

INSPECTION REPORT

GRENDON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Grendon, Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121975

Headteacher: Mrs Val Atkins

Lead inspector: Mr Adrian Portlock

Dates of inspection: 26 - 28 January 2004

Inspection number: 260763

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	81
School address:	Main Road Grendon Northampton Northamptonshire
Postcode:	NN7 1JW
Telephone number:	01933 663208
Fax number:	01933 665734
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Gillian Swinden
Date of previous inspection:	12 October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small school of 81 pupils in the village of Grendon, situated to the east of Northampton. About one quarter of the pupils come from the village, with the majority of pupils coming from surrounding villages. The school is part of the Ashby Cluster of small schools.

The children's attainment on entry to Year 1 varies from year to year: this year the attainment on entry is average. The attainment of children starting in the reception class is below average for children of their age. There is a significant variation in the number of pupils in each year group. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs, and with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, are average. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic families. All pupils speak English as their first language. No pupils receive free school meals.

In 2003, the school was awarded the Healthy Schools Award (Bronze) and a School Achievement Award. Various community groups use the school, for example Grendon Nursery Playgroup.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21411	Adrian Portlock	Lead inspector	Mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology and physical education.
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector	
21235	Marjorie Graham	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, English, geography, history, music, religious education and special educational needs.

The inspection contractor was:

Inspire Educational Ltd
The Coach House
132 Whitaker Road
DERBY
DE23 6AP

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good school** with a very caring and positive ethos. Standards in the core subjects are well above average, largely because of the very good teaching in these subjects and the very good leadership. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are as follows:

- The pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good and very good in core subjects.
- The headteacher's leadership is very good.
- The provision for the pupils' personal development is very good and underpins the pupils' attitudes and behaviour.
- The assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics are not well enough developed.
- The pupils have too few opportunities to use and develop their numeracy skills in other subjects.
- The pupils are very well cared for.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have improved and all of the previous issues from the last inspection have been fully addressed. The governors have made very significant progress in developing their ability to support the school and to fulfil their responsibilities.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The pupils are achieving very well and standards are well above average. By the end of the Foundation Stage, standards are average; most children are expected to reach the required goals. The children are well taught and are achieving well. By the end of Year 2, standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics and the pupils achieve well. The more able Year 2 pupils are given challenging work to do. Standards in Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science and the pupils achieve very well. These findings are mostly in line with the 2003 national test results.

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

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

Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average. The teaching is good, the pupils achieve well and they have good opportunities to use ICT in other subjects.

The pupils have very good attitudes to work and school and behave very well in lessons and at break times. Their **social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good overall. The school promotes the pupils' moral and social development very well.** The pupils' attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. Literacy, numeracy and science are very well taught throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and make good progress. Literacy and ICT skills are well developed in other subjects, although there are too few opportunities provided to use and develop numeracy skills across the curriculum. The assessment procedures support pupils' learning by identifying what pupils can do and what they need to do to improve in English and mathematics, although they need to be developed further in other subjects. There is effective use of classroom assistants in supporting pupils' learning, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. The pupils have good opportunities to extend their skills and understanding in the arts, humanities and sporting activities. There is good provision for the pupils in the Foundation Stage. There is a good range of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities and there is very good provision for the pupils' personal development. The school takes very good care of the pupils' welfare, health and safety.

The school has very effective links with parents, the community and other schools. The parents provide very good support for their children's learning. There is a very strong partnership with local schools, particularly those in the cluster of small schools, which is a considerable benefit to the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is very good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The headteacher, governors and staff work very effectively to promote the pupils' very positive attitudes and to raise standards. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and effective. Analysis of data and target setting are well established and the information provided supports the management of the school. Financial management and planning are very good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents are very pleased with the care and education that the school provides. The pupils enjoy school and feel that they are valued and well supported.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Provide or develop further effective assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Provide more opportunities for the pupils to use and develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects.

Overall, achievement is very good. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good by the end of Year 6. In the core subjects, standards are well above average by the time that the pupils leave the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6, the standards achieved are well above average in English, mathematics and science.
- Year 2 pupils achieve well and are expected to attain at least average standards by the end of the year.
- Most of the children in the Foundation Stage are on course to reach the early learning goals in all areas of learning.
- The pupils' achievement in ICT is good.

Commentary

1. The children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all areas of learning and they are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals. The effective provision and teaching enable the children to make good progress and they achieve well in all areas.
2. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. Since the last inspection, standards in the core subjects have improved and the school's trend is above the national trend. Overall in these subjects, the pupils achieve very well by the time that they leave the school. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and by the end of Year 6 they have achieved very well. There are much greater variations in Year 2 results than in Year 6 results. The pupils make good progress and enter Year 1 performing in line with the national expectations in communication, language and literacy. The early good progress is built on effectively and the pupils make greater gains in their learning as they move through the school. By the end of Year 6 standards are consistently well above the national average and higher than those attained by the pupils in similar schools. Pupils of all abilities achieve very well by the time that they leave the school. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
3. From the inspection evidence, standards in the current Year 2 are judged to be in line with the nationally expected levels.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.0 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.0 (14.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.5 (18.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.0 (29.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.0 (30.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.0 (31.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average by the end of Year 6. The majority of the pupils have well-developed speaking skills and are provided with very good opportunities to extend these skills through discussion. Standards in reading are well above average by the end of Year 6. The reception children are introduced to a structured reading programme supported by the systematic teaching of phonic skills. By the end of Year 2, the higher attaining pupils read accurately, although their fluency varies, and they all enjoy books and stories. By Year 6, standards in writing, including spelling, are well above average. The pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to use and extend their writing skills. They are able to express their ideas effectively and interestingly. In all these aspects of English the pupils achieve very well.
5. In mathematics and science, the pupils achieve very well overall. They make good progress and achieve well by Year 2. The pace of work increases and by Year 6 they have achieved very well. The school has worked hard at developing the pupils' mathematical and scientific problem solving skills and this is proving successful in the way that pupils are tackling their investigations. They have plenty of opportunities to carry out both mathematical and scientific investigations and use the very good knowledge that they have acquired. The success in both these subjects is largely due to the quality and consistency of teaching. Effective planning is ensuring that all aspects of the subject are covered in a challenging and interesting way.
6. In ICT standards are above average. The school has continued to improve the provision and computers are used effectively in other subjects. This has resulted in higher standards in most aspects of the subject, particularly in using data and presenting information. Standards are above average. It was not possible to make a judgement on the standards achieved in other subjects, although all of the foundation subjects are taught.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils have very good attitudes to their work and they behave very well in lessons and around the school. There is good provision by the school for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. High standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The pupils enjoy school and work hard.
- The pupils are very confident, mature and willing to take on responsibilities.
- The relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
- The pupils' moral and social development is very good, helping them to show respect for others.
- Attendance levels are above average and pupils are rarely late.

Commentary

7. Throughout the school, the pupils show very positive attitudes in lessons. They concentrate very well, show a very good interest in their work and take a pride in their achievements. Their own motivation has a strong impact on their achievements at the school. The teachers build on this very well by making learning interesting for the pupils. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher's use of humour built very effectively on the pupils' natural confidence in helping them learn about estimating angles and checking their answers using a protractor. The pupils say they enjoy school and this is evident in the interest they show in the range of activities provided outside lessons. The pupils are very keen to show off their play areas and are proud of the contribution their parents have made in improving facilities.
8. The school builds well on the pupils' positive attitudes through the very good provision for their moral and social development. The pupils demonstrate high levels of confidence and responsibility. They have helped devise a simple but clear set of school rules, such as; "Bullying just don't do it" and; "Include others in your games if possible." They are very keen to undertake a wide range of responsibilities, for example, Librarian of the Week. The pupils' personal development is enhanced by the opportunity to take part in residential visits in Years 5 and 6.

9. Behaviour in lessons, around the school and at playtimes is very good. Both pupils and parents say there is no serious bullying, racist or sexist behaviour and minor incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively. There have been no exclusions over recent years. The pupils know right from wrong and know what to do if incidents or accidents happen.
10. The pupils express their feelings very well from an early age. They are encouraged to support a wide range of charities helping them to appreciate the needs of those who are less fortunate than themselves. The “Buddy” arrangements between pupils in Years 5 and 6 and children in the reception class is very effective in helping them to cultivate very good relationships and a strong family feel to the school. Relationships throughout the school are very good. The pupils co-operate very well with each other in learning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

11. Attendance levels this year are above the national average with virtually no unauthorised absences. Punctuality is very good and lessons start on time. Procedures to record and monitor attendance are good and parents follow them well ensuring that there are very few cases of unauthorised absence. Parents and pupils appreciate the importance of regular and prompt attendance in relation to education.

Exclusions

12. There have been no exclusions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good overall. Teaching and learning are good in all parts of the school. The curriculum provision is good and the additional activities that enrich the curriculum are good. The provision for pupils with special education needs is good. The accommodation has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good and very good in the core subjects. There is very effective literacy and numeracy teaching and learning throughout the school but numeracy skills are not sufficiently developed in other subjects. In ICT, skills are taught well both in ICT lessons and in other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In all of the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was at least good and often it was very good.
- There is very effective literacy, numeracy and science teaching and learning throughout the school.
- The teaching meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs well.
- Literacy and ICT skills are well developed in other subjects, but there are fewer opportunities provided to develop numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Assessment and tracking procedures effectively support pupils' learning by identifying what pupils can do and what they need to do to improve in English and mathematics but needs to be developed further in other subjects.

- Classroom assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning, particularly those pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8	11	0	0	0	0

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

13. The quality of teaching has continued to improve since the last inspection and this is one of the main factors in raising standards and achievement. The good teaching in the Foundation Stage and Year 1 enables the children to make an effective start and they progress well. The teacher and support assistants plan the learning activities carefully to ensure that there are opportunities for the children to have access to all six areas of learning and to the literacy and numeracy strategies. This careful planning is continued throughout the school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is well planned and this results in the good progress seen in learning to read and in numeracy work.
14. In Years 1 to 6, the quality of teaching is consistently very good in English, mathematics and science. The very effective leadership of the headteacher and subject co-ordinators ensures that there is a consistency in teaching throughout the school. More able pupils are taught in a challenging and effective way, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The pupils' writing was identified by the school as an area for development and it is improving. The pupils respond well to the teaching, persevering with tasks and taking a pride in their finished work. Whilst literacy and ICT skills are well developed, the school is not providing sufficient opportunities to apply numeracy skills across the curriculum and opportunities to use these skills are missed in some work.
15. The co-ordinator for special educational needs, teachers and the learning support assistants plan together effectively for the needs of the pupils with special educational needs. The needs of pupils are clearly identified by the assessments that are carried out and strategies to address them are then highlighted in the pupils' individual education plans. The pupils are supported well within the classes. The individual education plans for the pupils contain clear targets that are manageable and practical and are effectively implemented.
16. The learning support and classroom assistants are used well in all classes and provide very effectively for pupils, including those with special educational needs. They have been trained well in carrying out their roles and are clear about what they are doing to support the pupils they are working with. Consequently, this supports the pupils' good achievements.
17. In Years 2 to 6, the pupils' needs in numeracy and literacy are carefully met in each year. The teaching of Year 2 pupils alongside Year 3 pupils has ensured that the more able pupils are challenged fully, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Good assessment and tracking systems to ensure that pupils achieve well have been established; these are particularly well developed in English and mathematics. Good arrangements are in place to check what the Foundation Stage children know, understand and can do; this information is well used to plan the next steps children need to take in their learning. Throughout the school, teachers use questions very effectively to assess and extend the pupils' understanding. Marking provides pupils with very clear guidance in English on how they might improve their work. It is more variable in other subjects.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. The pupils have opportunities to apply their literacy and ICT skills to other subjects and to extend their skills and understanding in the arts, humanities and sporting activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for the pupils in the Foundation Stage.
- The pupils with special educational needs are supported well by their teachers and the teaching assistants.
- There is a good range of enrichment and extra curricular opportunities.
- There is very good provision for the pupils' personal development.
- There are fewer opportunities for the pupils to apply their numeracy skills in other subjects.

Commentary

18. Throughout the school the curriculum is planned well to meet the statutory requirements and to meet the needs of all the pupils. There is a good range of learning opportunities that provide appropriately for the mixed-age classes. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is well organised and ensures that the children receive a good grounding in the early skills of literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the linked intervention programmes are used effectively to support the pupils' learning. The pupils have numerous opportunities to apply their literacy and ICT skills to other subjects but there are fewer opportunities for the application of numeracy skills.
19. All the pupils are valued and the school makes significant efforts to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all of them in all aspects of its provision. The school is at an early stage in the identification of gifted and talented pupils but those with Special Educational Needs are supported well. The learning and classroom assistants play a significant part in this good provision. The school provides a thoughtfully considered and flexible range of support to meet individual needs. The pupils benefit from a balance of whole class teaching, small group work and individual attention to their areas of difficulty. This enables them to make good progress and achieve standards that reflect their individual targets.
20. The school has an effective approach to personal, social and health education and this maintains the standards reported at the last inspection. The teachers have a clear understanding of how to involve the pupils in sharing their views about sensitive issues, aspects of social awareness and behaviour. Discussions with the pupils indicate that they understand the need for rules in school and in the wider society. All the members of staff are good models as they demonstrate the importance of respect for each other's views and feelings and help the pupils to develop an understanding of what is involved in belonging to a community. There are close and effective links with the other schools in the 'cluster' and the pupils benefit from this range of expertise and from the interest shown in them. This helps to ease the introduction of the children entering the education system for the first time and those who transfer to the secondary stage.
21. The school makes good provision for enrichment and extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is supported by a programme of day and residential visits to places of historical, geographical and cultural interest. The after school clubs cover French, sports and yoga.
22. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Resources are generally good. Since the last inspection the school has improved the range of reference books in the library and the quality of the equipment and software to support the development of the pupils' research and ICT skills.
23. Accommodation is good. The school has acted well in relation to the concerns in the last report in providing a good accessible outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage and the cramped

conditions for the oldest pupils. The school has extended its accommodation, particularly in providing a library space, computer suite, office accommodation, staff room and good size classrooms for the oldest pupils. The use of an additional church room adjoining the school has significantly enhanced the ability of the school to teach junior aged pupils in smaller groups.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides very effectively for the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The teachers provide all pupils with good advice and guidance. The school involves pupils very well in its work and development. The provision has improved well since the last inspection, particularly in relation to the governors' oversight of health and safety arrangements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal development is promoted very well.
- The pupils are helped to feel involved in the running of the school and their views are valued.
- There are very good induction arrangements.
- Child protection procedures and awareness are very good.
- The school provides a very secure and safe environment for the children to learn in.

Commentary

24. All members of staff work very hard in developing their knowledge of the needs of all of the pupils. The strong family caring ethos ensures every pupil feels valued and cared for. This has a very positive impact on the pupils' attitudes to learning and high standards of maturity and confidence. All members of staff listen to and value the opinions of pupils very well. The pupils feel that members of staff listen to what they say, for example, in forming school rules. Older pupils are trusted and given responsibilities matching their maturity.
25. There are very good induction arrangements for children both as they join the reception class and for those who join later. This enables pupils to settle quickly and form very positive relationships. The provision of the village playgroup in the school hall is a very good example of how the school looks to help the induction process.
26. Close attention is given to health and safety, child protection, fire precautions and first aid procedures. Both parents and pupils agree that the school takes very good steps to provide a very safe and caring environment in which the children flourish. The governors have introduced very thorough and effective measures to cover all aspects of health and safety at the school. All pupils are trained in first aid in Years 5 and 6.
27. The pupils receive effective support and guidance. They are confident about their move to secondary education. Advice and guidance is based on good assessment information in relation to English and mathematics.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's very effective links with parents, the community and other schools has a very positive impact on the children's learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The parents support their children's learning very well.
- The information provided for parents is very good.
- The school is an integral part of local community.
- There is a very strong partnership with the local schools, particularly those in the cluster of small schools.

Commentary

28. There is a very effective partnership between the school, individual teachers and parents. The parents ensure their children attend regularly and promptly and their financial contributions have been crucial in providing the school with additional resources. The parents have also provided invaluable help in improving outdoor facilities and the fabric of the school.
29. The school builds on the parents' interest and enthusiasm very effectively. It provides them with very good information about their children's progress and encourages them to become involved in their children's education. Annual reports are very informative about each child's progress and also indicate areas for development and how parents may help. In particular, the reception class reports with their regular updates are very useful and appreciated by the parents. Newsletters are very informative. These are backed up with other information, such as, "Home Learning Guidelines." Members of staff are accessible and have very good relationships with parents.
30. The school plays a key part in the life of the village and both supports and is supported by the local community very well. The pupils are involved in a range of village and church events. The church allows the school to use an adjoining room for an extra classroom and the school hall is used by the village playgroup. Local businesses and clubs, especially the local golf club, provide very good support. The partnership with the local secondary school ensures pupils are well prepared for their move to secondary school. The local cluster of schools is very effective, for example in providing curriculum support and sporting and music activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is very good overall. The staff work as a team to support and develop the teaching and to raise standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good.
- All teachers and governors work as a very effective team to improve the school.
- All staff are committed to improving the pupils' achievements and standards.
- Subject leaders are knowledgeable and effective.
- Financial planning and management are very good.

Commentary

31. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. She provides a very clear direction and a commitment to raising standards. She is deeply committed to the school, the pupils and the staff and plays a visible role in the daily life of the school community, combined with teaching a class for three days each week. Her positive approach and determination contribute to the very good team spirit found in the school. This has resulted in effective teaching and learning throughout the school and higher standards. The issues raised in the last report have been very thoroughly addressed.
32. The headteacher, staff and governors share a common vision for the school. They promote a clear view of what is needed for the pupils and as a result all staff have a confidence in the school and a very clear sense of direction and purpose. An effective structure for auditing, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum has been established. A shared approach to decision making is promoted and the team ensures that agreed teaching and learning policies are being implemented.
33. Most of the governors are new to the role since the last inspection. Their varied backgrounds offer the school a wide and extremely beneficial range of experience. They have overcome the issues raised at the last inspection and now play an important and effective role in the school's

development. A very committed Chair leads the work of the governing body and she is supported well by the other governors. Through their commitment to visiting the school and working with subject leaders, they have a good knowledge of how well the school is working and what it needs to do to improve. They are supportive but also ready to challenge the school. The 'Governor of the Month' policy ensures that all governors take a turn getting to know the school. The governing body have high expectations for the school and they play an important role in financial management and work hard to achieve best value for the school.

34. The involvement of both staff and governors in school development planning and in the compilation of their own action plans has ensured a shared approach to meeting the school's challenging targets. The school has developed a rigorous process of self-evaluation. A thorough analysis of all available data allows the school to target its improvement very effectively. The school improvement plan sets out the proposed developments and gives a clear indication of priorities and timescales. It details specific targets and procedures that will be followed to achieve them. The plan promotes a shared approach to decision making and shows high expectations of all those involved in the life of the school. A significant feature of the school's improvement planning is the opportunity for representatives of members of the school and local community to be involved at an early stage in discussions about how well the school is performing and what it needs to do to improve further. It encourages subject co-ordinators to take a lead in their areas of responsibility, which they do very well. The need for subject leaders to be given the time to undertake observations of teaching and use the results of evaluations to improve standards still further is well established in the core subjects but less so in non-core subjects, particularly history and geography. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.
35. The procedures for the pupils' with special educational needs is thorough, well organised and well led.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	262524
Total expenditure	261637
Expenditure per pupil	3114

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	28270
Balance carried forward to the next	31780

36. The school successfully links spending to the key priorities for development. There are clear budgeting procedures and forward planning is carefully undertaken. Good financial records are kept and all the recommendations made in the last audit report from the local authority have been addressed. The governors evaluate fully the impact of expenditure in terms of the improved or sustained educational performance of the pupils. Procedures for obtaining value for money are good.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. The children are admitted to the mixed reception (Foundation Stage 2) and Year 1 class at the beginning of the school year that follows their fourth birthday. Currently there are thirteen children on roll.
38. On the basis of assessments carried out soon after they start, the children's attainment ranges between below and above average. Over the past few years, the trend has been for a decreasing number of the children to enter with the range of skills expected of children of that age. Judgements about standards and achievement therefore need to be treated cautiously. Also the variable, but often small, number of pupils in each year group can significantly affect results. Standards amongst boys and girls are similar. All the children, including those with Special Educational Needs make good progress. Most of them are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in all the areas of learning by the time they transfer to Year 1. These standards are achieved by the good teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision is good in all of the areas of learning.
- The children achieve well in all of the areas of learning because the teaching is good.
- The teachers and the support staff work well together.
- All members of staff understand the children's needs, promote their self-esteem and develop their confidence.
- There are good planning and assessment procedures and there is good management.

Commentary

39. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well by the headteacher who works with the class for three days a week and the teacher who works for the other two days. They are knowledgeable about the children's stages of development, their individual needs and their styles of learning. They are well supported by the teaching assistants who are well briefed and clear about their roles and responsibilities. There are regular meetings to ensure that assessment information is used in the planning of activities to meet the children's needs. There is a balance of activities directed by the adults; those explored by the children and those that the children initiate for themselves. All the members of staff have high expectations of themselves as well as of the children. These expectations pervade all of the aspects of learning and have resulted in a stimulating and secure environment which supports the children's learning and their positive attitudes. The teachers provide work that is suitably challenging. They focus on what the children are learning and this enables them to assess what has been achieved and to plan the next steps that have to be taken. This maintains the high standards reported at the last inspection.
40. The children make good progress in their **personal, social and emotional development**. Before they start school there is a thoughtfully planned programme of visits and talks for parents when the routines and activities are introduced and explained. This helps the children to become more confident about embarking on this very important stage of their life. They settle quickly into the carefully organised routines because they are secure and know that the staff will listen to them and support them. The children develop positive attitudes because the staff successfully create the ethos and conditions they need to become effective learners. There is emphasis on times when they can be part of discussions with adults and these activities cater well for the children who are gaining the confidence to explore or to participate. They are encouraged to voice their likes and dislikes, share and take turns. The children learn to work together, become aware of other children's feelings and in understanding the consequences of their actions.

41. In the area of **communication, language and literacy**, the children achieve well. Their learning is managed well with carefully planned and supervised activities as well as opportunities for independence. Their skills of speaking and listening are developed effectively in adult directed activities. This is evident in discussion times when the children are encouraged to ask and answer questions about topical and personal issues. During imaginative play they adapt their speech and mannerisms to the characters they are portraying. The children are keen to learn to read and their early reading skills are developed through the sharing of books and stories. When they look at books they handle them carefully and explain that they can get information from the words and the pictures. When they share the reading with the adults they predict events and when they finish the story they recount it in sequence. Through the phonics sessions they learn the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make. Some use this information when they read unfamiliar words or when they are writing and need to decide how to spell.
42. The children make good progress with their **mathematical development**. There is a good range of opportunities for developing mathematical skills as they explain how they work things out. The children learn the correct mathematical vocabulary in stories, rhymes and games and enjoy using it as they count, match, sort, measure, weigh and order objects according to shape, size and colour.
43. In the work planned to develop the children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** they take part in a wide range of carefully planned experiences. There are well thought out opportunities that give the children the confidence to explore, experiment and use all their senses. They make good progress in learning about why things happen, how things are made and why changes occur. The current theme of recycling is helping the children to understand different types of materials and the part that they can play in taking care of the environment. Through taking part in school, church and village events the children begin to appreciate the variety of religious and cultural beliefs and celebrations. The children solve simple problems by making and modifying models. They use a variety of construction kits to make decisions about the ways of joining parts. When they create collages and models they are sensible about the safety rules for using scissors and glue. When they use the computer they operate the mouse and become increasingly confident in clicking on icons when using programs. The teachers and support staff are skilled at questioning and they make effective use of the children's answers to assess their understanding. They extend this effectively by giving the children the support they need to develop the confidence to think for themselves.
44. There are good opportunities for the children's **physical development**. They have direct access to their own outdoor area and they also use the school hall. The resources are used well for the children to gain control of their bodies and they learn to run, climb, push, pull, and balance. They demonstrate control as they change speed and direction. This was evident in the hall when they were creating a dragon dance that had been stimulated by a story read to them and by models and pictures they had created. The children learn to be aware of space and of their own safety and the safety of others. They develop the skills of throwing, catching and kicking and they also use mathematical language as they talk about over, under, high and low. They use tools carefully as they dig and fill containers in the sand and water trays. They develop their manipulative skills when they use small equipment such as scissors and brushes and when they connect and assemble jigsaws and construction kits. They have the physical skills to control the computer cursor and the quality of their drawings demonstrate that they develop the hand-eye co-ordination and pencil control needed to write letters and numbers.
45. The children's **creative development** is promoted effectively through opportunities to express their feelings in drawing, painting, modelling, music making and role-play. The teachers and support staff ensure that the children learn how to use and control the materials well and this helps them to gain an awareness of shape, pattern, colour and texture. The children enjoy the opportunities for imaginative play and they are provided with a range of small world equipment and overalls and hard hats for the recycling centre. When they use the small world figures they create conversations between the workers on the building site or the knights in the castle. These activities are a rich source for language development and the children adopt the voices and mannerisms of the characters.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above the national average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well by the time that they leave the school.
- Teaching is very good.
- The subject is managed very well.
- Pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects.

Commentary

46. Overall, the pupils' attainment is average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils of all abilities achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment by the time that they leave the school. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
47. Standards in speaking and listening are well above average by the end of Year 6. The majority of the pupils have well-developed speaking skills and use interesting language with complex sentences. They listen carefully to their teachers and the other pupils. This was evident in a very good Year 5/6 lesson where the pupils were reading 'Kensuke's Kingdom' and discussing the effect of redundancy on family life. Most of the pupils think carefully when they answer questions, explain their point of view and justify their answers and opinions in a mature way. They express their opinions about the style and effectiveness of the language the author uses to create a particular mood or atmosphere in a book.
48. Standards in reading are well above average by the end of Year 6. The reception children are introduced to a structured reading programme supported by the systematic teaching of phonic skills. By the end of Year 2 the higher attaining pupils read accurately although their fluency varies but all enjoy books and stories. By the end of Year 6, the pupils are independent and enthusiastic readers who explain why certain books appeal to them. They use books and computer programs for research and to support their work in other subjects such as geography, history and religious education. The school is keen for the pupils to enjoy reading and the home-school book is used by the teachers and the parents. This provides them with information about progress, suggestions about how the children can be supported with any difficulties and with guidance for the next stage.
49. By Year 6, standards in writing, including spelling, are well above average. The National Literacy Strategy has influenced the organisation of lessons and this is having a positive impact on the development of the pupils' knowledge of grammatical structures and the processes of writing in different styles for different purposes. The pupils in Year 2 develop their ideas into a sequence of punctuated sentences and begin to use connecting words effectively to join ideas and to create sustained writing. By the end of Year 6 the pupils organise their writing well. They are able to define what makes a good start to a story in order to capture a reader's attention. They prepare an initial draft of their work and edit it to clarify their thoughts through their writing. They write narrative, factual pieces and poetry. There is ample evidence that the pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects.
50. Throughout the school the pupils with special educational needs achieve standards that reflect their individual targets. These pupils benefit from a balance of whole class teaching, small group work and individual attention to their areas of difficulty. The teaching assistants' effective guidance and support play a significant part in this good provision. The school has used

effectively the National Literacy Strategy intervention programmes such as the Early, Additional and Further Literacy Support materials and methods.

51. The vast majority of the pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and they enjoy their lessons. They are very well behaved and try to do their best at all times. During discussions, they are attentive, make relevant contributions and respect the ideas and opinions of others. They are clear about the teachers' high expectations of their work and their behaviour. The subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as they begin to understand the power of words to create moods and atmosphere, to pose questions, create arguments and encourage empathy.
52. Teaching is very good. The members of the support staff play a significant part in this. All the members of staff have a good knowledge and clear understanding of the subject. The work is planned carefully and the teachers explain clearly what they want the pupils to learn and set targets with them. The lessons are organised well and the work is suitably challenging for all ability levels. The teachers use their questioning skills effectively to establish the pupils' understanding and then use the answers effectively to support and extend the learning. At the end of lessons the pupils are given opportunities to discuss what they have been doing but the teachers rarely involve them in discussing or reviewing their learning.
53. Although the co-ordinator works at the school part-time the subject is managed very well. The quality of teaching and learning is checked by lesson observations and scrutiny of the plans and the pupils' books. The teachers make great efforts to know the pupils well and gather information about their strengths and weaknesses. They mark the pupils' work regularly and offer praise. The assessment of the pupils' progress is used to plan future work for all ability levels and the pupils are involved with the targets. The teachers ensure that the targets for reading and writing reflect what is needed to help individual pupils to improve or give guidance about the next steps in learning.
54. The school's resources are good, with a suitable collection of reading scheme and other fiction books. The library and class collections have a good range of reference books. Throughout the school, the pupils make good use of ICT for research and by word processing to enhance their written work.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. The pupils use their literacy skills well to support work in other subjects. Their skills in speaking and listening are used across the curriculum in support of discussions in class sessions and in groups in subjects such as mathematics and science. The pupils are encouraged to retrieve and collate information from a range of sources to support history and geography topics and their writing skills are developed well in most of the subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils attain well above average standards overall.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well by the time that they leave the school.
- The teaching and learning are very good.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Assessment information is made very good use of in identifying what the pupils need to do to improve.
- The use of numeracy in other subjects is not as well developed as it is for literacy or ICT.

Commentary

56. By the time that they leave the school, the Year 6 pupils achieve well above average standards overall. This has been the case for the last few years, largely due to the very good and consistent teaching that the pupils receive.
57. The needs of all pupils are very well met. The school assesses the pupils' needs and takes effective action based upon the information collected. For example, the Year 4 pupils are taught in one class group for mathematics and a small number of pupils were identified as needing additional support to raise standards. An intensive programme of work was devised and carried out to cover those areas specific to the needs of these pupils. In the last inspection it was found that the more able Year 2 pupils did not achieve as well as they could. This is no longer the case. The Year 2 pupils achieve well and many are capable of the work expected of Year 3.
58. The main reason for the high standards is the quality of teaching. The work is very well planned. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and use this to develop their work in challenging and interesting ways. Very good relationships have been developed between the staff and pupils and this ensures that the pupils learn very well and develop very positive attitudes to working. In all lessons, the pupils persevere with their work and work very well with other pupils. They are taught to think when carrying out investigations. For example, in a Year 4 class, the pupils used their knowledge of number very well to tackle and solve several problems. They used a variety of strategies to resolve the problems and were able to talk knowledgeably about the methods they were using. The school had identified that investigational aspects of the pupils' work needed to be improved and has successfully begun to overcome this.
59. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve standards that reflect their individual targets. There are a range of strategies to meet their needs: whole class teaching, small group work and individual work when appropriate. The learning support assistants are effective in supporting the pupils they work with.
60. The subject co-ordinator provides strong leadership and the staff work as an effective team. There are good opportunities to monitor the teaching and learning and this plays an important part in ensuring the consistency throughout the school. Computers and other equipment are used effectively in supporting and enriching the pupils' learning and the pupils, from the youngest upwards, are confident users of these resources.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Both literacy and ICT are linked to the teaching of mathematics. There are some good examples of how numeracy can be taught in other subjects but these opportunities are not always developed, particularly in science, design and technology and geography. In these subjects, the pupils have opportunities for measuring, handling data and using number but too little attention is given to ensuring appropriate challenge or depth of learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities achieve very well by the time that they leave the school.
- The pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to their work.
- The teaching and learning are very good.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- There are good opportunities for developing literacy and ICT skills, but there are fewer opportunities to develop numeracy skills.

- Assessment information is generally effective but some of the pupils' targets for improvement need to be more precisely focused on the next steps in learning.

Commentary

62. Standards are well above average in Year 6. They have continued to improve since the last inspection, largely because of the quality of teaching and the consistency of teaching the subject in all classes. The pupils achieve very well because of this. The subject is very well led and managed and this is also having a positive impact on the quality of the provision of the subject. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
63. Years 5 and 6 pupils have very positive attitudes to their work. They discuss healthy eating in a mature and sensible way and make good use of their individual research and homework to illustrate their ideas. They enjoy their work and they listen well to adults and each other. Working in pairs, Year 2 and 3 pupils co-operate very well when investigating which materials make good conductors. Pupils use their initiative and undertake responsibilities appropriately and confidently.
64. The quality of teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have high expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' work and in ensuring that pupils complete the tasks set within a reasonable time. All teachers plan effectively and identify clear objectives for learning. These are shared with the pupils so that they have a good understanding of the focus of the lesson. Tasks are well matched to the different abilities of the pupils and the more able pupils are increasingly challenged to make the most of their potential. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
65. The pupils use their literacy and ICT skills well. The focus on writing has improved the pupils' confidence in using subject-specific language. While there are some good opportunities for developing numeracy skills in the subject, this aspect is not planned for in detail.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils achieve above average standards overall.
- The teaching and learning are good and ensures that the pupils of all abilities achieve well by the time that they leave the school.
- The subject is very well led and managed and the improved resources and accommodation are having a significant impact on raising standards.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and knowledgeable users of ICT.
- ICT skills and knowledge are developed well in other subjects.
- The effective use of assessment information is developing but is not yet sufficiently in place throughout the school.

Commentary

66. ICT now has a much higher profile across the school and has much better resources. This has resulted in higher standards in most aspects of the subject, particularly in using data and presenting information. Standards are above average.
67. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 understand that computers help them to express their ideas in different ways. They type in short pieces of information, including their own stories and accounts and understand how to use the cursor to change and delete words. They know how to select different programs and run them from the program menu. All pupils observed using computers during ICT lessons were confident in using the mouse, directional arrows and cursor to place

text and have made good progress in developing keyboard skills. They support each other well. In a mixed Year 2 - 4 class, the older pupils helped younger pupils by discussing ways of entering information into a database.

68. The pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school. By Year 6, they use computers confidently in a variety of ways. Many had combined text and pictures to create a display. They also used their knowledge of spreadsheets to enter information and investigated how to total columns and rows. They were able to save and store data and retrieved their own work easily.
69. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers show confidence in teaching the subject and have a good knowledge of the programs used. Very successful teaching occurs in the computer suite where teachers are able to spend extended time with pupils ensuring they understand new programs and demonstrating how to use them. More able Year 6 pupils were challenged to carry out a task with only limited information when using spreadsheets, which they tackled successfully.
70. Throughout the school the pupils' attitudes in ICT lessons are very good. They work with enthusiasm and enjoyment, helping each other and concentrating for lengthy periods. The pupils enjoy working with computers, treating equipment with care and behaving appropriately when they are not directly supervised. Many pupils are skilled at using the keyboard and a wide variety of programs, accessing sites on the Internet and sending e-mail.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Since the last inspection, the school has established a computer suite which has greatly enhanced the provision and is well used by all classes. The computers in the classrooms are well used. In the Reception and Year 1 class, the pupils confidently used the computer to carry out a skills program set up by the teacher. There are many good examples of work in which the pupils have been able to practise, reinforce and use the skills they have learned in the computer suite. There are plenty of examples of ICT being used to support other subjects.

HUMANITIES

72. No **history, geography or religious education** lessons were seen so it is not possible to judge the quality of provision. Evidence from the teachers' plans and the pupils' work, indicate that the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus for religious education are met fully and that history and geography meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.
73. The pupils learn about religious traditions, beliefs and practices and are given opportunities to reflect on and make decisions about their personal response to questions of meanings and values.
74. The pupils' experiences are enriched by a programme of day and residential visits to places of historical, geographical and cultural interest. The junior pupils have used their very good writing skills in accounts of historical events such as political and domestic life in Tudor times. In geography the infant pupils have followed Barnaby Bear's travels to a variety of locations. None of these three subjects has any systematic method of recording the pupils' progress in the development of key skills.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. Only one lesson was seen in design and technology and physical education and none in art and design and music. It is therefore not possible to judge the overall provision for these subjects. Inspectors discussed the work with teachers, subject co-ordinators and pupils. The pupils' work was analysed, including work on display and in portfolios.

76. In **art and design**, there is a well-planned and worthwhile curriculum that focuses on developing pupils' skills as they move through the school. The work on display and in the portfolio indicates that standards are above average and are similar to those at the last inspection. The pupils enjoy art lessons and activities and the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Good use of ICT skills is being made and contributes to the good range of media and methods being used to depict artistic themes. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use their skills and knowledge in more open ended and creative ways. The subject is effectively led and managed.
77. In **design and technology**, lessons are well planned and the teachers support each other effectively in offering advice and guidance. From the completed work seen, the teachers have set high expectations and pupils take a pride in their work. The quality of the work being undertaken is good. Year 4 to Year 6 pupils are designing and making prototypes for houses linked to their work on Tudors. The models being completed show care and thought and the pupils are proud of what they have accomplished.
78. When discussing their work the pupils are interested, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They are keen to explain how they produced their products and what they needed to take into consideration when designing and making. They talk about the processes involved and take pride in their work. There are good opportunities to develop work using ICT, although the school is aware that they are not yet equipped to develop control aspects of the subject as fully as they would like. This is being addressed within the cluster of small schools.
79. The subject co-ordinator is well informed and she takes an effective lead in the subject. The scheme of work ensures that planning is consistent across the years and classes and that there is a good range of work covered. Effective planning exists in all classes and there is evidence of sufficient time being made available to carry out the planned work. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy skills, and to a lesser extent numeracy skills.
80. In **music**, the plans for the subject show that they meet the requirement of the National Curriculum. The subject is taught by the same part-time specialist teacher as at the last inspection when provision was judged to be excellent. There is a school recorder group and some of the pupils have instrumental tuition from visiting specialists. All the pupils have opportunities to sing in assemblies and to perform in school and village musical events.
81. In **physical education**, there is a comprehensive programme of work which covers all aspects of the National Curriculum. It is enhanced by a good range of activities provided outside lessons. The pupils have swimming lessons at a local swimming pool. Very nearly all pupils attain the expected level of competence by the time that they leave the school and many exceed it. The quality of teaching and learning in the one lesson seen was good. A mixed Year 2 to 4 class was developing a rain dance. The teacher had established very effective routines and had progressively built up the skills needed for the pupils to link their movements and actions to suit the mood being developed. The pupils responded well within the rather cramped space. The subject is managed well and there are appropriate and useful plans. The indoor accommodation is rather limited to a small hall. The pupils observed using the hall did so effectively, working within the effective routines established by the teacher. The good out-of-lesson activities enhance the pupils' learning. The school takes part in a variety of sporting events and matches.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

82. No lessons were seen in personal, social and health education and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement.
83. All classes have regular lessons in **personal, social and health education**. The pupils are confident and very interested in the work they do. They are given very good opportunities to

explore and think about issues that affect their personal, social and health development and they respond very well to the opportunities provided. The pupils are helped to understand the importance of respecting other people's feelings and values. This is developed through specific personal, social and health lessons and assemblies but most of all through the way all staff relate to the pupils and are effective role models. The school gives the pupils opportunities to develop their awareness of the responsibilities of living in a community. Through this, the pupils are helped to develop a clear sense of fairness and to support each other.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
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	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	3
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	3
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	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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

