

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HORTON CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chipping Sodbury, Bristol

LEA area: South Gloucester

Unique reference number: 109262

Headteacher: Mrs E Hayball

Lead inspector: Lynne Read

Dates of inspection: 15 – 16 September 2003

Inspection number: 256510

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 aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	34
School address:	Horton Chipping Sodbury Bristol
Postcode:	BS37 6QP
Telephone number:	01454 318834
Fax number:	01454 318834
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Angela Peacock
Date of previous inspection:	8 June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Horton CE Primary School is situated in a village and many pupils travel considerable distances to attend. Socio-economic circumstances vary widely but, on balance, they are around average. With 34 pupils on roll, Horton is much smaller than most primary schools. Children entering the reception class have had a range of learning experiences that are vastly different from year to year. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about their overall level of prior learning. The proportion of pupils on the school's list of special educational needs (26 per cent) is above average. Some year groups have a high percentage of these pupils while others have none. Pupils on the list have moderate learning, physical or behavioural difficulties. Three per cent of the school population has a statement of special educational need and this is above the national average. A high proportion of pupils arrive at Horton part-way through their education; many of them have experienced problems in their previous schools. There are many more girls than boys in Years 3 to 6, with a more usual gender balance in the reception and infant class. Most pupils are of a British, white heritage. Other backgrounds include non-British white and white-Caribbean and all the pupils speak English as their first language. Italian is taught as a foreign language in Years 1 to 6. The school has achieved the Sports Active Mark and Investors in People awards and is working towards the Healthy Schools award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21199	Lynne Read	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Foundation stage Special educational needs English Art and design Geography History Music
31758	Edward Tipper	Lay inspector	
22482	Bruce Potter	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Physical education

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>8</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>11</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>31</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Horton is a good school where pupils achieve well.** Teaching is **good** for the reception children and for those pupils in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is **satisfactory**. Leadership and management are **good** overall. Provision for the reception children is **good**. Pupils with special educational needs are **well supported** and have access to all the activities that the school has to offer. The school provides **good** value for money.

The school's main strengths are:

- Achievement is good in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils' attainment is above expectations in Year 6 for information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, music and physical education.
- Teaching is good overall and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.
- There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development and, as a result, pupils have good attitudes to learning, they behave well and there are good relationships.
- The curriculum is broad and is enriched by some innovative approaches.
- Pupils are very well cared for.
- The school is well led and managed.

There are two areas for development:

- The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 varies from teacher to teacher and in different subjects and this has a direct impact on the rate of pupils' learning which varies from very good to unsatisfactory.
- The systems for setting learning targets in science are not as clear and concise as those for English and mathematics. They are not always used to plan harder work, as they are in English and mathematics, for those pupils in Years 1 and 2 who are capable of higher attainment.

There have been **good improvements** at the school since the last inspection. The key issues have been addressed successfully and improvements to the provision of ICT are **very good**.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

On the basis of records and work seen, achievement is judged as good for children in the reception group and children are likely to attain the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of the year. In language, mathematical understanding and personal development, this year's group are likely to exceed expectations. **In Years 1 to 6 achievement in English, mathematics and science is good.** There have been some good improvements over the last year in writing, following the focused action that the school took. Records show some exceptional gains in learning for pupils who have transferred from other schools. Progress in the lessons seen was good in Years 3 to 6 but varied between very good and unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Attainment in ICT, art and design, music and physical education in Year 6 is **above** that normally expected.

*The table below is not a reliable indicator of trends because year groups are small and there are high percentages of pupils with special educational needs in some years. Reference should be made to the inspection findings above that relate to pupils' actual achievement.*

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	E	E*	E*
Mathematics	A	C	E	E
Science	A*	E	E*	E*

*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 since fewer than 80% of the pupils attended the school in Year 2 and no reliable data about prior performance is available.*

The school pays good attention to promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and, because of this, pupils' personal development is good. They have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Pupils who have behavioural or emotional difficulties are enabled to access all lessons through established routines, intervention strategies and good adult support. Family holidays taken in term time have resulted in a drop in attendance rates, though these remain satisfactory at present. Pupils are punctual.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.** Teaching in the reception class and in Years 3 to 6 is good and pupils learn well. A major strength is the setting of challenging targets for learning. This underpins the good progress seen. In Years 1 and 2 there are strengths and weaknesses in teaching but it is judged as **satisfactory** overall. There are subsequent variations in pupils' learning and the higher attaining pupils are not always challenged to the full in science. The experienced teaching assistants are well briefed. They make a valuable contribution to learning.

The school provides a **good, broad curriculum** that is enhanced by specialist teaching, by very good links with parents, other schools and the community and through visits and visiting speakers. Pupils benefit from a wide range of study that includes Italian lessons, specialist ICT teaching, participation in local events, sporting and music festivals, improved facilities for physical education and extended opportunities for creative development. There is a good range of activities out of school time that further enriches pupils' experiences. Care, support and guidance for pupils are **very good**. The partnership with parents, the local community and other education providers is **very good**.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management at the school is **good** overall. The headteacher drives the school forward, identifying potential barriers to learning and overcoming them. Together with the governors and subject managers, she strives for high achievement and school development planning reflects this effectively. The inspection took place in the third week of the new school year and the planned programme for appraising teachers' performance had not started. This explains why the variations in teaching had not been tackled. Governors have a good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their practical help and support are highly regarded and valued by the headteacher and her staff. **Governance is good.**

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have **great confidence** in the school. In returned questionnaires and at the meeting they particularly praised the quality of teaching, high expectations and the good progress that their children make. They value the attention given to pupils' personal development and the fact that there is no harassment or bullying at school. Parents commend the range of activities outside of lessons. Pupils make a **good** contribution to the running of the school through the work of the school council. They express **very positive** views of school life and say that they feel safe.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- to eliminate the variations in teaching seen in Years 1 and 2 so that all lessons match the higher standards seen in the class and to ensure that all groups of pupils, including those who are capable of higher attainment, are well challenged.
- to improve the clarity of the target setting procedures for science using the easily accessible format seen in English and mathematics and to ensure that the information is used in all lesson plans to include enough challenge for the higher attaining pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Achievement in the reception class is **good** in all the areas of learning. In Years 3 to 6 achievement in English, mathematics and science for previous years is **good** and indicators from lesson observations show that it is likely to be maintained this year. For four out of the other seven subjects taught, attainment is above expectations in Year 6. In Years 1 and 2 achievement for previous years is **good** but lesson observations for the current group show variations in progress between subjects and in lessons taken by different teachers.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in the reception class and are on line to exceed the nationally expected goals in three out of the six areas of learning and to match expectations in the remaining three.
- For English and mathematics, achievement is good in Years 1 to 6. In science it is good in Years 3 to 6.
- Throughout school, pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT), physical education, art and design and music.
- The school's detailed analysis shows that there is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls or in pupils from different ethnic groups.
- For the present group of Years 1 and 2 pupils, the rate of learning is variable and is likely to have an adverse effect on future achievement if not corrected.
- In Years 1 and 2 pupils who are capable of higher attainment do not always work to capacity in science.

#### **Commentary**

1. There are small year group numbers, a high incidence of pupils with special educational needs in some years and high numbers of pupils leaving and entering the school. As a result, accurate comparisons of standards against national or similar school results are not statistically reliable. Judgements on achievement were made by looking at completed work over time, scrutinising the school's detailed records of each individual's progress and by observing lessons and through discussions. Pupils enter school at many different points between reception class and Year 6. Several pupils have transferred to Horton because they have been unable to settle in their previous schools. Those who enter at the start of the reception year have vastly different experiences of pre-school learning. Some children are above average at that stage while others require much support. The balance of higher and lower attaining children varies from year to year. In view of these facts an overall judgement on pupils' prior learning when they enter school would be unreliable. The school copes well with this situation. A file is opened for each child or pupil when they enter school, containing relevant information about their learning and attainment. This is then used to set targets and plan work. It is reviewed at regular intervals as the pupil settles in and staff get to know his or her capabilities. There is a good emphasis on tracking personal as well as academic progress. The records show good gains in learning overall and quite exceptional gains for some children who have transferred from other schools.
2. Achievement over time at the school is judged as good overall. Achievement in writing and mathematics has improved since the time of the last inspection; in speaking and listening and reading it has been sustained at the good level reported in 1998. In 2003 the Year 6 group did well in their tests, considering that 60 per cent of the pupils had special educational needs and 70 per cent had arrived part way through their education. They exceeded their targets set for attainment at the expected Level 4. There was a pleasing improvement in the numbers of pupils attaining the higher level 5 in science which was equal to that in mathematics.

3. Results for Year 2 in the 2003 tests reflected the fact that there were no pupils with special educational needs in the group and all attained the expected Level 2 in all subjects. There were some variations, however, in the numbers attaining at the higher level 3 in the different subjects; 75 per cent did so in reading, 50 per cent in mathematics and 25 per cent in each of writing and science. A similar pattern was seen in the previous year with fewer pupils attaining the higher level in science and writing than in mathematics and reading. In writing the very focused target setting and good teaching are leading to more pupils working at the higher level and this was evident in a very good lesson observed and by looking at pupils' books. In science, however, evidence from the scrutiny of books and the lesson seen, shows that those pupils capable of higher attainment are not consistently challenged by harder work. The subject manager has established some thorough assessment and target setting procedures but these are separate from the records for English and mathematics. When planning work, teachers have to consult two different sets of material. Since these three subjects represent the 'core' of the curriculum, it would be more efficient to have a consistent format for ease of reference and to ensure that the higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 are consistently set work at the higher levels.
4. In lessons seen, progress in the reception class is good and the present group of children are on track to exceed the nationally expected attainment in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical understanding. There was little evidence gathered relating to creative and physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world because the children were attending part-time at the start of the school year. Evidence from the pupils who have just moved into Year 1 shows that they gained a solid grounding in the three areas during their time in the reception class. The children make good progress because their work is planned to build carefully on prior learning, lessons follow the recommended guidelines and they have good support in the classroom.
5. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is good. Pupils read fluently and some good research work was seen in pupils' books. They write in different styles, paying good attention to the organisation and purpose of the work. In mathematics, pupils compute accurately and by Year 6 most have a sound understanding of shape, measures and data. Progress varies in Years 1 and 2. In an English lesson learning was very good, in mathematics it was satisfactory and in one science lesson it was unsatisfactory. The variation is directly related to differences in the style of teaching, classroom management and teacher expectations. If not rectified quickly it is likely to have a negative effect on future achievement for the age group.
6. Throughout school, pupils progress very well in ICT. This is due to the work of the specialist teacher for ICT, the very good leadership of the subject, the improved facilities in the computer suite and focused training for all staff. Learning is also very effectively supported by the provision of out-of-school clubs for ICT and the commitment of a very knowledgeable teaching assistant. The school places a good emphasis on the creative subjects of art and music and on physical education. As a result, pupils make good progress and attainment is above expectations. These subjects offer an opportunity to excel for those pupils who experience difficulty with the more academic studies. The good quality of provision illustrates the school's commitment to providing a rounded education in which every pupil can find success. Pupils particularly enjoy their Italian lessons and in Year 6, are confident in understanding short passages of familiar language, in speaking short phrases and reading and writing familiar words. Achievement in history and geography is satisfactory and standards match expectations by Year 6. In the two days of the inspection, it was not possible to judge achievement in design and technology.
7. It is not possible to comment on trends of results over time since year group numbers are so small. The school tracks the progress of individuals in terms of the attainment points gained. These records show that over the years, pupils continue to make good gains in relation to their prior learning and abilities. There is no marked difference in the progress of boys and girls; the school is mindful of the need to incorporate topics and material that will interest both

genders. The individual tracking, target setting and review system ensures that pupils of all ethnic backgrounds and those who have special educational needs do equally well.

8. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were happy with their children's progress and were especially pleased with the good standards in ICT. In the returned questionnaires, all expressed the view that their child was making good progress.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' behaviour is **good** and they demonstrate **good** attitudes to their work and towards others in the school. There is **good** provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their attendance is **satisfactory** and punctuality is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have good, positive attitudes to learning that help them to make good progress at school.
- Pupils are polite and behave well.
- The school offers its pupils a range of opportunities to enable them to develop their self-confidence and form constructive relationships with other pupils and adults.
- The school enables pupils to develop a wide range of social skills, prepares them well for life in a culturally diverse society and instils in them a strong moral code.
- Attendance is line with other schools, but has declined since the time of the last inspection.

### **Commentary**

9. The children in the reception group have very good attitudes to school; their behaviour is very good and they are likely to exceed the expected learning goals in personal and social education by the end of the year. They are eager to learn and, although it is very early in the school year, they maintain very good levels of concentration.
10. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 show a keen interest in their lessons and the range of extra-curricular activities. They work and play well with each other, develop good relationships with adults in the school and are polite and courteous to visitors. Overall, they behave themselves well in the playground, assemblies and at lunch-time. These judgements are made in light of the fact that some pupils have special behavioural and emotional needs and they sometimes find it difficult to cope with the conventions of the classroom. Individual programmes and coping strategies are in place that minimise any possible disruption and these help to ensure that all pupils have equal access to lessons. There have been no exclusions in the last year and this is further evidence of the success of the school's approach. The overall positive nature of pupils' attitudes and behaviour creates an environment where learning can flourish.
11. The school council allows elected pupils from each year group to exercise responsibility in representing the views of their colleagues. In a council meeting, they were seen to do this do this very confidently and came up with some very worthwhile suggestions. In addition, pupils operate as book and milk monitors and the 'buddy' system allows older ones to support their younger friends. Some pupils are also involved in the production of a high quality newsletter which contains all their own work. Pupils even had the initiative to interview the inspectors for the next issue! These opportunities clearly raise pupils' self-confidence and both they and their parents are very appreciative of the school's caring and supportive ethos.
12. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Pupils are taught to show respect for other people and their possessions, as well as the wider environment, through their lessons and by the direct example of adults within the school. Meanwhile, the school's extensive links with the wider local community ensure that pupils have the advantage of meeting people from a varied range of backgrounds. They gain a good understanding of world-wide cultural traditions in subjects such as geography, history, art and music. This is

reinforced by visitors to the school such as a parent who came and talked about South Africa and another who helped the school organise a Caribbean evening. Representatives from various charities encourage pupils to think about those less fortunate than themselves. As an example, the pupils decided to raise funds for Oxfam after an illustrated talk about Angola. Displays in school include a good emphasis on different cultures and, during one whole-school act of worship, pupils demonstrated a secure knowledge of world faiths. Pupils are taught the principle of right and wrong through the constant adult reinforcement of the school code of conduct and class rules. The Christian foundation of the school promotes a strong caring attitude and a respect for other people's views, values and needs.

### Attendance

13. The slight decline in attendance is due mainly to the rise in the number of holidays taken in term-time. In response, the school has produced an informative leaflet on the importance of regular attendance. The headteacher is aware that she may need to do more to convince parents of the long-term negative effect of taking holidays during term time. Pupils arrive at school on time, well prepared to start their work.

#### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0
National data	0.5

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

### Exclusions

#### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean

#### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
32	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

14. The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching is **good** overall but there are inconsistencies in Years 1 and 2. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **effectively** promoted and results in **good** standards of personal development. There is a **broad and balanced** curriculum with a **good** emphasis on creative subjects and **very good** provision for ICT. Assessments and systems for setting learning targets are **good** for English and mathematics and **satisfactory** for science. There is a **good**, profitable partnership with parents and the community that benefits pupils' learning. Leadership and management are focused on high achievement and are **good**.

### Teaching and learning

15. The quality of teaching for the reception year group and pupils in Years 3 to 6 is **good** and pupils learn well. In Years 1 and 2 the quality of teaching varies **between very good and unsatisfactory**. This inconsistency in practice leads directly to variations in pupils' learning.

Overall, teaching for this age group is judged as **satisfactory**, reflecting the strengths and weaknesses seen. There are **good** processes in place for checking learning in English and mathematics and science. The information gathered is well used in planning lessons in English and mathematics but not always in science in Years 1 and 2.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers (including the visiting experts seen) have a good range of subject knowledge, including a sound understanding of the needs of children in the reception group. Teaching is especially good in writing, ICT, art and design, music and physical education.
- The majority of the planning is good and uses assessment information well to target the next steps in learning for individual pupils in English and mathematics.
- Teaching assistants are knowledgeable, very well briefed and very effectively deployed.
- In most lessons, teachers use a range of strategies to interest, motivate and encourage pupils.
- Pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are fully involved in all lessons and receive the support that they need.
- Homework is well used and successfully extends learning.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of planning and expectations in Years 1 and 2.
- The learning of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is variable and not always as good as it could be.
- The information about pupils' learning is not as well used to provide challenging work in science in Years 1 and 2 as it is in English and mathematics.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 17 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	10	2	1	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.*

16. Teaching in the reception class is good and, as a result, children make good progress along the expected learning programme. They are well supported by either the classteacher or teaching assistant during lessons so that their work can be tailored to their needs. Good records of progress are kept and teachers use these to plan the next steps in learning. In Years 1 and 2 teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory and the patterns of learning reflect the inconsistencies. In a very good English lesson, expectations were high, achievement was very good and the teacher intervened in the writing process to move learning forward at a very good pace. In a science lesson, however, the planning did not provide enough challenge for higher attaining pupils and some groups were not clear about what to do. Consequently, the rate of learning in this lesson was unsatisfactory. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is good. Lessons challenge the faster learners and provide good support for those who are experiencing difficulties. Progress is therefore good.

#### Some examples of good teaching and learning

Reception group	<p>The teaching assistant led a puppet play session that promoted communication skills effectively.</p> <p>The children are supported for most of the time and have lessons that contain a good amount of practical activity. In a mathematics session based on the principle of division, the children distributed their toy animals equally into the sections of the farmyard.</p> <p>There are short, oral sessions where children learn to discriminate, segment and blend sounds within words. This work is laying a solid foundation for later reading and spelling. The benefits were seen in the good skills of older pupils in Years 1 and 2.</p>
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Years 1 and 2	<p>In an English lesson, there were good interventions in the writing process where pupils were encouraged to rehearse their sentences out loud and to constantly check their spelling and punctuation.</p> <p>The teachers included short sessions such as 'brain gym' or singing to break up the longer periods in the classroom. This helped to refresh the pupils so that they could concentrate on the next task.</p> <p>In a music lesson pupils had opportunities to explore and investigate instruments and to invent their own recording methods.</p> <p>Good progress was made in a small group session organised for those needing extra help with reading and writing skills.</p>
Years 3 to 6	<p>In an imaginative dance lesson pupils combined work in physical education, music, religious education and ICT and learning was very good.</p> <p>There are focused sessions in the computer suite with the specialist teacher where learning moves forward at a very good pace.</p> <p>Creative lessons such as art and music allow everyone, regardless of any special need they may have, to engage in imaginative interpretation.</p> <p>The teaching assistant took a specially planned group session to extend reading and writing skills where very good progress was made.</p>
Years 1 to 6	<p>The headteacher has individual sessions with pupils in each year group to talk about their work and progress and to consider how they might improve further.</p>

17. Throughout school, teachers assess progress regularly and keep detailed records that they generally use to plan future work. Practice is especially good for English and mathematics. In science, the information is collated but kept separately and is not always used to inform planning in Years 1 and 2. The subject manager has already identified this as an area for development. The headteacher and subject managers observe and monitor teaching according to a programme devised at the beginning of the year. Records show that there is useful feedback to teachers and the results of monitoring are used to plan future training and support. The success of the approach is seen in the drive to improve provision in ICT. The inspection took place in the third week of the new school year when the programme had not started and this explains why the issues in Years 1 and 2 had not yet been identified. Teachers make good use of computers, both during lessons and in researching sources for their planning.
  
18. Specialist teachers provide good enrichment and added expertise for the curriculum. Pupils speak with great enthusiasm about their Italian lessons; some older pupils demonstrated their fluency with great pride. The teaching assistants bring further talents to the school and are very well briefed on their role in the classroom. They provide particularly good support for work in ICT and for maintaining the library provision. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported through their individual learning plans and additional help. Teachers and assistants are specifically deployed so that these pupils often have small group or one-to-one sessions. Strategies have been developed to cope with those pupils who have emotional or behavioural problems and procedures were seen to work well during the inspection. Gifted and talented pupils have additional challenge as appropriate. Pupils have a good amount of homework and most complete their tasks conscientiously. Teachers' marking is thorough, often refers to the individual's targets and is helpful in showing them how to improve or in congratulating their successes. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their progress in lessons and this allows them to take responsibility for their own learning.

### **The curriculum**

19. The curriculum for the reception group of children and for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is **good, broad and well balanced**. It is well supported by a **very good** range of extra-curricular activities encompassing both sport and arts. There have been **good** improvements since the last inspection.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a broad and balanced, interesting and worthwhile curriculum.
- Children in the reception group experience a good range of activities specifically planned to meet their needs and to encourage skills of investigation and exploration.
- There are very good links between subjects.
- There is good provision and support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Improvements in the provision for ICT have been very good and good in physical education.
- There is very good enrichment to the curriculum through out-of-school clubs, visits and visitors.
- Pupils have fully and equal access to all the activities that the school has to offer.
- The school makes good use of the talents of parents, governors and people within the local and church community, and has good, profitable partnerships with other education providers.
- The displays in the learning environment for the reception children do not reflect all aspects of their learning programme and studies.

## Commentary

20. The curriculum fully meets all statutory requirements and supports pupils who have special educational needs effectively. It is well organised to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes and work is planned across a two-year cycle to ensure that there is no repetition. As a result, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are promoted in a progressive way. There is a good range of expertise among staff, and some innovative approaches to ensuring a wide scope of study in this small school. There is expert, additional support for ICT and for Italian lessons. Consequently the pupils receive well-informed tuition in academic, creative, physical, aesthetic and practical subjects as well as a modern foreign language. The school places good emphasis upon personal, social, citizenship and health education and is the recipient of the Healthy Schools Award. Good improvements in the curriculum, facilities and out-of-school activities for physical education have resulted in the award of the nationally recognised Sports Active Mark. The accommodation has been developed to provide a computer suite that is an important factor in the improvements in the curriculum and learning for ICT. The reception children have to be taught at one end of the classroom that also accommodates the Years 1 and 2 pupils. There is a satisfactory selection of resources but the displays do not reflect the curriculum that these children follow or celebrate their particular achievements. There is an interesting programme of visits and visiting speakers which further enrich the curriculum and extend learning beyond the classroom. Participation in music and sports festivals allows pupils to extend their social skills and to compete and perform before an audience; thus developing confidence. Links with the community are promoted through the excellent termly magazine that pupils publish, using and extending their ICT and English skills. Links between subjects reinforce learning very well. For example, pupils listen to music and represent their feelings artistically or they employ their mathematical skills to measure accurately or make graphs in science. The headteacher has gone to great lengths to ensure that there is a good range of subject expertise among the staff and visiting teachers in this small school. The issue of limited space for physical education has been successfully addressed by securing the use of the village hall and field. Education grants have been well used to create a conservation area and better outside leisure facilities for the pupils. There have been very good improvements for resources in ICT.

### Example of outstanding practice

**The following illustrates how well the school is linking different areas of the curriculum, in this case, art and design, elements of design technology, aspects of literacy and information communication technology.**

The lesson, for Year 5 pupils, is taken by the teacher who is very well supported by a very knowledgeable teaching assistant. In a previous lesson the pupils had designed and made a hat (art and design) with the intention of making a video to give others instructions in the making of hats. Pupils prepared, in the form of a story board, directions that included script, camera angles, close ups, etc. (This operation employed various skills in the literacy curriculum). The ICT lesson observed was concerned with the making of the video. The pupils were excited and well motivated by the prospect and each had their role to play in the production. The instructional dialogue was carefully prepared and rehearsed and, with 'retakes', very effectively supported the visual presentation (speaking/literacy). Each stage of the process was filmed, punctuated by the customary calls of 'action' and 'cut'. The first take of the video was viewed on screen and pupils were able to learn a little of the process of editing. A subsequent lesson was to be concerned with retakes of the less than satisfactory sections and creating final touches, such as the titles.

The lesson was very successful because of the skills and enthusiasm of the staff and the use of skills across the curriculum. This had a significant and positive effect upon the pupils' learning. The equipment was acquired as a result of a successful grant bid by the headteacher.

### Care, guidance and support

21. The school makes **very good** provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils. It also provides them with **very good** support, advice and guidance. They are involved in the organisation of the school's day-to-day work and the ongoing development of its educational provision in an effective manner.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very successful in ensuring that each pupil develops trusting relationships with at least one adult.
- The school has taken a number of steps to promote a healthy lifestyle for its pupils.
- There are good arrangements for pupils joining the school which allow them to settle in quickly.
- Pupils benefit from good, ongoing support, advice and guidance throughout their time in the school.
- Pupils are very well cared for in a secure environment.
- The school council is proving successful as a means of enabling pupils to express their views and to shape future direction.
- Pupils evaluate their own progress successfully and are involved in setting their learning targets.

### Commentary

22. All members of staff get to know their charges individually and this ensures that pupils have someone to turn to if they have any problems or concerns. The 'buddy' system is also helpful in this regard; older pupils are paired with younger ones so they can help with problems. Parents are very appreciative of the personal support their children receive and pupils confirm these feelings.
23. The headteacher, staff and governors are very keen to ensure the pupils develop a healthy lifestyle during their time at the school. In science, pupils study the importance of healthy foods and fruit and flapjacks have been introduced into the tuck shop to encourage good habits. Pupils have access to water during their lessons so they remain refreshed and able to concentrate. A particularly interesting initiative is the 'walk to school' which happens twice a week. Pupils, most of whom normally arrive by car, meet at the village hall and proceed to school on foot, supervised by the headteacher.

24. Parents of pupils are very pleased with the support that they and their children receive on joining the school. Visits are arranged and a very detailed booklet provides all the information they need. Regular assessments are then carried out on pupils' academic and personal progress. These, along with examples of work and test results, are included in personal files which track their progress all through their life in the school.
25. The pupils work in safe and secure surroundings. The headteacher and a governor carry out an annual health and safety audit and complete a very thorough monitoring checklist. Any problems are tackled as a priority. All visits and outdoor activities are subject to an assessment of potential risk and the necessary action taken, where appropriate, to ensure safety. There is also a comprehensive system for ensuring that the local authority's child protection procedures are implemented appropriately and that all adults are aware of their responsibilities and the procedures.
26. The school council is proving a useful means of allowing pupils to express their views on how school life could be improved. The school makes good use of the local authority's 'assessment for learning' project. Pupils learn to review their work and evaluate how well they think they have done. They know their individual targets which are now kept in a handy small notebook for easy reference. These measures enable pupils to share in the education process rather than having it imposed on them.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

27. The school has developed **very good** relationships with its parents, who have great confidence in the school. Links with the local community and other schools are **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents make a very strong contribution to pupils' learning, both at school and at home.
- The school has developed extensive links with the local community which have a major influence on the personal, social and academic development of its pupils.
- The school has developed good links with other schools which are of great benefit.

### **Commentary**

28. The school has introduced several initiatives to ensure that parents have the opportunity to become involved in the learning of their children. Staff produce leaflets at the beginning of each year which outline the areas to be studied. Other material specifically concentrates on how parents can help their children with their literacy and numeracy studies. The Parents Forum, held once a term, also enables sessions to be run on academic topics as well giving parents the opportunity to discuss issues of a wider interest. Parents are welcome to assist in the life of the school and the headteacher has drawn up an audit of the skills they offer. Consequently, several assist in the school with such activities as listening to readers, running clubs and looking after the gardens. There is also a thriving 'Friends of Horton School' association which raised some £2000 last year. The combined enthusiasm of the adults in the school and the parents has meant these initiatives have a considerable impact on the standards of learning.
29. The school looks to the wider community to provide a wider range of experiences for the pupils. It does this exceptionally well and the following are just a few examples:
  - the school attends various functions, in the nearby town of Chipping Sodbury, such as the annual carnival and Christmas-tree decorating competition;
  - there are links with a local music association;
  - the school is involved with the National Trust Guardianship scheme; artists, conservation experts and historians work with the pupils;
  - pupils from Years 5 and 6 attend a residential activities weekend;
  - the many visitors include a local author, a lay preacher and environmental organisations;

- pupils attend services in the village church, whose minister is also a visitor to the school. Overall, the many links established have proved to be of considerable benefit to the academic and personal development of the pupils.

30. The school has forged strong links with its receiving secondary schools that effectively help pupils to prepare for the transition. They attend enrichment days and sporting events and Year 7 teachers visit Horton to work with pupils in Years 5 and 6 and get to know them. Specially written units of study in English and mathematics give pupils a taste of lessons at secondary school. Other links with education providers benefit the school. The headteacher attends meetings of the 'small schools cluster group' and helps organise joint projects to promote work in ICT or to provide for special educational needs pupils. Joint activities such as drama workshops provide good enhancement and would be uneconomic for one school to run on its own.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

31. Leadership and management at the school are **good** and all staff share in the drive for high achievement. **Good** management enables the school to run smoothly. Leadership is focused on self-review and strong team work and is **good** overall. The inspection took place in the third week of the new school year when the planned monitoring and evaluation programme had not begun. The monitoring of classroom performance over previous years is judged as **good**. Governors provide **good** support and fulfil their statutory duties well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership of the headteacher and subject managers is based on high aspirations.
- There is very good team work and sharing of expertise.
- Day to day practice reflects the success of the school's commitment to ensuring that all pupils have full and equal access to all parts of school life.
- There are good procedures in place for the professional development of all staff.
- Governors have a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have a long-term view of development.
- Information gathered from the school's self evaluation programme is used effectively in school improvement planning.
- Resources are managed efficiently and additional grant awards are well used to enrich provision.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Leadership***

32. The headteacher provides good leadership, driving the school forward through strong teamwork. The school successfully lives out its mission statement by striving for high achievement and providing a caring environment where all pupils, regardless of any special need they may have, are fully integrated into all activities. The headteacher is highly regarded by parents who value her hard work, approachability and commitment. There have been some very good innovations at the school. The headteacher has secured external accommodation, additional resources and the services of outside, expert teachers to enhance curriculum provision. She constantly seeks grant funding and some very good improvements to the exterior facilities have resulted from such money. Subject managers provide good leadership. In this small school, each teacher is responsible for several subjects. As an innovation for time management, the headteacher has introduced a curriculum matrix which ensures that each area is reviewed on a regular basis. As a result, managers have a good overview of teaching and learning in each of their subjects through checking pupils' work, looking at planning and classroom observations. They use their findings effectively to direct improvement planning. Two good examples of effective leadership are seen in the improvements to provision and

attainment in ICT and the recent, successful drive to improve writing. The headteacher identifies potential barriers to provision and achievement and takes action to remove them.

Below are a few examples.

Barrier identified	Action taken
There are high numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school part way through their education. A high incidence of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups make the interpretation of data very difficult.	An individual assessment, tracking and target setting system was introduced that allows teachers and governors to keep a check on each pupils' progress and the overall performance of the school.
There is no hall for physical education lessons and the school grounds are limited in size.	Use of the village hall and field is now secured and pupils use the athletics track at the local secondary school.
There was a lack of male role models for the boys.	The vicar now visits regularly, at least one male accompanies the annual residential visit, one male governor takes the football and newspaper clubs, one male governor takes collective worship or religious education lessons and another takes reading sessions.
Small staff numbers means that it is difficult to cover all areas of expertise.	Staff training programme has been introduced to meet individual and school needs. Additional experts have been sought to support work in ICT, a modern foreign language and design and technology. Teachers share experiences with those from other small schools and a beacon school to pool ideas.
There was limited funding available and the grounds were in need of development.	The headteacher sought a grant that has enabled the development of a conservation area for science, a quiet picnic garden area and new hard surfacing for recreation. Some parents were recruited who provide a valuable service in maintaining the attractive gardens.
Little contact with some parents because they live so far away from school.	A Parents' Forum is arranged termly where parents can have a say in the running of the school, express concerns and provide suggestions.
Traffic congestion around school is a potential safety hazard.	The headteacher arranged a 'walk to school' from the village hall on two days each week.

### **Management**

33. There is an effective cycle of self-evaluation at the school that includes a planned programme of classroom observations, together with a detailed analysis of data and target setting. All staff, including teaching assistants and non-teaching personnel are included in regular performance reviews where a programme of training and support needs is established. The school procedures were recently commended in the report that led to the 'Investors in People' award. The timing of the start of the programme, however, requires review to ensure that issues are picked up immediately, especially where new arrangements are in place. Support staff and teachers are deployed effectively to meet the specific needs of individual pupils and to maintain good provision for the children in the reception group. An experienced school administrator has a good deal of expertise and covers a varied range of duties to provide very good support. The accommodation and resources are used efficiently and best value is routinely sought. The reserve currently held is targeted for maintenance work and to cope with fluctuating roll numbers. Taking into account reasonable costs, the school gives good value for money.

## Financial information

### Financial information for the year April 2001 to March 2002

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	187,319	Balance from previous year	23,658
Total expenditure	181,794	Balance carried forward to the next year.	29,183
Expenditure per pupil	3,868		

*For the purposes of judging value for money, the 'reasonable costs' of the school were used rather than 'average costs'. This more accurately reflects the circumstances in which this very small school operates. In the year to March, 2002 there were 47 pupils on roll.*

## Governance

34. Governors know the staff and pupils well and have a secure view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They each support an area of the curriculum or general management and are viewed, by the headteacher, as a great asset to the school. They provide good support for learning, on school visits and in practical maintenance work to save money. Governors are fully involved in the decision making processes that lead to school improvement planning and regularly check on the success of the work covered. They believe firmly that all pupils should have full access to the curriculum and commit substantial money to this end. In turn, they keep a watchful eye on the deployment of staff and expect to see benefits in pupils' learning.

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

The quality of provision is good in all areas of learning. Planning is based on assessments of what the children have achieved and teaching sessions move learning forward at a good pace. The present children are on line to achieve the expected learning goals by the end of the year and to exceed them in some areas. Teaching is good and children are supported by either the classteacher or a teaching assistant in the mixed-age class that also includes Year 1 and 2 pupils. Records show that children who have special educational needs are identified early and have individual programmes of learning and good support from staff. There are good links with the various providers of pre-school education and a useful introduction programme. Both these factors help children to settle quickly. The quality and amount of information for parents are good and parents feel well informed. The inspection took place in the third week of the new school year. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, from a scrutiny of work done over the past year and from teachers' records and planning.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**. The children are on track to **exceed** the learning goals set for them by the end of the year because they are making **good** progress.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children work and play well together and mix confidently with older pupils, both in the class and on the playground.
- They are encouraged to be independent and care for themselves effectively.
- Children maintain attention, concentrate on their tasks and ask appropriate questions.
- Good teaching and the caring ethos of the school promote personal development well.

#### **Commentary**

35. Patient, supportive teaching ensures that children know exactly what is expected of them. There is a strong emphasis on social skills and on promoting self discipline. As a result, the children are well used to class routines, share ideas and equipment freely, take turns fairly and are polite. Children have opportunities to choose from a selection of activities during their 'golden time' which is a good use of the limited space in the classroom. All adults encourage children to help themselves and only intervene when absolutely necessary. As a result, children are confident in trying out something new.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**. Progress is **good** and children are likely to **exceed** the nationally expected targets in this area by the end of the school year.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children develop good skills in speaking and they listen attentively.
- They can identify and say sounds at the beginning and ends of words.
- They enjoy sharing a book with an adult and they re-tell the story in the correct order.
- Children are learning to form letters accurately.
- Teaching is good and the teaching assistants provide good, informed support.
- There is no dedicated reading area for this age group.

## Commentary

36. Children benefit from whole-class sessions where they listen attentively, offer their opinions confidently and join in a range of songs and rhymes. In one session with the teaching assistant, they re-told a story using puppets and engaged in role play, mimicking the language that the characters might have used. Sessions include various activities to engage and interest the children who consequently develop good habits of learning and make good progress. Children benefit from hearing the more mature language of the older pupils in whole-class discussions. In the whole-school act of worship, one child volunteered a reply that was detailed and articulate. This shows a very good level of confidence for such a young age. There is no reading or listening area dedicated to the needs of these children. The one that exists is at the other end of the classroom and is stocked primarily with books chosen for Years 1 and 2 rather than early reading material.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good** and progress is **good**. This year's children are likely to **exceed** the learning targets for mathematical understanding by the end of the year.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are developing a good grasp of mathematical language.
- They count accurately and recognise some numerals.
- Children use their mathematical skills and knowledge in a range of problem solving situations such as model making.
- Teaching is good.
- There is very little classroom display related to mathematical understanding.

## Commentary

40. The focused teaching sessions build effectively on the children's prior learning and consequently, good progress is made. In one session, the children organised their farmyard animals equally into pens, showing good application of their developing mathematical skills. Work from last year's group shows a good understanding of shape, measures, coins and number sequences. Displays in the classroom relate mostly to the work of the older pupils and there is very little inspiration or reference for children working on early mathematical ideas such as 'bigger than' or shapes in the environment.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**. As a result, children make **good** progress and are likely to achieve the learning targets expected nationally.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a wide range of topics to promote children's understanding of the world around them.
- Children are encouraged to ask questions and to investigate.
- Adults prompt children's thinking effectively rather than simply giving answers.
- There are good opportunities to learn about ICT.

## Commentary

40. Work is based around the topics covered by the older pupils in the class and, with careful planning, lessons are tailored to the needs of the younger children. There is a good emphasis on developing enquiry skills that sets a firm foundation for later work in science. Children have good access to computers and use them confidently in all areas of learning.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**. Children are likely to achieve the expected learning goals by the end of the year and make good progress.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children share in the lessons at the village hall or field and, over the year, have opportunities for dance, gymnastics and sport.
- Short, outdoor activities are planned during the day to develop specific skills.
- Children can join in the 'walk to school' that takes place on 2 days each week.
- Over the year, children have good opportunities to use a wide range of tools, equipment and materials.
- The shared play area provides a good range of opportunities to develop physical skills.
- There is no dedicated, secure outside area for this age group.

## Commentary

40. Children have secure control of their bodies and show a developing awareness of space. They develop appropriate levels of dexterity, for example, when 'painting' large letters on the playground surface. Children enjoy outdoor sessions with adults when, for example, they work on changing speed and direction. There is no enclosed outdoor area for the children and therefore outdoor sessions have to be planned when there is an adult to supervise, rather than being included in the children's choice of activities. Nevertheless, children receive satisfactory opportunities to develop their physical skills over the year.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**. Progress is **good** and is likely to lead to expected levels of attainment by the end of the reception year.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planned activities allow children to communicate their feelings and use their imagination.
- Teaching is good. Over the year they have varied opportunities to explore shape, texture, colour and form.
- Children know songs and rhymes from memory and have a good awareness of rhythm.
- They experiment with the language and actions that adults use in the role play area.
- There is no classroom display of creative work to inspire and motivate the children.

## Commentary

40. Opportunities for children to use their imagination are built into many activities, for example, children used puppets to re-tell a story, adding their own interpretation of the characters. They are eager to try out new experiences and ideas. Adults effectively stimulate the children's imagination and help them to express their individuality. Children use a selection of media such as paint, crayon, clay-type products or junk materials over the year. Evidence shows some creative pieces of work with good use of colour and texture but none are on display.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** and pupils **achieve well** from Year 1 to Year 6. Teaching is **good** and some is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in speaking and listening and in reading is good.
- Achievement in writing is much improved and is good.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and marking is of a high quality.
- Teaching assistants lead focused, successful sessions for pupils who need extra support.
- Pupils have individual targets that are based on careful assessments of work completed.
- There is good leadership for the subject.

#### Commentary

41. There are small year group numbers, a high incidence of pupils with special educational needs in some years and high numbers of pupils leaving and entering the school. As a result, accurate comparisons of standards against national or similar school results are not statistically reliable. Judgements on achievement were made by looking at completed work over time, scrutinising the school's detailed records and by observing three lessons and talking to pupils.
42. Progress and achievement over time have improved since the last inspection. This is partly due to the fact that pupils now have individual targets and know which parts of their work need improving. Teachers assess progress regularly and take action where gains fall short of expectations. There is a strong emphasis in Years 1 and 2 on teaching pupils to blend and segment letter sounds within words. This promotes good progress in reading in Years 1 and 2 and in spelling across the school. Teachers are skilled in leading discussions and ensure that all members of the class are involved. As a result, pupils speak fluently and confidently. The development of writing skills has been a focus of school improvement over the last year and has led to better progress and standards of work. The quality of handwriting and presentation generally has improved due to added time and emphasis on this area.
43. Teachers demonstrate the skills of writing effectively and provide a good model for their pupils. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are encouraged to 'have a go' using the wipe-off boards. They can then discuss and improve their work before committing it to paper. In Years 3 to 6 teachers and the teaching assistant intervene effectively in the writing process, encouraging pupils to think about the organisation and style of their work. Marking is a particularly strong feature with helpful comments that support pupils' own evaluation of their work and point out ways to improve. In Years 1 and 2 much evaluation is completed orally as pupils consider whether they have met their target for the lesson. This is a good way of encouraging younger pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Homework is well used to extend learning in the classroom and is usually completed conscientiously. Parents and governors provide valuable support for this subject by hearing readers or sharing books with pupils. Leadership is focused on constant improvement and all staff attend training where appropriate to ensure that they keep up to date with new developments. The teaching assistants have received the recommended training and run successful intervention programmes for pupils who need extra help. The good quality of action planning and leadership in this subject is illustrated by the recent improvements in writing.

## Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. English skills are well used across the curriculum. In Years 1 and 2 pupils write reports in their geography lessons, make lists in science and use specific language such as *portcullis* when labelling their drawings of a castle. In Years 3 to 6 pupils write at length when recording their work, using an appropriate non-fiction style to match the subject matter. They gather information from books and electronic sources effectively for research purposes. Speaking and listening skills are extended through collaborative projects and whole-class or group discussions. In one music lesson in Years 1 and 2 pupils negotiated which symbols they would use to record their compositions and arrived at a suitable compromise. English skills are often combined with competencies in ICT when pupils are recording work in other subjects or when producing the very good school newsletter.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** overall. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is **satisfactory** and **good** in Years 3 to 6. Achievement over past years is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, relative to their starting points.
- Pupils' books show a good range of work across the programmes of study.
- Teachers use test results well to track pupils' progress, to identify individual needs and set individual targets.
- Teachers plan their lessons well.
- There is good support from the teaching assistants, especially for those pupils who have special educational needs.
- Information communication technology is well used to support the curriculum.
- Not all lessons in Years 1 and 2 have sufficient pace and learning is sometimes satisfactory rather than good.

### Commentary

45. Achievement was judged on a scrutiny of work over the past year, information from the school's records and assessment file, and discussions with staff and pupils. Learning opportunities are enhanced for pupils in Years 3 to 6 by the present system of teaching in two groups to meet the needs of the younger and older pupils, of those capable of higher attainment and of those who have special educational needs. In this way, all have the support and challenge that they need and make good progress. By Year 6 most pupils have a secure understanding of number including decimals, fractions, ratio and proportion. There are good examples of problem solving work including measures and shape. Pupils try hard and the quantity, accuracy and range of work are all good. Towards the end of Year 6, pupils benefit from a transition project to prepare them for mathematics lessons at secondary school.
46. In Years 1 and 2 the work is planned according to pupils' prior learning but the pace of teaching and learning in the lesson seen was satisfactory rather than the good standard that was seen in other subjects such as English. Class management was not as effective and expectations of work output were lower. If this is typical of the provision and these issues are not tackled quickly, they are likely to have a negative impact on achievement for this year's pupils. Since the last inspection, good progress has been sustained in Years 3 to 6.
47. The teaching assistants provide targeted support during lessons. They work from a detailed guidance document that clearly shows the expected learning outcomes of the lesson so that they can evaluate the progress made and feed the information back to the teacher. The curriculum covers all aspects of the national numeracy guidance, with a good emphasis on

mental arithmetic. Homework is regularly set and successfully reinforces the learning in lessons.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

48. Wherever possible, pupils are called upon to apply mathematical knowledge and skills over a range of curriculum areas. This is especially apparent in subjects such as science when, for example, pupils take accurate readings. In design and technology pupils measure carefully when drawing plans or in the making process. Lessons often extend pupils' ICT skills for example, in developing spreadsheets for complex calculations or presenting information in graphs and tables.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good** overall but there is scope to improve the target setting and planning systems to ensure that the higher attaining pupils have the challenges that they need in Years 1 and 2. Overall, pupils **achieve well** in this subject relative to their starting point.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good emphasis upon teaching scientific skills such as investigation and experimentation.
- Pupils communicate their ideas and findings well using appropriate scientific language, drawings, diagrams, tables, graphs and ICT facilities.
- Teaching assistants provide good support and ensure that all pupils are involved in the lesson.
- There is good leadership for the subject.
- Target setting systems do not follow the same clear format as in English and mathematics and are kept in a separate file. (This issue has already been recognised by the subject manager as an area for development)
- Planning for lessons does not always use the information from past assessments to ensure that all pupils, especially the older or higher attaining ones, have enough challenge in Years 1 and 2.

### **Commentary**

49. Achievement is better than that reported at the time of the previous inspection. Progress in the lesson seen in Years 5 to 6 was good because teaching built on previous learning accurately. Pupils showed a good understanding of the human body and of what makes a healthy lifestyle. The lesson also supported pupils' personal education effectively. A scrutiny of work in books shows a wide coverage of the recommended programme of study for science and increased emphasis on investigative and experimental skills. The school's arrangement for teaching the younger and older juniors in two groups allows for planning that accurately targets the next steps and includes the challenge that the higher attaining pupils need.
50. In Years 1 and 2 progress in the lesson seen was unsatisfactory. Planning did not show the expected outcomes for the different groups in the class and the lesson did not contain sufficient challenge for the higher attaining or older pupils. A scrutiny of last year's work for the age group shows a good knowledge and understanding of living things and materials but less so in physical processes such as forces. The balance of work across each aspect of science has been addressed this year. However, assessment information is not being used as well as it could be to inform planning in Years 1 and 2. The good practice that exists in English and mathematics has not been extended to this subject although the subject manager is aware of the need to do so.
51. Last year's action planning was aimed at developing pupils' skills of investigation and experimentation. Under the leadership of the subject manager, teachers have undergone training, reviewed planning and their own practice. They have seen a resulting improvement and the 2003 test results for Year 6 pupils, show an increase in pupils attaining the average

grade. In discussions with older pupils, it is evident that they can identify variable factors that might make their experiments unreliable. They know how to eliminate or isolate these variables to ensure a fair test. Good links are made with other subjects such as mathematics and English. There is good use of ICT by pupils in collecting and sorting information and in recording their findings. Teachers are increasingly using ICT facilities to enrich their teaching materials. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development as they work collaboratively on investigations and experiments. Health education is well incorporated into the curriculum for science. The new conservation area in the school grounds makes a good contribution to learning about life and living things.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is very good. Pupils achieve well and attainment is above expectations. Both these factors represent very good improvements on the findings of the last inspection.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good use of ICT to support studies across the curriculum.
- There is very good teaching by school staff and an enthusiastic and knowledgeable specialist teacher.
- The teaching assistant provides very good support and leadership.
- The subject has a high profile at the school.
- There are good opportunities for all pupils, resulting in good motivation and achievement.
- The Internet is well used to support pupils' research and teachers' planning.
- Assessment and the setting of individual pupil targets move learning forward at a good rate.
- Pupils use their ICT skills very effectively in lessons and in out-of-school activities.

### Commentary

52. Pupils are taught in small year groups which makes it possible to cater for, and support, individual needs. In turn, this leads to good achievement and attainment that is generally above expectations by Year 6.

Evidence of the good quality of work includes:

Pupils importing pictures to illustrate work, using a word bank, labelling and classifying, making simple graphs and pictograms, understanding instructions and giving commands.	Year 1
Pupils writing, editing and presenting work, finding information, making pictures, controlling a robot, combining text and graphics.	Year 2
Pupils manipulating sound, using databases, sending and receiving e-mails, exploring simulations, cutting and pasting text and graphics to create a specific effect.	Year 3
Pupils creating images using repeating patterns, making a more sophisticated database, finding different ways to organise and present information, use of logo and modelling effects on the screen.	Year 4
Pupils analyse data using complex searches; they create and use spreadsheets. They monitor environmental conditions, e.g. temperature, control different devices and design web pages.	Year 5
Pupils designing and developing multi-media presentations, extensive use of Internet to search a database and interpret information, a variety of control and monitoring activities and use of a 'publisher' programme.	Year 6

53. The subject leader has shown vision and commitment in striving towards the many improvements that have been made. In this, she has been very well supported by the headteacher and governors who see provision in ICT as a high priority for the school. The good scheme of work makes sure that all National Curriculum requirements are met and that pupils have good opportunities to apply the skills that they acquire. Rigorous assessment and target setting drive learning forward at a good pace and keeps pupils very well motivated. The school's provision of hard and soft ware has been extended to enable both these factors.

From a situation which was mainly unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection, hard work, dedication and enthusiasm have ensured that ICT is now a strength of the school.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

54. The school places high priority on its use of ICT across the curriculum. There is an excellent example to be found in the curriculum section of this report which illustrates very high quality use of ICT in other curricular areas.
55. There are frequent occasions in which word processing is used to edit and present written work. Pupils create tables and charts to illustrate the outcome of scientific enquiry. Good use is made of graphics programmes in art lessons, especially when experimenting with new techniques or ideas. Pupils and teachers regularly use the Internet for research and this is particularly beneficial for enriching studies in science, history and geography. The ICT clubs are very popular and pupils enjoy exploring the use of the new video camera, especially in recording work in practical or physical subjects and in keeping a momento of school events. Pupils employ a range of ICT and other subject skills in producing and publishing magazines.

## HUMANITIES

No history lessons were seen during the inspection. In geography one lesson was seen in Years 1 and 2 but none in Years 3 to 6. Judgements are largely based on a scrutiny of work, including portfolios developed by the subject leaders, looking at planning and talking to pupils.

### History

Provision in history is **satisfactory** overall. There is no judgement on teaching since no lessons were seen. The curriculum is broad and enhanced by links with other subjects and visits to places of interest.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards match national expectations in Years 2 and 6.
- Planning ensures that skills and knowledge are taught in a progressive way.
- By Year 6 pupils have well developed skills of enquiry and interpretation.
- Pupils have a sound understanding of historical change.
- Pupils use their research skills effectively to gather information.
- There is little evidence of pupils interpreting and evaluating the reliability of evidence.

### Commentary

56. Planning is based on a two-year cycle that ensures there is no repetition and that pupils have the challenge they need. Extra support is provided for pupils who have special educational needs so that they cover the curriculum and make the expected progress. In Years 1 and 2 pupils compare and contrast old and new, gaining a good understanding of changes over the passage of time. From Years 3 to 6 this work is extended as pupils study Victorian Britain and explore the rapid changes to work and life during the period. They begin to study cause and effect, for example as they link the high incidence of child deaths with the unsafe working conditions. They successfully use a range of sources to find out about the life of sailors in Tudor times. This is good preparation for work at secondary school level. There is little evidence of pupils evaluating sources of evidence in terms of how the past is interpreted from different viewpoints or in detecting bias. Good links with other subjects enhance learning. For example, pupils produced paintings and collage work of Henry VIII after researching the costume and jewellery of the period. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

## Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**. Standards match national expectations in Years 2 and 6.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The work supports pupils' understanding of local heritage and of other cultures around the world.
- Planning is good and meets the needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes.
- Teachers make good use of the environment to promote fieldwork skills and of outside links to enhance learning.

### Commentary

57. The teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory and catered effectively for the different learning needs of the pupils in the class. As a result, they make the expected progress. Pupils have a sound understanding of mapping skills. In Years 1 and 2 they draw routes and plans and in Years 3 to 6 they successfully map out a journey. Teachers make good use of the rich local environment to enhance studies, especially when investigating settlements and geographical features. Pupils develop a sound understanding of other cultures as they compare and contrast life in an Indian village with their own. This was very well illustrated in the daily timetables that they produced for both cultures. Links with the National Trust promote learning well and pupils have sound concept of conservation issues. Visiting speakers add an extra dimension to learning. Pupils were inspired by one presentation about life in Africa which gave them an insight into third world issues. The standards seen at the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils who have special educational needs have good support to help them achieve their best.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

One lesson in art and design was seen in Years 3 to 6 and two lessons were seen in music, covering the full age range. Additional evidence was gathered from looking at a wide range of pupils' art work, watching musical performances that the school has on video and talking to pupils. No lessons were seen in design and technology. Pupils of all ages were observed in their physical educational lessons and video and photographic evidence was taken into consideration.

### Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good** and teachers have a secure level of subject knowledge that promotes **good** progress.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils study the work of a wide range of artists.
- Teaching in the one lesson seen was good.
- Attainment is above expectations in Years 2 and 6.
- The subject supports pupils' spiritual and cultural development effectively.
- There are good links with other subjects to enhance learning.
- There is good enrichment for the subject.

### Commentary

58. Pupils are familiar with the work of artists from various times in history and from around the world. This supports their knowledge of culture and tradition. Over the year, pupils investigate and use a good range of media. Pupils who have special educational needs often do well in this creative subject and pupils work hard during lessons. They have clear ideas about what they do and do not like and this helps them to make decisions about how they should improve

their work. In the one lesson seen, pupils used their imagination to create 'mood pictures', making some original use of colour and pattern. The teaching assistant helped to inspire the pupils through her enthusiasm and knowledge. Some good links with subjects such as music, ICT, history and geography enhance learning well, as do the local artists who visit school. Visits to art galleries add a further dimension to learning. The subject leader has a good overview of attainment and provision.

## Design and technology

No lessons were seen in design and technology but inspectors saw evidence of pupils' completed work that was at the expected level and was **satisfactory**. Provision in this subject is **satisfactory**. The school is setting up links with a local secondary school that has been awarded 'technology status' in order to make use of their teachers' expertise and enrich the curriculum further.

## Music

Provision in music is **good** and promotes pupils' spiritual and cultural development well. Progress is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have opportunities to appreciate a good range of music.
- They enjoy performing and creating music.
- Attainment is above expectations in Years 2 and 6.
- Teaching is good.
- Out-of-school clubs, extra lessons and performances provide enhancement for learning.
- Assessment records are in the process of review.

## Commentary

59. Pupils sing tunefully and with good expression. By Year 6 they have a secure understanding of musical terminology and follow notation. In a good lesson seen in Years 3 to 6 pupils performed a round, adding drone and ostinato to create a very good effect. In Years 1 and 2 they recognise a good range of instruments and know how to create different effects when playing them. These pupils devised symbols so that they could record their compositions for others to play. Teachers are knowledgeable and inspire their pupils. Lessons consist of different short activities that promote a good pace of learning and much enjoyment. Pupils experience a wide range of music from different times and cultures which supports their cultural development. Music is often played as a calming effect during the school day, for example as an introduction to worship. This enhances pupils' spiritual experiences. Lunchtime and after-school clubs include opportunities to sing and play instruments. Other enrichment includes the choir singing at church services, involvement with the local music society, music workshops and school performances in which all take part. Good links with art help pupils to express what they feel when listening to music. Teachers check progress across the topics covered but the subject manager is working on a more detailed record of skills, knowledge and understanding acquired. This is a focus of development planning for this year.

## Physical education

The provision in physical education is **good** and there have been **good** improvements since the last inspection. Achievement is good and many pupils are attaining above expectations by Year 6.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan interesting lessons, often linking with other areas of the curriculum.
- Teachers and support staff provide good models for the pupils.

- Teachers have undergone training to enhance their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- There are good opportunities to extend learning in out-of-school clubs.
- Pupils are well involved in sporting activities taking place in their community.
- The school has achieved the Sports Active mark award in recognition of its efforts in promoting physical activity.
- Assessment procedures are in the developmental stage.

### **Commentary**

60. Lessons consist of a series of short activities to keep the pace moving and maintain pupils' interest. The dance lesson seen for Years 3 to 6 was cleverly linked to the Biblical theme on the creation that forms part of the pupils' studies. It was part of a series of lessons and good prior learning was evident as pupils spoke about the 'impact, style, mood and dynamics' of their work and were knowledgeable about the theme generally. Very good demonstrations by both the class teacher and the teaching assistant inspired the pupils and drove learning forward at a very good rate. Links with music further enhanced the quality of the experience. Pupils showed good presentation skills as they performed their sequence and there was good links here with ICT as they decided to video the work in order to support their own appraisal and to keep as a record of progress. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils interpreted the movement of a cat and, again, there was a very good link with music studies. The staff worked very hard to promote originality of thought and interpretation of the music. Some pupils who find it difficult to cope with the conventions of the lesson were effectively handled so that they did not interrupt the flow of the learning. There was very good physical and creative effort in both lessons, with an awareness of the positive effects of exercise. The lessons gave good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and others' efforts and to seek ways to improve performance. Team spirit was strong and pupils showed a good awareness of, and a respect for, each other's space.
61. The school provides a very good range of sporting and physical opportunities out of school time to extend provision. They also form part of the 'healthy schools' initiative. These include the twice weekly 'walk to school', sports days, county athletics meetings and local sports festivals. The curriculum itself is rich and includes a good balance of games, gymnastics, swimming and athletics. It is made possible through the use of the village hall and playing field, an arrangement established by the headteacher. The walk to and from the hall over playtime adds to the benefits. The range and take-up of physical activity at this small school have led to the prestigious Sports Active Mark Award, of which staff, parents and pupils are very proud. At present, the subject manager is working on developing more efficient and effective ways of assessing and recording progress, including the use of ICT. Some basic records do exist but they are not easy to use when planning the next steps.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
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
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7). Year group numbers are too small to make a reliable judgement on standards against national comparisons.*