

INSPECTION REPORT

DOTHILL INFANT SCHOOL

Wellington, Telford

LEA area: Telford and Wrekin

Unique reference number: 123413

Headteacher: Mrs B J Boden

Lead inspector: Ian Knight

Dates of inspection: 15th September 2003 – 17th September 2003

Inspection number: 261164

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	266
School address:	Severn Drive Wellington Telford
Postcode:	TF1 3JB
Telephone number:	01952 223460
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Brian Smith
Date of previous inspection:	16 th November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Dothill Infant School is a large infant school serving the Wellington area of Telford. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds; overall the socio-economic background of pupils is average. Although the full range of attainment is present on entry to the school, it has been consistently average for a number of years. Almost all pupils are white British. There are small numbers of pupils who are Asian, black or of dual heritage. No pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs is 12 per cent, which is slightly below average. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs for physical disabilities but the majority of other pupils identified have learning difficulties. The numbers of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is low.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23031	Ian Knight	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science, information and communication technology
9736	John Brasier	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
18709	Nina Bee	<i>Team inspector</i>	The Foundation Stage, special educational needs, art and design, music
22990	Chris Furniss	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics, design and technology, physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This is a good school, offering good value for money. Pupils achieve well throughout the school because of good teaching and learning. The school engenders good attitudes and behaviour in its pupils. However, pupils' work is not assessed rigorously enough to guide teachers and ensure that the most capable pupils are really stretched. Similarly, monitoring and evaluation of the school's work are not rigorous enough to spread good practice and eliminate inconsistencies. Leadership and management of the school are both sound overall.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement throughout the school is good because of good teaching.
- There is good provision for pupils with a special educational need, and they make good progress.
- Teaching assistants are very effective in supporting pupils in and out of class.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and behave well because the school has a positive, caring ethos.
- Assessment is not used effectively enough to ensure that all pupils, including the most capable, are really challenged.
- The school's work is not monitored and evaluated effectively enough to identify and eradicate weaknesses and inconsistencies.
- Strategic planning is not focused enough to bring about further improvement.

The school has improved satisfactorily since its last inspection: standards in English have been maintained at a high level, and elsewhere standards have at least been maintained. The proportion of very good teaching has increased modestly. The key issue in respect of the development of schemes of work has been thoroughly addressed, but little progress has been made towards the key issue regarding assessment.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	A	B	A	B
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	B	B	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Achievement throughout the school is good. Children in Reception are on course to achieve all the goals children are expected to reach by the time they enter Year 1, with a significant minority exceeding them. This represents good achievement. In Year 2, pupils are performing at levels above those expected in reading, writing, mathematics, art and design, and design and technology. Standards are in line with those expected in most other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils have made good progress to achieve these standards and are achieving well. However, the most capable pupils are not consistently challenged enough and their achievement is satisfactory.

The school has a positive ethos, which enables good development of pupils' personal qualities and satisfactory provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils show good attitudes to learning throughout the school, and behave well.

Children in Reception behave very well. Attendance is good. Relationships between everyone are cordial. The school engenders good levels of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others, and ensures that pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Pupils make good progress because teachers teach well. Teaching assistants offer good support to pupils in lessons so that they are able to apply themselves productively to their work. Time is used well in Reception, but some lessons in Years 1 and 2 are too long and the pace of learning suffers. Children in Reception work well independently, but pupils in Years 1 and 2 have fewer opportunities. When formal assessments are carried out, the outcomes are not used rigorously, with the result that the most capable pupils are not consistently challenged enough. Teachers do not set or share individual targets for improvement with pupils, and the result is that pupils do not have a full enough understanding of how they might improve.

The curriculum is enriched by the careful planning of themes that link several subject areas together. However, it does not specify clearly enough how time should be used. The school does not consistently seek and act on parents' views. Good procedures are in place to ensure pupils' welfare in school, and most pupils have a very good and trusting relationship with at least one adult in the school, so that they feel valued and able to do their best.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is satisfactorily led and managed. Leadership by the headteacher and others with a leadership role is satisfactory. The school is committed to fulfilling the needs of all individuals. It succeeds in doing this for pupils with special educational needs, but the level of challenge for the most capable is uneven. The day-to-day management of the school is effective, but the school's work is not monitored and evaluated rigorously enough. This means that inconsistencies persist and long-term strategic planning is not based firmly in evidence about the school's work. As a result, strategic planning is not effective enough in driving the school towards even higher standards. The governing body operates satisfactorily and has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied, overall, with the school. They do believe that communication could be improved, but feel that the school is offering a good education for their children. Pupils are very satisfied and speak warmly of their experiences.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Make better use of assessment information in the planning of lessons so that all pupils, including the most capable, are consistently challenged.
- Involve more staff in monitoring and evaluating the school's work, and use the information more effectively to spread good practice and eliminate inconsistencies in practice.
- Consult more widely on the school's strategic planning. Ensure that the plan focuses on the highest possible achievement by all and includes measurable success criteria related to that.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement throughout the school is good. Standards in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics are better than average. Standards in art and design, and in design and technology, are above expectations. However, the most capable pupils are not consistently challenged enough, and their achievement is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in National Curriculum tests have been consistently much higher than average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics between 1999 and 2002.
- Writing standards are well above average when compared to those of similar schools; reading standards are above this average.
- Observed standards in English, mathematics, art and design, and design and technology are above expectations.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets.
- The most capable pupils are not challenged consistently enough because assessment results are not used to the best effect to plan work matched to their needs in every lesson.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.3 (16.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.0 (15.7)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	17.3 (17.0)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 86 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. In the table above, one 'point' represents approximately the progress expected in one term. The expected Level 2 is represented by 15 points; the higher Level 3 by 21 points.
2. In 2002, standards in National Curriculum tests were well above average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. When the school is compared only to those with a similar intake, then standards in writing were well above average and reading standards were above average, but standards in mathematics were average. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 in tests was well above average in each area. National comparisons cannot yet be made for the tests undertaken in 2003, but in reading, the proportion gaining the highest levels declined significantly, whilst in writing that proportion rose significantly. Standards in mathematics, the weakest subject in 2002, did not change significantly in 2003. There are no tests in the other core subject of science, but the results of teachers' assessments in 2002 show that standards were about average overall. When compared to those of similar schools, however, standards in science were only just in the average range. In 2003, the proportion gaining the higher Level 3 fell. Over the period from 1999 to 2002, standards in tests were consistently better than average, but the trend of improvement was not consistent year-on-year. One factor in this has been the lack of rigour in monitoring and evaluation of the school's work.

3. Test results can tell only part of the story, however. They relate only to a few subjects and pupils. They also cannot differentiate between *attainment* – standards in tests – and *achievement* – the extent to which pupils are really doing as well as they can, given their background and past experiences. Inspection findings can fill some of these gaps.

4. By the end of their time in Reception, the majority of children will reach the expected levels in all areas. A significant number will exceed these levels, especially in the areas of personal, social and emotional development; communication, literacy and language; creative development; and the development of the skills of information and communication technology (ICT). Children achieve well because teaching is usually good. Progress is enhanced further because personal and social skills are well promoted and most children have positive attitudes to learning. The good progress made by the children, coupled with the usually good teaching across the areas, show that these children's achievement is good.

5. In Years 1 and 2, good teaching and learning continue. Even this early in the year, pupils in Year 2 are already attaining standards above what would currently be expected in English, mathematics, art and design, and design and technology. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards in music, but standards in the other subject were in line with what would be expected at this time. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment when they work on the targets on their individual education plans. In lessons, progress is sometimes hindered when teachers do not give enough guidance to inform the pupils what they need to do to improve. However, the decline in the number of pupils gaining the highest levels in reading and science, together with a lack of significant improvement in standards in mathematics in the 2003 tests, suggests that the most capable pupils are not always attaining the standards of which they are capable. The school's efforts to improve matters have not been based on clear information about pupils' work or evaluations of teaching. As a result, the relative weakness in mathematics evident in the 2002 tests was not dealt with effectively and the standards in the 2003 tests were similar. The use of catch-up schemes in reading led to more pupils gaining the expected Level 2 in 2003, but the needs of higher attainers did not have the same urgency, and hence their decline. Nevertheless, the overall make-up of the intake to the school is one of average attainment: the standards reported indicate that the majority do make good progress and their achievement is good. It remains the case, however, that the school does not yet maintain a register of pupils who might be gifted or talented, nor does it use assessment effectively to set challenging targets for the most capable pupils in all subjects. As a result, these pupils are not consistently challenged enough so that, although they attain good levels, their achievement is only satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their development morally and socially is also good, while provision for both spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Their attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' enthusiasm and interest in lessons provide a good foundation for learning.
- Pupils are keenly aware of the rules that their own classes have agreed upon, and acknowledge that one should treat others as one would like to be treated.
- Behaviour is consistently good in class, and often good in other circumstances.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to reflect on or rejoice in the spiritual or other wonders that they discover.

Commentary

6. Children in Reception enjoy coming to school and settle into their classes quickly, showing positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is very good, and they develop good relationships both with the adults who work with them and with each other. All children show good independent skills

as they begin to tidy up at the end of sessions, and most change confidently before and after their physical development lessons.

7. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are keen to answer questions and contribute their own ideas to lessons. They listen with respect to the viewpoints of others and show pleasure when right choices have been made. For example, in a personal, social and health education lesson in Year 1, pupils were keen to offer their views on what are healthy and unhealthy foods, and were excited to find the odd one out in a selection of foods displayed on the carpet.

8. Pupils exhibit mature behaviour in most situations. They appreciate what is expected of them and are keen to comply. There is very little challenging behaviour. Pupils say that there is no bullying or other oppressive behaviour and that behaviour is good, except for some pupils in Year 1 who found some of the other pupils' behaviour too boisterous. Should problems arise, the school deals with them quickly and effectively. There have been no recent exclusions.

9. Pupils with special educational needs are positive learners and respond well to lessons, in particular when they receive additional help from the special educational needs teaching assistant. Their behaviour is good.

10. Pupils talk interestingly about the rules their classes have devised and the need for such rules. These vary from class to class, and this gives pupils a sense of ownership for their own environment. They relish opportunities to do jobs independently and delight to show visitors the way around. They understand the need for adjustments to behaviour to meet various circumstances and, for instance, how a 'playground voice' differs from a 'classroom voice'.

11. Pupils appreciate the wide range of music used within the school for several activities. The school has a rich programme of visits from musicians and storytellers. Pupils understand that we are a more wealthy community than many of those in the Third World and they are pleased to have made their own contribution to help others. The school has welcomed a paraplegic sportswoman – an Olympic Gold Medallist – who provided a marvellous role model for the children. However, the school provides only limited opportunities to appreciate that we live in a richly multicultural society.

12. A joint campaign with the education welfare office reduced unauthorised absence over the past year, but authorised absence increased slightly. Current figures are better than the national average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.0
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.4
National data	0.5

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, but the use of assessment is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is sound: it is enriched by the use of themes that connect different subject areas, but time is not always planned for effectively. The school provides well for pupils' health and safety. Although parents make a good contribution to learning at school and at home, the school does not involve parents enough in its work.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are both good throughout the school, but the use of assessment is unsatisfactory. The most capable pupils are not consistently challenged in lessons, and pupils do not always know how well they are doing, or how to improve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers work hard to encourage and engage their pupils.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support groups of pupils.
- Most pupils make good progress in lessons.
- Teachers are skilled in managing pupils' behaviour so that no time is lost maintaining order.
- Resources are used effectively.
- Some lessons are too long and time is not always managed well so that the pace of learning is slowed.
- Assessment results are not used consistently to ensure that all pupils are challenged enough.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	4 (13%)	13 (43%)	13 (43%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

13. Teaching in the Reception classes is generally good. Teaching assistants and volunteer helpers support the teachers well when they work with small groups, enhancing learning for all children. Adults promote personal and social skills well in many activities. This results in children getting on well with each other and developing positive attitudes to learning. Learning is good during most lessons as the children acquire new knowledge, develop ideas and increase their understanding. However, not all adults consistently promote listening skills, and when this happens children sometimes shout out during class discussions. This at times interferes with learning. Teachers' planning is thorough and day-to-day assessment is used satisfactorily to move groups of children on to the next stage of learning.

14. Teaching and learning are also good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers know pupils well, and encourage and engage them in lessons effectively. As a result, pupils work hard and make good progress in lessons, enjoying their tasks. Staff have high expectations of how pupils will behave, and these are clearly understood by pupils. As a result, lessons proceed in an atmosphere of calm, so that learning is enhanced. Teachers use questioning effectively to drive learning and to check pupils' understanding in a lesson. In the subjects of the curriculum, teaching was good in English, mathematics and art and design. There was insufficient evidence to form a view on teaching in

design and technology, ICT, music, or religious education. Teaching was satisfactory overall in the other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs are given good quality support in lessons and when working on their individual targets. Teaching assistants support them and other pupils well. Detailed assessment records are kept on all pupils and these enable teachers to identify clear targets on their individual education plans. This has a positive effect on learning within lessons and the progress pupils make over time. However, there are occasions when pupils are given too little guidance to improve, and this affects the learning within some lessons. Resources are used well, for example in art and design lessons, to excite and inspire pupils. However, some lessons in the morning are too long, and this affects the pace of learning adversely. Teachers do not consistently tell pupils what they expect them to learn in a lesson, nor allow pupils to reflect on how much they have learned at the end. Consequently, pupils do not always know how well they are doing or how to improve.

15. Assessment procedures are securely in place only in English and mathematics. There are no assessment procedures in the other subjects, despite this being a key issue at the time of the last inspection. Consequently, teachers do not have enough information to pitch work at just the right level for all in the class; in particular, the most capable pupils are sometimes not challenged beyond their comfort zone, so that their achievement is satisfactory rather than good.

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum of sufficient breadth and balance to meet the needs of the pupils, the requirements of the National Curriculum, and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. There are good opportunities for enrichment through the effective use of visits and visitors and a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory for the Foundation Stage and good overall. They are used well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits and visitors are used well to extend and enrich the curriculum.
- Provision is good for English, mathematics, ICT, art and design, and design and technology
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Accommodation and resources are good overall and are well used.
- Topics, and links between subjects, are used effectively.
- Some curricular policies and schemes of work, although in place, are dated and still in need of review.
- Specific skills in some subjects are not consistently developed.
- Time is not always planned for or used effectively across the school.
- Provision for outdoor activities is limited for the Reception classes.

Commentary

16. One of the key issues from the last inspection was to complete the development of schemes of work for all subjects, and this has been satisfactorily addressed, so that there are now policies and schemes in place for all subjects. However, procedures for reviewing and updating these are not rigorous enough.

17. The curriculum overall is satisfactory and meets the needs of pupils in all areas of the National Curriculum, in religious education, in personal, social and health education (including sex, drugs and relationships), and in the Reception classes. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily.

18. The provision for the children in the Reception classes is satisfactory, and good in the case of personal, social and emotional development, which is consistently promoted well in all activities. There is satisfactory provision for physical development indoors, but the school has identified the provision for structured outdoor play as an area for development. Resources are satisfactory to

support most areas of learning but are limited for the secure outdoor area; for example, there are no wheeled vehicles to promote physical development. Activities are thoroughly planned according to the national guidance.

19. In Years 1 and 2, some areas of the curriculum are good, in particular English, mathematics, ICT, art and design, and design and technology. This means that pupils achieve well, and the overall standard of work in Year 2 in most of these subjects is higher than would be expected for pupils of their age. The good use of topics and well-planned links between different subject areas support pupils' progress in both literacy and numeracy. Good examples of these links were seen in work and displays in almost every area of the curriculum, and they help make the curriculum interesting and relevant to the pupils. However, good though this approach is, it has meant that some subject-specific skills are not always taught as well as they could be, for example in history and geography.

20. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has maintained this high standard since the previous inspection. Reviews are completed regularly, and parents are regularly informed. The school identifies and assesses pupils with special educational needs well, and their individual education plans contain sharp targets, which clearly show the good progress the pupils make. Classroom resources of good quality are used well to support teaching and learning generally.

21. The curriculum is well supported by a range of well-planned visits and visitors. These visits range from trips within walking distance, such as the Playpark and the local shops, to more distant places such as Coalport China Museum and Cardingmill Valley. One aspect of the effectiveness of these visits is that they often link different subjects; for example, a visit to Blist's Hill Open Air Museum linked science, history and personal, social and health education. This practice is a productive use of both time and resources. Time is not, though, always used as effectively as it might be. Some English and mathematics lessons are too long because the timetabling is not always clear. Whilst there may be occasions when a particular mathematics lesson may need to exceed an hour, 45 to 50 minutes is generally sufficient. Stretching it out to seventy minutes slows the pace of the lesson and makes pupils lose concentration, with little tangible benefit. Similarly, literacy lessons of 75 minutes are usually much too long for pupils of this age. Timetable planning needs reviewing to make better use of time and to avoid potential 'black holes' in the day where time is 'swallowed up' and wasted.

22. Accommodation and resources are good overall. The building is spacious with adequate room in classrooms. The headteacher has remarked upon a lack of outside play space but the inspection team judged it adequate. There is an attractive hall for assemblies and indoor physical education. The ICT suite holds only ten computers due to lack of space, but is satisfactory. There is a library and there are areas where groups of pupils can be withdrawn to work in groups. The environment is attractive and, thanks to the committed and hardworking caretaker and cleaning staff, is well maintained. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard to mount attractive displays of topics and pupils' work, and these enhance the learning environment and help pupils to feel that their work is valued. Learning resources are good in mathematics, ICT, and design and technology. They are satisfactory in all other areas except art and design, where they are very good. Although accommodation and resources for the Foundation Stage are satisfactory the school has already recognised and is seeking to address the shortage of outdoor facilities.

23. Human resources are good. The committed team of teachers is well matched to the needs of the curriculum. Well trained and deployed teaching assistants support teachers and pupils well, and their commitment and expertise make a significant contribution to the good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures that pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are well provided for. It gives them satisfactory support, advice and guidance and involves them satisfactorily in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pastoral care is very good and is based on trusting and caring relationships with teachers and teaching assistants.
- There are good arrangements for child protection, welfare and health and safety.
- There are good arrangements for the induction of pupils. Visits are made to 15 feeder nurseries and playgroups.
- There is a lack of targets for individual pupils and of information on their academic progress.

Commentary

24. Pupils told inspectors how happy they were in the school, and parents confirmed that this was the case. This clearly forms a good foundation for the pupils' work in school. The headteacher and other staff speak caringly about pupils and the difficulties individuals might be facing, and it is clear that child protection concerns are well embedded in their thinking. Health and safety is prominent in the life of the school. All the required policies are in place. The caretaker takes a lively interest in keeping the buildings safe, and the headteacher has attended a course on safety audits for external visits. Dinner supervisors take an interest in the children and look after them well. Pupils with special educational needs are sensitively integrated into classes by the teachers and by their experienced teaching assistants. All adults work well together as a team and have a clear idea of how pupils with special educational needs learn. The daily support that pupils receive is good. Outside agencies are used well to support pupils when necessary.

25. Parents told inspectors how pleased they are with the way their children have been introduced into the Reception classes, and the manner in which they had been kept informed. In Reception, detailed notes on personal development are kept. In other classes, personal development is monitored informally by teachers and teaching assistants, but because they know their pupils so well this is done very efficiently. On the academic side, there are no central records of the progress of individual pupils, so that teachers do not have a secure foundation on which to base their advice. More information is available on pupils with individual education plans, but these are only a small minority.

26. Although there is as yet no school council, pupils say that they can talk to staff about whole school issues, such as the fairness of the rules applied to playground games. They also contribute to their classroom rules. Teachers are always prepared to listen to pupils' concerns whenever these arise.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and other educational institutions are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' involvement in their children's work at home and at school is good, and they encourage them well.
- There are good transfer arrangements to the junior school.
- There is not enough consultation with parents on whole school issues.

Commentary

27. Parents have high opinions of the school, and there were few concerns expressed in the answers to the questionnaire. The main area of concern, raised by a minority, relates to communication between school and home, especially about pupils' progress and the curriculum. The school provides good information to parents in the prospectus, newsletters and reports on pupils, and in the governors' annual report, but there are gaps. No information is given to parents on what their children will be studying each term, and in the annual reports there are no targets or suggestions about how parents may help their children. By contrast, parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about how their children are doing in relation to targets on their individual education plans. The well-established 'circle of friends' ensures a smooth transition when these pupils transfer to the local junior school.

28. Parents are supportive in many ways, especially in raising funds through the Friends of the School. Parents help in school, and a group of parents has decided to seek a qualification in Early Years education, for which the school is offering support. Parents are made welcome in school and all are given the maximum opportunity to be involved in their children's education. For example, the school provides information to separated parents and is especially helpful if the parents themselves have problems in communicating. Joint plans are made to tackle attendance or behaviour problems. Parents regularly come into school and support children well in the Reception classes. They give good quality support and enhance the learning of many children. There are six consultation evenings each year and a variety of events that parents can attend. Parents are not, however, consulted about wider issues such as policies, developments and the curriculum.

29. The school's spacious hall is not as yet available for community use. The school uses the community to good effect by arranging visits to local shops, building sites and environmental areas. The Chair of Governors brings interesting visitors into the school, such as the Mayor of Wellington, and the youth minister of a local church is a lively and inspiring visitor. The local library is used well, and it has an engaging storyteller.

30. The local cluster of schools has done some useful work on standardising achievement levels, and it provides a useful forum for making comparisons of efficiency and results. There are good links with the adjacent junior school and a 'circle of friends' is established to help the more insecure children cope with transfer. Good contacts are maintained with the nurseries and playgroups feeding the school. A video link has been established with a local junior school, and when used has resulted in some good developments in speaking and listening.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher and other key staff offer satisfactory leadership to the school. Management of the school is satisfactory. The governing body fulfils its roles satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership has enabled high standards to be maintained over a period of time.
- The school demonstrates a clear and effective commitment to equal opportunities for all.
- The governing body understands the school's strengths and weaknesses well.
- The school's work is not monitored effectively.
- The school's strategic planning is not focused enough.

Commentary

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	486706
Total expenditure	504463
Expenditure per pupil	2065

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-13943
Balance carried forward to the next	-31700

31. The headteacher and staff share a commitment to equality of opportunity and provision that is suitable for all according to need. This is most clearly seen in the good provision for pupils with special educational needs, an area which is well led and managed. All adults work well together as a team, and this enables pupils to make good progress. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is aware of the need to monitor more rigorously the progress pupils make during lessons, in particular when they do not receive extra support. Funds for special educational needs are used appropriately for the development of resources, training for staff, release time for the co-ordinator, and additional support from teaching assistants to develop basic skills. However, it is less successful in consistently meeting the needs of the most capable. This is because assessment information is not used effectively enough and the school's monitoring procedures are not adequate to identify weaknesses and improve practice. This has a knock-on effect on the school's long-term strategic planning, which does not identify priorities for improvement in sufficient detail. The targets refer to subject areas, but do not focus on what aspects the school really needs to do to improve. This lack of rigour has been a factor in the decline in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in reading, and the lack of improvement in mathematics and science in 2003.

32. Nevertheless, the staff operate effectively as a team, and there is an ethos of mutual support. Staff in each year group plan together, for example, so that pupils receive the same planned lessons in each class. The Foundation Stage is led satisfactorily. Provision is satisfactory and teaching is generally good. New systems for planning and assessment have been recently introduced. All adults work well together as a team, developing a similar curriculum in both classes. In addition, the two co-ordinators who work a job share in the Foundation Stage consistently deliver a satisfactory curriculum, and teaching is good. Mathematics is led well and science is led soundly, but the co-ordination of English is currently unsatisfactory, as the school has not identified a member of staff to undertake this role since the retirement of the former post holder at the end of the previous term. The co-ordination of history is also unsatisfactory. The good leadership and management offered by the co-ordinator for art and design is reflected in the good standards achieved in this area. Provision in ICT is improving rapidly, and the co-ordinator is offering good leadership and sound management. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the leadership and management of design and technology and music; in the remaining subjects, leadership and management are both satisfactory. However, only the co-ordinator for mathematics has undertaken any purposeful monitoring in the subject, a process which has informed a new policy for the teaching of the subject. Other co-ordinators have not had the opportunity to investigate standards and provision in their subjects in enough detail to decide how to improve matters even further. Performance management supports personal development effectively.

33. The governing body has recently had a significant turnover as members moved on. As a group they are supportive of the school and ensure that statutory requirements are met. Their role in strategic planning is limited, though they do check on the progress of the school development plan. Through visits and the headteacher's reports, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and they operate soundly as a critical friend to the school.

34. Day-to-day management is effective and the school's budget is managed well. The school has an agreed plan to reduce the budget deficit and come back into positive figures. The best value principles are implicit in the school's dealings.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, and good for personal, social and emotional development. Although there is a secure outdoor area, the use of this facility has been identified as an area for development. In addition, resources for outdoor play are limited. The majority of children enter Reception with attainment that is average. Induction procedures are good and this ensures that the children settle in quickly and happily. The children achieve well because the teaching is good, and they receive good support from the teaching assistants and volunteer helpers. In addition, the curriculum provides a suitable range of activities that are accurately matched to their needs. The provision is satisfactorily managed. The recently developed systems to monitor pupils' progress are satisfactory. All adults manage the children well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well because teaching is good and their development is consistently well promoted.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support learning.
- Behaviour is very good. Adults do not miss opportunities to praise good behaviour.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive.

Commentary

35. Good provision enables most children to reach at least the expected levels, with a significant number likely to exceed these levels by the end of their time in Reception. Teaching is good and teaching assistants enhance learning considerably as they support children well in both classes. This area of learning is well promoted in many activities. All adults have very high expectations regarding behaviour, and as a result behaviour is very good. Children achieve well because they show positive attitudes to learning and thoroughly enjoy coming to school. Personal independence is well developed, for example when the children plan which activities they wish to do, or as they sensibly wash up their beakers after having a drink. There are many good opportunities for the children to work in pairs and small groups and to begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently. They take turns and concentrate well as they interact with each other and with the adults who help them. Most children select activities with confidence and know that they are expected to help to tidy away at the end of each session. Planning and past work shows that the children begin to develop a satisfactory understanding of religions, and celebrations within different religions. For example, higher attaining children speak confidently about the 'Friendship bracelets' they made after learning about the Hindu Festival, Raksha Bandham.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults work hard at developing the children's skills in this area, and teaching is good.
- The children respond positively to lessons.
- Listening skills are not consistently promoted in both classes

Commentary

36. Most children are on course to attain the expected levels by the end of their time in Reception. A significant number are likely to exceed these levels. Children achieve well and adults keep clear records of how each child is doing. The good teaching is characterised by a good understanding of the needs of young children and well-organised sessions in which children work at interesting activities that motivate them. A minor weakness in teaching is that not all adults promote listening skills effectively. This then results in children shouting out during some class discussions, which makes it difficult for others to concentrate. However, when adults expect the children to listen, they listen attentively and respond appropriately. The children have many opportunities to develop speaking skills and many speak confidently. In one class, one five year old boy was very excited about taking the register to the office because he wanted to say 'Good Morning' to the secretary.

37. There are satisfactory opportunities for children to begin to develop their knowledge of initial sounds as they play sound games and learn to sing songs that emphasise the sequence of the alphabet. Children of all abilities were seen attempting to identify initial sounds in words. The love of books is promoted well, which results in all children handling books carefully and enjoying reading activities. Children show great interest in the illustrations and most are aware of the difference between the text and the pictures. Many children tell the story by looking at the pictures, and higher attaining children begin to recognise a few familiar words. They begin to learn to read the names of the characters in their reading scheme, at school and at home. Many children identify and read their own names, but lower attaining children need adult help to do this.

38. The children are becoming confident writers as they develop early writing skills. Children of all abilities are keen to write their name and use writing as a means of recording. Higher attaining children write confidently with clearly formed letters. One girl, aged four, wrote her name with confidence and said 'I write with my left hand'.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and there is a wide variety of activities to support learning.
- The children enjoy developing number skills.
- Teaching assistants and volunteer helpers are used well to support learning.
- Sometimes, adults miss opportunities to promote basic number formation.

Commentary

39. Teaching and learning are good. All adults give the children many opportunities to develop mathematical skills. They do this by asking clear questions, and promote learning by singing number rhymes. They use a sound range of resources to promote mathematical development, and work through activities that involve counting and writing numbers. The children enjoy the many

experiences they are given to develop basic number skills. Children were seen confidently identifying the number three and then drawing three trees, but adults sometimes miss opportunities that would allow children to learn how to write numbers correctly. Mathematical concepts are reinforced in many ways. Children enthusiastically and confidently sing number songs such as 'Five Green Speckled Frogs' as they reinforce the idea of counting forwards and backward from 0 to 5 and, during discussion, begin to learn basic mathematical vocabulary such as 'more than' and 'less than'. Adults interact well within the ability groups in which the children work, and give them many opportunities to articulate their thinking, thus developing their mathematical understanding. For example, whilst working with a small group, a volunteer helper was seen questioning the children well as they worked together filling containers with water. As a result, most children developed a good understanding of the idea of 'empty' and 'full'. Children achieve well and most are likely to at least reach the expected levels by the end of their time in Reception.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, notably where children are being helped to develop basic computer awareness and early ICT skills.
- The children respond positively to activities, in particular when they use the computers.

Commentary

40. Teaching is good and, although not all strands of this wide area were seen, planning indicates that all are systematically covered. The teaching of skills needed to develop computer skills is particularly good. The children achieve well as they begin to name basic parts of the computer such as 'keyboard' and 'mouse'. There are many planned opportunities to develop these skills, for example when the children used the mouse confidently to move the cursor around the screen as they worked through programs such as 'Tizzy's Toy Box'. Pupils of all abilities were seen developing their idea of the sequence of the alphabet and learning how to print out an alphabet sheet. One articulate boy spoke clearly as he correctly recalled the simple printing procedure he had been taught. Construction toys are regularly used to build models, when children work together in small groups or choose to work alone. Most children confidently join construction pieces together to build and balance.

41. Previous work shows that the children select resources with a purpose in mind, for example as they made clocks with simple winding mechanisms. Discussions with children indicate that they are beginning to develop a basic idea of the past and present as they talk about their grandparents and themselves, and show a satisfactory understanding of 'older' and 'younger'. Most children have some idea of their local area, and higher attaining children correctly and confidently recall their address. A few children name Telford as their nearest town. Discussions with children and a scrutiny of past work show that children are achieving the expected levels for their ages. A few are likely to exceed these levels, in particular in the development of ICT skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and classes are well managed.
- The children respond well to lessons that involve physical development.
- Activities are supported well by teaching assistants.
- There are too few resources for children to develop physically in the secure outdoor area.

Commentary

42. Teaching is good in this area, and there are regular opportunities in the hall for physical development. One lesson was seen, and here the teaching was good. All children changed quickly and those who needed help confidently asked for support. Adults interacted with them well as the children showed a sound awareness of space, learning to balance on different parts of their body. Learning was good because instructions were clear and children were expected to listen. All children responded positively to the teacher's high expectations and behaved well.

43. Most children handle scissors, paintbrushes and pencils with sound control. All children play imaginatively and confidently with construction toys and have opportunities to use soft materials such as coloured dough to make models like 'pink lollipops'. Children achieve well in this area and most children are at least on course to reach the expected levels.

44. The co-ordinator has identified as a weakness in provision the lack of planned opportunities for outdoor play and the need to develop resources. For example, although there are climbing facilities in the secure outdoor area, there are no wheeled vehicles for children to use.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good because teaching assistants and volunteer helpers support the teachers well. This enables all children to succeed.
- The attitudes of the children are positive.
- This area reinforces aspects of personal and social development well.

Commentary

45. Pupils achieve well because teaching is consistently good. There are many examples of support staff being used effectively to promote learning. One volunteer helper supported a group of children well, as they reinforced and developed their understanding of initial sounds in words. Questioning provoked the children into thinking carefully when they were asked what the initial letter was as they cut out items from a magazine. In addition there was good reference to the need to use left-handed scissors 'if you write with your left hand'. In another group, a teaching assistant gave good support and guidance to a group of children who were making name collages. Initial letter sounds were aired as they worked amicably together. Another adult volunteer gave clear guidance on sitting and listening attentively as she worked with a small group of children. Children enthusiastically develop a repertoire of songs, They listened to a tape and sang songs such as 'Mary, Mary'; all listened well, and most joined in confidently. All activities have satisfactory resources and are generally well organised. Creative development links well with personal and social development and mathematical development. The children used paint to make leaves from

well-controlled handprints. These were then added to their 'Friendship Tree'. Previous work shows that the children are introduced to the work of famous artists such as L. S. Lowry and use paint satisfactorily to paint pictures of things they have seen, such as 'Waterfalls'. Good quality displays enliven classrooms. The majority of children express their own ideas and communicate their feelings satisfactorily as they play well together in the 'Home Corner'. Most of the children are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of Reception, with a significant number on course to exceed these levels.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to their work.
- Teaching assistants provide good quality support that enables lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs to make the same progress as all other members of the class.
- The literacy hour is inconsistently interpreted.
- Not all pupils have individual targets for improvement.
- There is a lack of tracking procedures to monitor pupils' progress.

Commentary

46. When pupils join the school, attainment in English is average. They then go on to make good progress in the subject and achieve above average standards by the time they are seven. This is evident from the scrutiny of pupils' English work and the results of the most recent national assessment tasks. The progress pupils make, when considered in conjunction with the levels of challenge they meet in classes, indicates that achievement in English is good. Although the number of pupils who achieved higher grades in reading skills and in standards of writing declined slightly between 2002 and 2003, standards overall have improved since the last inspection.

47. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants. This enables them to make the same progress as all other pupils.

48. Pupils are good listeners and pay attention to both teachers and other members of the class. Regular chances are given for pupils to talk about the activities in which they are involved. A video link with the local junior school is a useful tool and has helped to promote speaking and listening skills. The majority of pupils have good speaking and listening skills by the time they are seven, though a number of quieter and less confident pupils still have problems when speaking in anything approaching a formal situation.

49. Skills of word building, and an understanding of the link between letters and their sounds, are taught well. There are well focused reading activities in groups, with the guidance of an adult, and these enable pupils to make good progress over time. Most pupils have a good understanding of factual books and are able to retrieve information effectively. Consequently, pupils are good readers by the time they are seven, and a significant number of higher attaining pupils read with clarity, confidence and real expression. Pupils are given the chance to read a good range of books, including both poetry and stories. Although pupils read a satisfactory range of factual books, there are not enough opportunities to explore how information can be conveyed in different forms, for example, through the reading of newspapers and magazines, advertisements, pamphlets and brochures.

50. Pupils make good progress in the basic skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar and use them in a good range of writing activities throughout Years 1 and 2. Pupils write creative, descriptive and instructional pieces. They write their own poetry, produce book reviews and write simple formal and informal letters. Written work is well planned, with clear guidance to support lower attaining pupils in the construction of their work. Handwriting and presentation are good overall, with chances for pupils to word-process their work. Occasional opportunities are given for pupils to use re-drafting skills to improve work, though this is an area for development. As a result of the good provision,

writing standards at seven are good, and a number of higher attaining pupils produce good quality written work of an extended length with few or no mistakes.

51. The overall quality of teaching in English is good, and some very good teaching was observed during the period of the inspection. Lessons are well planned, and teachers generally ensure that work matches the needs and abilities of pupils. Occasions were observed, however, where teachers could have had higher expectations of pupils, and where the most capable pupils could have been challenged further. The school has responded well to the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, though there are some inconsistencies in its application within the literacy hour. Teachers do not always share the learning objectives for the lesson with pupils, with the result that some pupils are not sure about what they will learn or the skills they will use and develop in the lesson. Teaching assistants have a good range of skills and make a positive contribution to pupils' progress in English. Teachers work well together in planning good lessons for pupils in parallel classes.

52. There is a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, though documentation for the subject needs to be updated. The school has introduced a good range of assessment procedures to record how well pupils do in their reading and written work. This information, however, is not used to provide all pupils with individual targets for improvement and to monitor and track pupils' progress over time. Following the retirement of a member of staff at the end of the previous term, the school currently lacks a co-ordinator for English. This inhibits the school's ability to monitor the subject and to plan for improvement. Because of this, leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. There are no specific strategies for the development of literacy across the curriculum, but some good examples of written work can be observed in other subjects. These include history, geography and religious education.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards are above average.
- Other areas of the curriculum are used well to support numeracy.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Effective leadership has created a good team who work well together.
- Teachers do not always set and share clear learning objectives to focus and guide pupils.
- Assessment is not always used effectively to set targets for improvement.
- Time is not always used effectively.

Commentary

54. Results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests show that Year 2 pupils attained standards above the national average. Evidence gained during the inspection supports this, and even at this early stage of the year pupils in Year 2 are attaining a level higher than would be expected. Pupils achieve well, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress through the school. All areas of mathematics are effectively covered and pupils are given good opportunities to investigate and find things out for themselves. The subject co-ordinator is keen to develop further their problem-solving skills.

55. The quality of teaching is good, and this was evident from the teaching observed and from the quality of work consistently produced during the past year. Relationships are very good and staff

constantly encourage pupils, who respond well and enjoy their lessons. Lessons follow the guidance of the National Numeracy Strategy, and pupils are encouraged not just to get things right but to understand number by thinking about strategies that work. This is important for the future development of pupils' skills. Teachers generally manage behaviour well and know how to keep pupils well motivated, for example by keeping all pupils engaged through effective questioning and targeting specific questions at individual pupils. This also helps teachers to assess pupils' understanding and progress. What teachers do not consistently do is have clear and specific learning objectives and share them with pupils. As a result, lessons do not always have a clear focus and pupils do not always know what they are expected to learn. The whole class sessions at the end of lessons are not always effective because teachers and pupils are not able to review the lesson's aims, and assess how well they have been met. A Year 2 lesson was one of the few observed where there were such clear objectives shared with pupils, and all pupils spoken to were able to explain clearly what they were doing and why, and how well they felt they had understood.

56. Teachers generally maintain a brisk pace, which keeps pupils engaged. However, some lessons are too long, and this results in time being wasted. One example was a good Year 1 lesson where the pace of the whole class session was brisk and the work appropriate, but the lesson went on too long and little was achieved in the final ten minutes. Work is consistently marked and teachers monitor pupils' progress, as well as the results of National Curriculum tests and other assessments. However, the information gained is not used effectively enough to set group or individual targets and so give pupils specific ways to improve. This, and the lack of focused objectives for learning, means that some pupils, particularly the most capable, are not consistently challenged.

57. The subject is well led, with an experienced co-ordinator who leads a strong team of able staff who work well together. Management is satisfactory. Although the coordinator monitors planning and pupils' work, there have been too few opportunities to monitor the teaching and to ensure that good practice is both followed and shared. Resources are good and are used well, and pupils' work is attractively displayed through the school. Teaching assistants give good support and this is a factor in the good progress of all pupils. The above average standards found at the last inspection have been maintained.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. The Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well, and number is effectively supported in other areas of the curriculum such as art and design, geography, science, ICT, and design and technology. A good example of this was seen in the display work of Year 1 with the title 'making the best mops'. Mathematical skills, such as data handling and computation, were effectively linked with scientific investigation, the use of computers, and the skills of art and design and of design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school places a high emphasis on science which involves pupils in investigation and experiment.
- Learning in science is supported effectively by work in other subjects.
- Some lessons are too long and lack pace.
- Assessment procedures are only now being set up.

Commentary

59. Teachers' assessments in 2002 show that standards in science at the end of Year 2 were then about average, with more pupils than nationally attaining the higher Level 3. However, when compared with similar schools, the proportion of pupils gaining at least the expected Level 2 was below average, whilst the proportion gaining the higher Level 3 was also below average. There are no national comparisons yet for the 2003 assessments, but standards then were not significantly different. An analysis of work completed by pupils confirms a view of standards that are in line with expectations, and this indicates, together with evidence from lessons, that pupils, including those with a special educational need, achieve satisfactorily in science. However, there is little difference between the work completed by different pupils. Only one lesson could be observed, in Year 1, and in this lesson the planned tasks for different groups were not varied. This lack of variation is confirmed in the analysis of completed work over the last year and means that the most capable pupils are not always challenged enough and consequently achieve only satisfactorily. Some pupils commented that they found science lessons boring and that they spent too much time 'sitting on the carpet'. The observation of only one lesson is insufficient to confirm their view, but timetabled science lessons are long, and time was not well managed in the lesson seen.

60. Teaching and learning in science are satisfactory overall. The analysis of completed work shows that all areas of the subjects are appropriately covered, and that pupils make satisfactory progress. In addition, teachers seize opportunities in other lessons to reinforce scientific points. For example, in a physical education lesson, for Year 2, the teacher made good links with work on forces as pupils threw bean bags or rolled balls with 'just the right amount of force'. A Year 2 history lesson about transport before the development of the wheel also reinforced work on forces. Pupils considered how stones may have been moved to Stonehenge, and tried moving bricks over a range of surfaces themselves. Effective questioning is a feature of teaching, although it is not always closely matched to the needs of individual pupils.. In the science lesson observed, the teacher and other adults engaged pupils effectively and made good use of questioning. There was no evidence in the work analysis, or in the lesson observed, of any formal assessment being carried out or used in planning.

61. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management for the subject. She has overseen the introduction of a new scheme of work which emphasises investigational and experimental science, and the positive effects of this are evident in planning and pupils' work. However, there are no formal methods of assessment in science, so teachers do not know with any precision how well pupils are doing. This affects their ability to plan tasks to suit all pupils: in particular, the most capable are typically not challenged enough. The least capable, and those with special educational needs, receive support of good quality from teaching assistants and other adults. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to check the quality of teaching and learning, and her ability to support and advise colleagues is therefore hindered. This is one factor in the lack of significant improvement between 2002 and 2003. At the time of the last inspection, there was no scheme of work in science. This has been effectively addressed, with the curriculum further enhanced through the medium of other subjects. The subject has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The well-appointed suite is used to good effect for teaching ICT and its application to other subjects.
- The enthusiastic co-ordinator is improving provision and the confidence of staff .
- Assessment procedures are not securely in place or used effectively.
- Work in the subject is not checked or evaluated by the co-ordinator.

Commentary

62. A scrutiny of completed work and observation of lessons show that pupils in Year 2 are reaching standards in line with what would be expected at this time. Pupils, including those with a special educational need, achieve satisfactorily. Only one lesson directly aimed at ICT was observed, together with a lesson in which ICT was used to support the teaching of mathematics, so no secure judgements about teaching overall can be made. The teaching was good in the ICT lesson, with Year 1, which followed a theme from literacy. Pupils learned that whilst computer simulations are similar to the real work there are also differences, a point well demonstrated by the teacher. Later, pupils experimented with different computer simulations as they enjoyed discovering how to move and place objects on the screen. However, this activity lacked the clear focus of the earlier activity because pupils had not been directed to discover, for example, processes that can be carried out in a simulation but not with real objects. A well constructed curriculum, based on government guidelines and amended to fit the school's themes, ensures that all pupils experience all areas of the subject appropriately. Completed work confirms that pupils cover a wide range of skills.

63. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and is offering good leadership. She has a clear vision of how she expects the subject to develop further and is a good role model for both staff and pupils in her confident use of technology. Although the ICT suite holds only ten computers, it is adequate for the teaching of the skills of the subject. Its video link with the local junior school has been used well to promote both ICT skills and those of speaking and listening. However, there are no consistent methods of assessing the subject and the results of informal assessment do not influence planning enough for individuals. The co-ordinator's monitoring role is unsatisfactory as she has not had any opportunity to carry out direct monitoring of teaching and learning to better inform her future plans. Overall, the subject has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. ICT is used well to support learning across the curriculum. The suite of computers is rigorously timetabled so that all classes have the opportunity to use ICT to support other subjects, typically English, mathematics and science, as well as having lessons devoted to the understanding and skills of ICT. Examples of this access were seen in folders of completed work in which, for example, pupils had word-processed poetry, drawn trees, and produced pie charts. One mathematics lesson observed took place in the computer suite, where relevant software was used to reinforce pupils' understanding of number bonds.

HUMANITIES

One lesson in each of geography, history and religious education was observed. Whilst religious education was inspected in detail, geography and history were not. Pupils make satisfactory progress in both geography and history, attain standards in line with expectations and achieve satisfactorily. Teaching in both subjects is satisfactory. There are no assessment procedures in either geography or history.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There is good use of resources to promote pupils' learning.
- Links with other subjects are good.
- There are no assessment procedures.

Commentary

65. Pupils make satisfactory progress and, in Year 2, they are attaining standards in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This represents satisfactory achievement when considered in the light of the challenge pupils experience and the progress they make. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make the same progress as all other pupils. Pupils in Year 1 could be seen to be developing a satisfactory understanding of what it means to 'belong', for instance to a family or school. It is intended that this issue will be extended at a later date, to look at what it means to belong to a particular faith or religious group. Pupils consider the life and stories about Jesus, and reflect on the places of worship, festivals and celebrations of the Christian, Jewish and Islamic faiths. Assemblies make a positive contribution to pupils' religious education, with issues in assemblies often being followed up in religious education lessons.

66. It is not possible to make a secure judgment on the overall quality of teaching on the evidence of a single lesson. The lesson seen, however, was well planned and organised, with the teacher using a range of resources to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. There are good links with other areas of the curriculum, but this sometimes means that pupils do not have enough chances to develop discrete skills and to engage in individual research and exploration. The curriculum is enhanced by opportunities to visit places of interest. For example, pupils have visited the local church, and have been visited by leaders of different faiths, including the local vicar and a rabbi.

67. Teachers in the parallel classes work well together in planning individual lessons. There is an effective scheme of work, but no assessment procedures. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching as yet.

68. Standards in religious education have been maintained since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Two lessons were observed in art and design and in physical education, and one in music. No lessons could be observed in design and technology. In design and technology, pupils' completed work shows that standards are good, and that pupils achieve well and make good progress. In music, provision is good in singing, but no secure judgements could be made about overall standards, achievement, or teaching. Pupils attain the expected levels in physical education and achieve satisfactorily because of satisfactory teaching. There are no assessment procedures in any of the subjects.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because teaching is good and sometimes very good.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Pupils have enthusiastic attitudes to the subject and behave maturely in lessons. They have many opportunities to use in other subjects the skills they learn in art and design.
- Art and design resources are very good.
- There are no assessment procedures.

Commentary

69. Standards are above those expected for pupils in Year 2. The majority of pupils make good progress as they move through the school. This high standard in art and design has been maintained since the previous inspection. Teaching is good and sometimes very good. The main features associated with the very good teaching are lessons that are organised very well, with very good use of resources.. Everyone understands the teacher's instructions. In addition, support staff are used to good effect in helping pupils to learn. Pupils' attitudes are generally enthusiastic and they behave well, and this is a factor in their good achievement. Pupils recall accurately what they have done in previous art lessons, and show obvious enjoyment. They work well together, sharing equipment and discussing the tasks they are working on. The subject promotes social skills well..

70. In Year 1, pupils develop a good understanding of painting, printing and observational drawing. They carefully and accurately use coloured chalks, pastels and paints, showing good control to produce well proportioned drawings of flowers. History is linked to art and design as the pupils are introduced to portraits such as 'The Postman Roulin' painted by Vincent Van Gogh in Arles in 1889. The pupils' own portraits are detailed and show that they have looked at their subjects carefully. Current work enhances pupils' cultural development as they study African art and develop a sound idea of three-dimensional artwork when making masks. Pupils in Year 2 have worked on the idea of 'collage' after looking at differently shaped bottles. They used fabrics effectively to give texture to their artwork. A range of materials was used adventurously to create a 'collage tree'. The subject was then cleverly linked with English as pupils wrote poems about trees after looking at pictures of them. Pupils have many opportunities to use their confident art skills in other subjects. ICT skills were reinforced and developed as pupils were given the opportunity to draw trees on the computers, using an art program.

71. The co-ordinator manages the subject well, supporting colleagues and pupils where necessary. Resources are very good and used well to develop pupils' understanding. Throughout the school, art displays create an attractive visual environment and clearly demonstrate the good progress made. The main weakness in the subject is the lack of assessment procedures. No one has a clear picture of how individuals are doing

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

72. Only one short lesson could be observed. This formed part of an effective session on healthy eating, as pupils discussed their understanding of a healthy diet. The school makes appropriate provision for this area through timetabled lessons which give pupils an opportunity to air concerns as well as learn some of the elements of being a good citizen.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

