to do to improve. A new assessment system, based upon a new scheme of work, has been introduced to address this.
61. Pupils enjoy the subject and many continue their learning by using facilities at home. Pupils appreciate, however, the support they receive in school and feel that it enables them to make good progress. Opportunities for pupils to use the information and communication technology facilities outside the school day are currently limited. The school has a safe Internet use policy in place.
62. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator, who is pro-active in developing ICT in the school. Information and communication technology has improved considerably since the last inspection, when it was found to be unsatisfactory. The school recognises, however, that there is still a long way to go and there is a clear plan for future work, depending upon the availability of financial resources.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning in other subjects, although opportunities to develop research and investigational skills are somewhat limited. During the inspection ICT was seen being used well to support mathematics, literacy, art and geography. Displays around the school also indicate its usage in other subjects, including history and music.

HUMANITIES

There was insufficient evidence to make firm judgements about provision, standards or the quality of teaching and learning in **geography** and **history**. Teachers' planning was looked at, samples of work analysed and discussions held with pupils.

64. Planning shows that there is a satisfactory curriculum in geography and history, although it does not always systematically identify the skills pupils will learn. In discussion with pupils, it was clear that visits to places of interest such as the Delamere Forest and Llandudno were enhancing their knowledge and understanding of the subjects. An analysis of pupils' work shows that, in history pupils in Years 5 and 6 gain an understanding of how life was for Victorian people and pupils in Years 1 and 2 can compare the condition of buildings before and after the Great Fire of London. Pupils in Year 2 can identify the features on a simple map and identify an appropriate route. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have developed an understanding of the features of an area other than where they live and have satisfactory map reading skills. The analysis of pupils' work shows that pupils are not given enough opportunity to develop their own line of enquiry. The school library does not have enough appropriate reference materials to support investigational work for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The co-ordinator has recently purchased software materials to support investigations but these are not yet used to enhance the skills of historical enquiry.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well organised and provides strong support for teaching and learning.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of the major faiths.
- Pupils need more opportunity to develop their own responses to religious beliefs and practices.
- The co-ordinator has a clear vision for improving religious education.

Commentary

65. The curriculum is well organised and it meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The new scheme of work gives a clear structure for learning and provides strong support for staff. Opportunities to visit places of worship are incorporated: pupils in the Year 5 and 6 class visited a Mosque and younger pupils saw a christening at the local Anglican Church, furthering their understanding of the practises and values of different religions. The school has organised collections of books, which help younger pupils to know about religions such as Judaism. They respond well to stories from the Bible and to the range of artefacts and models used in teaching.
66. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' attainment is similar to that expected for pupils of their age. They have a good knowledge of the similarities and differences of the major faiths. In discussions with Year 5 and 6 pupils, they recounted the story of Islam. In a Year 4 lesson, all pupils had a good knowledge of the most commonly used bible stories and could relate detail of stories about Jesus.
67. The plan for developing the subject highlights the need for pupils to develop more systematic investigation of questions. This needs further development, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Overall, pupils are not given enough opportunity to develop their own responses and generate their own questions. The work in books does not regularly record pupils' views and thoughts about religious beliefs. In a Year 4 lesson, not enough time was given for the pupils to discuss their own views about Jesus from the evidence they had found. This limits their ability to develop their own views and respond to new religions.
68. The co-ordinator is clear how to develop more opportunities for enquiry and has revised the scheme of work. Her development plan highlights the need to ensure religious education complements other subjects.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only a small number of lessons were seen in music and physical education. Further information was gained from discussions with staff, review of schemes of work and pupils were heard singing and playing steel drums in assemblies. From this sample, it is not possible to make secure judgements about the provision in these subjects.

69. In **music**, the scheme of work used meets the requirements of the national curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to join extra-curricular clubs such as the choir, recorder club and the steel band. Keyboard lessons are also available. Provision is further enriched by pupils having good opportunities to work with visiting musicians in order to develop their enjoyment of different styles of music. Pupils' singing is generally tuneful, although they are a little shy when asked to sing alone or in small groups. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in regular school performances for parents.
70. In **physical education**, both the lessons seen were in gymnastics but the scheme of work for the school covers all the requirements of the national curriculum, including swimming. There are also a number of extra-curricular activities available. In the lessons seen, pupils met national

expectations. In Year 4, pupils showed co-ordination, control and imagination to build up a sequence of movements. There were very good class routines in place and the teacher showed high expectations. There was only a little time for pupils to review each other's work, however, and the lesson time was rather too short to allow pupils to develop their maximum potential.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Displays of work around school are of very high quality, and this contributes to an effective learning environment.
- The curriculum for art and design is very good allowing pupils the opportunity to use a wide variety of media, tools, techniques and skills.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude and enjoy being creative.

Commentary

71. Staff value pupils' work in art and design, and it is very attractively displayed throughout the school. Pupils are proud of it and motivated by their achievement. The very well planned curriculum for art, along with good subject knowledge amongst staff, leads to some very good teaching. Skills are taught systematically across the school and progress can be seen through work recorded in individual sketchbooks. Standards are above average. Pupils take a pride in their work and talk confidently about it. They enjoy art and design lessons and work in a concentrated manner.
72. Art lessons are not 'one-offs' but part of a sequence of lessons building up to produce a final goal. For example, Year 3 pupils are working to produce a maquette for a piece of sculpture to be made for their outside quiet area. They have studied body shape and position, which has been linked to work in science and physical education and they have also learned about colour in the project. In a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were investigating and combining materials very creatively to produce a group sculpture of very high quality. The pupils combined a wide variety of materials to achieve the multi-media outcome. All pupils fully engaged with the task and were able to talk about it knowledgeably. At the end of the lesson, the pupils were able to compare and comment constructively on the work as well as identifying any problems they had overcome.
73. There are lots of cross-curricular opportunities built into the art and design curriculum and teachers use the work of famous artists from a variety of cultures to provide inspiration for pupils' own work. Residential visits and visits to schools by artists also make a positive impact on standards.
74. The subject is well led and has made good improvements since the last inspection.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned and has good cross-curricular links.
- Longer lesson times allow pupils to make good progress with design and technology projects.
- There are regular opportunities for pupils to review their own work.
- Teaching is knowledgeable, with good support provided by the co-ordinator.

Commentary

75. **Design and technology** has improved considerably since the last inspection. The curriculum is well planned and is designed to fit in well with other subjects. For example, in Year 5 a unit involving the designing and making of musical instruments was planned to take place at the same time as the science topic on sound and music. Skills development is in line with national expectations and pupils are generally achieving well.
76. Lesson time is often 'blocked' to allow pupils a sustained amount of time on one project. The pupils work together on design and technology projects in small groups, showing very positive and enthusiastic attitudes. They take pride in their efforts and what they produce. Teaching, which is good, including that undertaken by teaching assistants, who make a significant contribution to standards. It is informed by good subject knowledge.
77. One feature of the curriculum is the regular opportunities for pupils to review their work and for self-assessment. Formal records of attainment are not kept. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

78. Pupils' personal development is regarded as an important part of the school's work across all year groups. There is a good programme of activities including work on healthy eating, for which the school received the Healthy Schools Award in 2003, general health awareness, sex, drugs and personal safety. There are regular visitors into school who help the pupils to become more aware of their responsibilities within a wider society. The pupils demonstrate their understanding well in the way they care for and look out for each other in school. During a whole school assembly, two Year 6 girls shared their idea for a 'friend stop' for pupils who wanted someone to play with at break time. There is also a programme of lunchtime games activities organised by older pupils and a lunchtime club to develop the confidence and self-esteem of some younger pupils run by two teaching assistants. The Pupil Council is viewed positively by all pupils in the school; they see it as having positive outcomes.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	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	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	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	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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