

INSPECTION REPORT

CHICKERELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Weymouth

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113708

Headteacher: Mr A E Mockridge

Lead inspector: Mrs Jean Harding

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th May 2004

Inspection number: 255779

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	330
School address:	Rashley Road Chickerell Weymouth Dorset
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Harris
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This large primary school serves a village community on the outskirts of Weymouth. Almost all pupils are white, and only two speak English as their second language. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well below average, but this is not an area where families are particularly advantaged. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is average, overall. Movement in and out of the school between reception and Year 6 is average, overall, but levels of mobility mean that some groups are not the same over their time in school. The school has identified an average percentage of pupils to have special educational needs, but very few have major problems or need a statement of special educational needs. There are 12 classes, all of mixed-age groups except the two reception classes.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21378	Mrs Jean Harding	Lead inspector	Science Religious education
33735	Mr Stephen Huard	Lay inspector	
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19302	Mrs Christine Perrett	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Foundation Stage curriculum
20230	Mrs Jenny Clayphan	Team inspector	Mathematics Personal, social and health education Geography History English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a fairly effective school with many strengths but some significant weaknesses. **It gives a satisfactory quality of education to its pupils.** Children in the reception classes do well, and pupils' achievement in Years 1 to 6 is good for some subjects, but it is satisfactory overall. Standards in reading, mathematics and information and communication technology are higher than average through the school and for most other subjects they are average, overall. The learning is satisfactory because the teaching is satisfactory. The curriculum is generally satisfactory. The quality of leadership is satisfactory, but there are aspects of management that are weak, including financial planning. Given the funding and the outcomes, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses¹ are:

- Standards in mathematics and art and design are higher than average through the school; standards of information and communication technology are above average in Years 1 and 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6; standards are above average in English at the end of Year 2 and in science at the end of Year 6.
- The good provision in the reception classes ensures that children achieve well.
- The financial planning and management are weak and so the school currently is heading for a large deficit budget.
- The planning and management of the curriculum are not good enough to ensure that there is a good balance of subjects, that sufficient religious education is taught and that there is a proper act of collective worship each day.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school as a result of the good provision for their care and personal development.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The national test results have risen, as there has been improvement to the planning of English, mathematics and science. The role of the subject co-ordinators is better developed in many subjects. However, there are still shortcomings in the use of resources and financial planning. The partnership with parents, although satisfactory, is not as strong as was reported before. Attendance figures are significantly lower than they were.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

PUPILS' ACHIEVEMENT IS SATISFACTORY OVERALL.

Children start in reception with average skills and understanding, overall, and sometimes their skills are well developed. Most children exceed the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year, and achieve well in most areas of learning.

The overall standards achieved by pupils in Years 1 and 2 are above those expected. Standards are above average in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and art and design. They are average in science and in all other subjects. In 2003 pupils at the end of Year 2 did better in the national tests in English than pupils from similar schools, because they started from a good base into Year 1. By the end of Year 2 achievement, overall, is satisfactory, but it is currently good in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and art and design.

¹ The strengths and weaknesses are listed in order of significance.

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

*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 free school meals.*

Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and standards are average overall. Standards are currently above average in mathematics and science. They are average in speaking, listening and writing and above average in reading. They are much better than expected in information and communication technology, in which progress is very good, but lower than expected in religious education in which progress has been unsatisfactory for pupils in Year 6. Results in the national tests from 2000 to 2003 have varied depending on the abilities of the year group, but results in science have been consistently above average. Grades in English last year were below average and not as good as those for similar schools. The trend is upwards and better than the national trend. Standards are higher than average in art and design and physical education.

The achievements of boys are no different from those of girls. Pupils with special educational needs make the same satisfactory progress as other pupils and often make good progress towards their targets. More able pupils could do better if they were always given work that was appropriate to their needs.

Pupils' personal development is good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, but it could be better for their spiritual development. Most pupils have good attitudes to school and their behaviour is good. Attendance is unsatisfactory and this is a worse situation than was reported at the last inspection.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is satisfactory. The teaching is satisfactory, overall, with strengths in the reception classes and in the teaching of English, art and design and information and communication technology across the school. The positive relationships mean that behaviour in class is good and pupils get down to work well. The planning of lessons is satisfactory, but this could be improved by setting consistently appropriate work for more able pupils and for older pupils in the mixed-year classes. Too many pupils are unnecessarily included on the special educational needs register.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but it is not balanced. A great deal of time is given to English, mathematics and science, especially for pupils in Year 6. The lack of time allocated to some non-core² subjects and religious education adversely affects pupils' progress in these subjects and their personal development. There are good opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum. Provision for those pupils with proven special educational needs is good. Pupils receive good care and support. Links with the community are good but those with parents are only satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has set a supportive ethos and a search for improvement; his leadership is satisfactory. Although satisfactory overall, there are significant weaknesses in the management of the school as money, staff and time are not always used efficiently. Strategic planning is not good enough. A large deficit budget has been set for

² The non-core subjects are those other than English, mathematics and science.

this year and this money will have to be found and costs cut for next year. Some spending cannot be justified in view of the needs of pupils and the financial position. The governors are facing up to this difficulty and realise that they need to ensure the best value for the money they receive. Current governance is satisfactory, overall, even though not all statutory requirements are met. However, in view of the current, large, deficit budget, governors' input to the school, until recently, has been unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are very satisfied with the school but a few are highly critical. Most pupils love school and take a full part in all activities.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the efficiency of the school including the deployment of staff and the planning of the finances, linking them directly to planned improvements and the money available;
- Improve the planning and management of the curriculum to ensure that all subjects are given sufficient time for teaching so that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are developed in a coherent way;
- Improve pupils' rates of attendance;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that all pupils take part in a proper daily act of collective worship.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are above average in reading, mathematics, science and physical education, and well above average in information and communication technology, by the time that pupils leave the school. Standards are average in speaking, listening and writing, but below average in religious education. Children's achievement is good in the reception classes, in which the greatest progress is made, and satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 6, but it is good throughout the school in information and communication technology. There has been satisfactory improvement in standards since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception classes achieve well in almost all areas of learning.
- Pupils in Year 6 reach higher than average standards in mathematics, science and information and communication technology, as a great deal of emphasis and time is given to these subjects.
- Reading is above average through the school.
- Pupils in Year 6 do not know enough about religious education, as they have not been taught enough.
- Standards of art and design are higher than expected through the school and also for physical education in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

Foundation Stage³

1. Children start school with attainment which is at least average and sometimes above average. The majority of children attain the early learning goals⁴ by the time they join Year 1 and most will exceed them. The children make particularly good progress in their communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills.

Key Stage 1⁵

2. Pupils' achievements are at least satisfactory and often good for English through Years 1 and 2, and so the standards they achieve are above average for reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are average in most other subjects, but above average for information and communication technology and art and design. The national test results have improved since the previous inspection and there was an encouraging improvement last year in the grades for reading. In comparison with similar schools, results were average but below average for mathematics as few pupils obtained a higher grade. Attainment in mathematics shows improvement this year and, overall, pupils are doing better. There has also been an improvement in the standards in science, since the previous inspection, but this could be improved with better planning of the science curriculum.

³ The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

⁴ The early learning goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year in primary school.

⁵ Key Stage 1, sometimes referred to as the infants, caters for pupils aged between 5 and 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores⁶ in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.7 (15.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.7 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.6 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Little or no geography, design and technology, history or music were seen in Years 1 and 2, so no overall judgements can be made about standards and pupils' achievements. Few records are available to indicate pupils' achievements in some non-core subjects; this is a weakness.

Key Stage 2⁷

- Pupils' achievements are satisfactory, overall, through Years 3 to 6, considering the standards they achieved in Year 2. Standards in English are average, overall, but higher than average in reading. Standards in mathematics and science are above average and progress has been satisfactory. In information and communication technology standards are well above average and achievement is good. Pupils' grades in the national tests have improved since the previous inspection. Grades in science have been consistently high. For the five years, from 1999 to 2003, the National Curriculum test results rose faster than the national trend, helped by low grades one year and good grades two years ago. In 2003 the overall results showed standards to be below average in English, average in mathematics, and above average in science. In comparison with similar schools, grades were below average in English, average in mathematics and well above average for science. The school has put a lot of effort into the teaching of these core subjects and so standards are now rising, especially in writing. However, the main factor in the better achievement is the improvement in the planning for core subjects and the large amount of time given to coaching pupils for the national tests during the summer term.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (29.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.3 (27.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.5 (30.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Very great emphasis has been placed on the core subjects for pupils in Year 6; because of this their progress in most other subjects is at best satisfactory, as these subjects have not had sufficient attention during pupils' final year at school. However, standards in physical education are high as the school considers this subject important and pupils are taught by specialists. No reliable judgement can be made for design and technology, music or geography as these subjects were not a focus for this inspection and they were not being taught during the week of inspection. A little history was seen and standards are satisfactory. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education, by the end of Year 6, is below that expected as they have not had regular teaching to reinforce what they have studied in previous years.

⁶ **Average Point Scores.** The average point scores table compares the school's performance with the national results. The calculations are arrived at by using the total of all test scores gained by pupils, and dividing the total by the number of pupils with a test result. This calculation is carried out for each subject tested.

⁷ Key Stage 2, sometimes referred to as the juniors, caters for pupils aged between 7 and 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6.

6. Over the whole school pupils' speaking and listening skills are as expected. Pupils make satisfactory use of their learned skills of communication and numeracy in other subjects, but they use their reading and information and communication technology skills well. Pupils with special educational needs make the same sort of progress as their classmates; those with marked difficulties often make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. More able pupils also make satisfactory progress. The school has identified a few pupils who are gifted and talented; these are mostly in the areas of English and mathematics. No pupil has been identified as talented in any other subject, even though there are pupils who show promise in these areas. Boys and girls make the same sort of progress and this is encouraging, as boys do not have problems with literacy. Pupils of non-white ethnic origin perform the same as other pupils.
7. Target-setting is satisfactory. Targets are not always reached, but they are aspirational. There are group targets for English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. There are no group or individual targets for science or any other subject. Pupils only have individual targets in English. Current targets are appropriate and are based on a thorough assessment of pupils' progress through the school. Pupils are generally happy with how they are doing. Most parents are also happy, but a few have concerns

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values, behaviour and personal development are good overall. The school promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. In most respects there has been good improvement since the previous inspection, but as pupils' attendance level is now below average, there has been a decline in this aspect.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning, and their behaviour is good.
- There is freedom from bullying and other forms of harassment, as relationships are very good.
- Children in the reception classes make good gains in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and this is an improvement.
- Attendance levels are below the national average.

Commentary

8. Pupils of all ages say they enjoy school and most things about it. Pupils apply themselves well to their studies in lessons. They have high expectations of themselves, and are, for the most part, very well motivated. This means that they try hard to meet their teachers' and their parents' expectations of them. Almost all pupils can be trusted to work independently of their teacher should the need arise. With rare exceptions, pupils have sound communication skills. This means that they feel equally confident talking to each other and to the adults who work with them. It is a key skill which serves them well as ambassadors for their school, not only in their exchanges with visitors, but also with adults in the wider community.
9. The school sets high expectations for behaviour, and pupils comply with established practices and procedures. Very good relationships are evident in lessons and around the school and pupils respect each other and their property. Pupils say that there are occasional incidents in the playground when boisterous play creates accidents, but any difficulties are sorted out by themselves or with the help of an adult. Some parents were concerned about incidents of bullying in the past, but during the inspection the team found no evidence of any unkind behaviour, and no pupil expressed concern to inspectors.
10. Pupils thrive on responsibility. Pupils in Year 6 help the younger pupils at lunchtimes, and relish the opportunities they are given to contribute to the life and work of the school, for example, as

librarians, and along with other pupils as members of the school council. All pupils contribute to the smooth running of the class by acting as monitors.

11. The school makes good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was reported to be satisfactory. Spiritual development remains satisfactory as it was at the time of the last report. The ethos of the school promotes respect and caring for others. By valuing and helping pupils, and through their own conduct, staff present themselves as good role models. There are opportunities given in assemblies for spiritual moments through prayer and reflection, but not all acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and insufficient time is allocated to religious education in some classes, which has a negative impact on pupils' spiritual development. There is a lack of planned opportunities in lessons to develop this area more fully.
12. Pupils' moral and social development is underpinned by the very good relationships that exist at all levels, and by the many opportunities they are given to take responsibility for others. Behaviour is good and in lessons and through a wide variety of clubs and extra-curricular activities, pupils are encouraged to work and play together, and to recognise their own contribution to team effort. All have a strong sense of right and wrong, which is engendered from an early age. There have been no exclusions recently.
13. Overall, good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. A wide variety of clubs gives pupils opportunities to engage in a range of sporting, musical, recreational and cultural activities. Visits and visitors regularly enhance pupils' learning in subjects such as English, history, music and art. Special events, such as Arts Week enhance pupils' understanding of their own culture. Through religious education pupils learn about different faiths, and they learn about life in different parts of the world in geography. The school has provided many opportunities to enhance pupils' multicultural awareness, such as studying African and Aboriginal culture, and provision for this area of development has improved since the last inspection.
14. Attendance levels are unsatisfactory. The level of authorised absence is above the national average. Pupils' attendance is significantly below the national average and shows a marked deterioration from the last inspection. There are too many instances of parents taking their children for holidays during term time. The school has had little success in persuading parents to give a higher priority to school attendance. Recent newsletters to parents on the subject suggest the least and the most disruptive months for parents to take children out of school. A review of a sample of school reports showed some examples of a clear link between below average performance and unsatisfactory levels of attendance. Punctuality is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.4	School data	0.1
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

15. An improved attendance recording system is now in place and persistent absence is now followed up more quickly. The evidence to date indicates that, although this year's figures will show a significant reduction in authorised absence, unauthorised absence is likely to rise. Pupils arrive at school on time and lessons start promptly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory overall, but it is good in the reception classes. The teaching, based on a satisfactory curriculum, is satisfactory and leads to satisfactory

learning by pupils. Staffing levels are satisfactory overall, but there are a lot of support staff. The accommodation is good, overall and resources are satisfactory, although those for information and communication technology are good.

Teaching and learning

The teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but they are good in the reception classes. Assessment is satisfactory overall, but good for English, mathematics and information and communication technology.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in the reception classes is good, leading to children’s good learning.
- Good use is made of information and communication technology in lessons.
- Very good relationships ensure that pupils behave well in lessons.
- The planning of lessons is not always detailed enough to ensure the best learning by older and more able pupils.
- Pupils work well independently and collaboratively.
- Assessment of English, mathematics and information and communication technology is good.
- Too many pupils are included on the special educational needs register.
- Support staff are not always used well enough.

Commentary

16. Teaching is consistently good in the reception classes, with some high quality work seen. Lessons in these classes are well organised and fun and so children learn well. Good emphasis is put on basic skills, but these are taught through a wide variety of activities and this ensures that children’s learning is relevant and skills reinforced constantly.
17. In the rest of the school the teaching is satisfactory, overall, with many areas of strength, but also inconsistencies in practice that affect the provision for pupils. The lack of detailed planning results in significant variations in the teaching of different subjects between the different classes, especially in Years 3 to 6. This is an issue that has not been identified or addressed by most subject managers or by the headteacher. Over half the lessons observed in the inspection were judged to be at least good, and a few examples of very good and excellent practice were seen in Years 3 to 6. No very good teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2. The reason why pupils are doing well in core subjects is that so much time is given to them; it is not just a case of high quality teaching. However, all the teaching of English observed was at least good. The teaching of information and communication technology is done well by specialists and it is often used well in the teaching of other subjects, but this depends on the skills and experience of staff. An excellent lesson was given by the subject leader.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (2%)	4 (8%)	23 (47%)	21 (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.

18. Through the supportive ethos of the school the pupils are easy to teach. They want to learn because they have very good relationships with staff. The noise from other classes, resulting from the design of the building, does not make it easy for staff to teach or pupils to learn, but with the goodwill and tolerance fostered by these relationships the difficulty is usually overcome. Pupils work well together when asked, and, at times, can work independently, but at other times they are rather reliant on staff help. The support staff give good help to the teachers, but they are sometimes not deployed as well as they might be. Given that they are so plentiful the pupils

sometimes turn to them for help before trying things for themselves, and this is not a good way to promote pupils' independent learning.

19. Teachers identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage, establish detailed individual education plans and work closely with teaching assistants to provide focused support for pupils who need it, and this has a positive impact on achievement. On the other hand, some pupils remain on the register for special educational needs for longer than is necessary and are receiving additional support when their needs could be met within the day-to-day planning for groups of different abilities within their class. There is a need, particularly as pupils grow older, to assess progress more rigorously with a view to reducing or removing support at the earliest possible opportunity.
20. The teaching of English and mathematics is generally well planned. It is detailed and there is a great deal of reinforcement of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills, as so much time is devoted to these subjects. The assessment of pupils' attainment is mostly thorough in these lessons. In other subjects the planning of lessons is not always detailed enough, so that pupils who are more able, and older pupils in mixed-age classes, do not make as much progress as they should. This is the area in which most improvement could be made. Mostly, teachers do not plan their own lessons in detail. Lessons are planned over the whole term for subjects taught to three or four mixed-age classes. They are, subsequently, not appropriately adapted to suit the needs of the different pupils in the classes and this disadvantages groups who may need extra challenge.
21. The practice of teaching subjects, other than English and mathematics, on a revolving basis in Years 1 and 2, does not help the teachers to plan for individuals or groups, or to follow up issues arising from pupils' incomplete learning. Because of this the assessment of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in these lessons is cursory. These lessons are heavily reliant on several adults being in the classroom and so there is much pre-lesson sorting out to do which takes up a great deal of teachers' time; this is inefficient. The organising of the teaching of three subjects at once also takes time and so the pace at the start of these sessions is a bit slow and insufficient actual teaching of skills is done. The review sessions at the end of lessons are not always carried out well, as some pupils hear the review before they have completed the work.
22. Assessment is satisfactory overall. Plenty of good assessment is done in English and mathematics and some good analysis of the results of assessments made. The assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is fairly rudimentary; the systems for assessing speaking and listening and the investigative aspects of science and mathematics are still being developed. Some of the assessment for non-core subjects and religious education is sketchy and quite new and staff do not know the levels of their pupils' attainment.
23. At the time of the previous inspection, teaching was judged to be good. The evidence from this inspection shows that there is not the unsatisfactory teaching that was observed, before but that there is less high quality teaching. The management of pupils' behaviour by staff has improved. Marking is more consistent, but is still not always as effective as it could be in showing pupils how they could improve. Parents are generally happy with the teaching, but a few are most unhappy, especially about what they consider to be excessive amounts of homework. The inspectors found that homework is generally satisfactory and pupils made no complaints to them about it.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils are offered a good range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation is good and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, and information and communication

technology is good.

- Time given to some subjects, including religious education, is below the minimum necessary for pupils' progress to be maintained. It is distributed very unevenly across the year and this restricts pupils' achievement.
- Some acts of collective worship do not meet statutory requirements and there is some confusion between class assemblies and personal, social and health education in some classes.
- There are very many support staff.
- There is a wide range of interesting activities that are important in enriching the curriculum.
- The accommodation is good.

Commentary

24. The curriculum has remained broadly satisfactory since the previous inspection, but there are some weaknesses. Good provision in English, mathematics and information and communication technology has ensured that standards are at, or above, the national average. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been updated and provision remains good. The school has acquired the 'Artsmark' and 'Activemark' awards for their contribution to pupils' artistic and sporting development.
25. Since 1998 the school has concentrated on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to good effect, but with the result that not enough time has been planned for teaching history and geography throughout the school, and not enough personal, social and health education and non-core subjects are taught in some classes. For instance, in design and technology pupils are unable to develop the expected skills steadily, and, in some instances, there has been insufficient time for them to complete tasks. The time given in Years 1 and 2 to teaching three subjects together, during one day a week, is very demanding for teachers because planning needs to be very detailed. It is not wholly effective because plans are not customised for the particular groups of pupils in each classroom and staff cannot, therefore, ensure that their pupils of different ages and abilities always have tasks of exactly suitable challenge in each subject. The reviews at the end of each session lessen the new, unknown aspect of each task for those who have not already tackled them. The teachers find it hard to be sure how much time is given to each of these subjects, because sometimes a topic is taught separately. There are different times allocated to subjects within the different classes for the same year groups; this compromises equal opportunities and is the result of weak management of the timetable. The management of the curriculum is affecting the provision and, hence, the quality of education for pupils.
26. The curriculum for religious education is not good enough, as too little time is devoted to the subject. Some teachers in Years 1 and 2 use personal, social and health education time as class assembly by adding a prayer at the end. This is unsatisfactory, as either, not enough personal, social and health education is being taught, or pupils are not having a daily act of worship. Some assemblies observed during the week did not meet statutory requirements, because there was no reference to a higher being and they were not suitably spiritual.
27. The school ensures that pupils have many opportunities to widen their experiences through visits to places of educational interest. The numerous visitors to the school are valuable in deepening pupils' understanding of the wider world. The many after-school clubs are popular, fun and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
28. The school is appropriately staffed. The number of teachers is on the high side of average. The number of well-trained support staff is good in the Foundation Stage and very generous in the rest of the school. Their presence ensures that the mixed-subject curriculum days in Years 1 and 2 are less problematic than they would otherwise be. The school has invested very heavily to provide a team of teaching assistants who support day-to-day teaching and learning and help pupils with special educational needs. They are highly valued, individually and collectively, by teachers and pupils alike, and with good reason. They are committed to their work, strive tirelessly to provide good care for all pupils and form very good working relationships with teaching colleagues. Due to the training provided by the school, and through their own initiative, they have become very well qualified to carry out the work they do. Their professional

development has involved many aspects of supporting pupils with special educational needs, and those members of the team who are called upon to provide specific help for pupils on the register for special educational needs are well qualified to do so. However, the school cannot justify having so many of these staff as there are relatively few pupils with special educational needs in the school.

29. Resources are satisfactory, but there are good resources for information and communication technology. The libraries have improved since the previous inspection. The accommodation is very good for children in the Foundation Stage. It is good overall for older pupils and the grounds are extensive and attractive. However, the open-plan nature of most classes creates disturbing noise levels and some classrooms are too small for the size and number of pupils they contain. There has been some improvement in the noise levels since the previous inspection. The school is laid out well for wheelchair users.

Care, guidance and support

The measures for ensuring pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a healthy, safe and caring environment.
- There are too many incidents at lunch times requiring first aid.
- The school council meets regularly and pupils' ideas are increasingly adopted.
- Child protection is good with the head teacher having good links with external agencies.

Commentary

30. The school provides a good level of care to all its pupils, an improvement since the last inspection. Appropriate procedures are in place and risk assessments exist for all the main areas. Procedures for induction are sound. Those relating to educational visits show good attention to detail. Pupils report that they are happy at school and behave well as a consequence.
31. Some parents were critical of the lunchtime arrangements, but the inspectors found them broadly satisfactory. Lunch time supervisors are effective in controlling the pupils while they are eating and as they play outside. However, there is a large number of incidents requiring first aid treatment for children at lunchtime. This is because supervisors are zealous in treating every incident as potentially serious rather than over-boisterous play on the part of the pupils. The staff know the pupils well and, through 'circle time'⁸ and personal, social and health education, are able to monitor and assess pupils' personal development adequately. There was no evidence to indicate that parents need worry about the behaviour management of support staff, as had been suggested.
32. The headteacher's responsibility as nominated person for child protection is carried out effectively with good links established with social services and other external agencies. This has been effectively used when needed. Staff have a good knowledge of the issues and are vigilant for warning signs.
33. There is an established school council which meets on a monthly basis. Pupils say that their views on subjects such as re-cycling, a mini prom, and changes to the lunchtime arrangements are taken seriously and their suggestions are frequently adopted.

⁸ 'Circle time' is a session provided for pupils to discuss a wide range of personal issues as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with parents and with the community overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is welcoming to parents and has good relations with most of them.
- There are good links with the local community.
- Several individual parents do not feel the school has dealt adequately or followed up on their concerns.
- Annual reports have improved in content and scope over the last few years.

Commentary

34. The school has maintained its good links with the community, which were identified as a strength in the last inspection. The school has a very high profile in the village with many of its ex-pupils living there. This has been used to the advantage of the school. Local businesses offer the school good deals and give help at weekends. A useful environmental programme was recently implemented with the local countryside ranger. Further links with the community are being promoted when the recently appointed co-ordinator, leading the new citizenship programme, arranges external speakers and sponsorship.
35. Links with parents are not of the same high quality as was reported at the previous inspection. Annual reports have improved continuously over the last few years but comments are rather bland. The school welcomes parents and feels it has generally good relationships with them. However, some parents feel that their concerns have not always been adequately dealt with. In communication with the inspection team a significant number of parents were very critical of several aspects of the school. This is of concern to the school. However, these issues were followed up and, generally, were not substantiated.
36. The school has established satisfactory links with other schools in the area through an area partnership group. The close working relationships it has with secondary schools have resulted in effective transition procedures preparing pupils to transfer smoothly and quickly to their new schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance are satisfactory, overall, with some strengths but significant areas of weakness. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is shared vision leading to improvement.
- The leadership and management have improved in some aspects since the previous inspection.
- Aspects of management including the management of the curriculum and the planning of finances are unsatisfactory.
- Staff are not always used efficiently.
- The school has less money per pupil to spend than many schools, but given its deficit budget, it gives only satisfactory value for money.

Commentary

37. There are many good aspects to the leadership of the school. The headteacher has built a strong team of staff and has ensured a shared vision about where they are going, and rising grades in the national tests. He has set a supportive ethos in which pupils are happy. He has fostered a productive climate for learning and gives clear educational direction. He has been

very careful to make sure that his staff are not overworked, and this has borne fruit, as staff are happy in the school and feel able to contribute to all aspects of its work. Staff morale has improved over the last six years.

38. The school is kept in good order and it is a comfortable place in which to work. Some satisfactory systems to monitor the performance of staff and pupils are in place. However, the school is not run efficiently. There have been high levels of investment in the teaching and support staff, but these staff are not always deployed effectively. The headteacher has high aspirations, but has not accepted that he cannot do all that he wants with the funds available. He has faith that the local education authority will provide more money. He has based this belief on his assumption that the school is under-funded for its special needs provision, but this is not the case. A large amount of staff time and money is spent on pupils with special educational needs, but there are not many pupils who need individual, specialist help. The spending on special educational needs support staff is high and cannot be justified in view of the amount of help they need. The number of classroom assistants has more than doubled since the previous inspection. In contrast, very little money is spent on administrative staff and so not only is the burden in the office great, but also other staff have to do aspects of administration which could be done by others; this is inefficient.
39. Financial planning is weak. Accounts are meticulous, but not in a form that can be readily interpreted by all who need to know where the money is going. The recent audit flagged up several areas of concern, some of which have been successfully addressed. However, plans for spending have been made with little reference as to how they are to be paid for. Expenditure has exceeded expected income over the last two financial years and the school was not aware of the size and effect of this deficit until recently. After much liaison with the local education authority, the school has just a small deficit from the last financial year, although it was predicted recently that it would be very much higher. The budget for the current year, 2004-05, shows a deficit of £26,000, even after a sizeable transitional grant. The governors will have to formulate an effective recovery plan to clear the deficit and ensure that costs do not outrun the income for the next year. This will be difficult.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	734,002	Balance from previous year	21,775
Total expenditure	756,636	Balance carried forward to the next	(859)*
Expenditure per pupil	2,307		

*Note – this is a negative balance. The deficit for the current financial year (2004/05) is approximately £60 000 which has been reduced by a grant of approximately £34 000.

40. There is inefficiency in the use of resources, particularly cash, staff and time. The time available is not used well. The school has pumped a great deal of teaching time, money and staff in to core subjects and information and communication technology, especially for pupils in Year 6, and the results are clear to see; standards are rising. However, the planning for this improvement has not been well thought out. Rising standards in these subjects are at the expense of standards that are lower than they could be in subjects that are not a focus. The school has allocated resources that they do not have to these subjects and other aspects of the provision, such as adequate time for some non-core subjects, and for worship, have been sidelined. Due to less than rigorous curriculum management, the timetabling is unsatisfactory and is leading to an imbalance of provision. Targets for school improvement are mostly focused on those subjects that are already strong and not on other aspects of the school that are relatively weak. Staff training has not always been directly linked to the priorities of development planning.
41. There is room for improvement in the arrangements for monitoring the effectiveness of day-to-day support for pupils with special educational needs. There are some inconsistencies between year groups in the way support is organised, and in how teachers throughout the school assess

at what stage support for pupils should be reduced or removed. This leads to some pupils remaining on the register for special educational needs for too long, resulting in an inefficient use of support staff.

42. The management is satisfactory and is consolidating what has been achieved, but is not good enough to ensure improvement in all areas. There has been just about satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, but still more needs to be done in the areas identified at that time. The monitoring of lessons by the headteacher lacks focus, although the format of the monitoring seen was satisfactory, there were very few comments on standards and pupils' achievement. He has made unrealistic assessments of how well the school is doing. There is insufficient analysis of what is happening, and the data and information obtained from many sources are not evaluated well. The problem is that facts about aspects, such as attainment and the financial position are known, but sometimes incorrect interpretations have been made about them. The principle of comparison to ensure the best value is not always used because the school does not have the knowledge with which to make comparisons, as few staff and governors have had much experience of other schools recently. Co-ordinators are given plenty of time for checking on provision in their subjects, but there has been no whole-school focus for this work and the results of this monitoring are not always apparent. The monitoring of some subject leaders is good, and, for many, their evaluations of what is happening are sound. English and mathematics have been monitored well, but other subjects, especially science, have not. The feedbacks from lesson observation are often rather general and there is little evidence of follow-up and subsequent changes in practice.
43. Many of the governors are new and have only just started to get the feel of the school. They are unaware of some of the weaknesses, but the formation of a committee for school improvement is a positive move. Governors ensure that the school provides appropriately for people who have disabilities and have put in place suitable procedures to counter racial abuse. They are concerned that the school receives some £500 less per pupil than most schools. Some effective governors are now in place who are likely to be able to 'bite the bullet' over the finances. They are conscious that difficult decisions will need to be made about cutting the budget without letting the standards, which have improved as result of the extra spending, slip. Because the curriculum has not been monitored well enough, the statutory requirement to ensure a proper act of collective worship every day has not been met.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall, provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

44. Children enter the reception classes at the start of the year in which they are five, initially for mornings only, and then full time in January. In general, children enter school with levels of attainment that are broadly average. They benefit from good teaching and a curriculum that is well matched to their learning needs. This provides a wide range of interesting and relevant activities that include an appropriate balance of formal teaching, with many opportunities for purposeful play, so that children can learn from direct experience. Adults work very well as a cohesive team, ensuring that children are safe and happy. As a result, children achieve well in the Foundation Stage, and demonstrate good overall standards when they start in Year 1. Their language, literacy and numeracy skills are particularly well developed for their ages. Provision in the Foundation Stage is similar to that at the time of the previous inspection, but improvements have been made to the resources for outside play.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good and children are confident and happy.
- Well-established routines and good models of behaviour promote an orderly community and encourage independence.

Commentary

45. By establishing good relationships and regular routines, and by making clear their shared expectations, staff bring a sense of purpose to children's experience of school. They develop children's good social skills effectively, so that most children are consistently polite, respond well, listen to adults and to each other, and interact in a kind and constructive way. For example, when playing in the 'veterinary surgery' role-play area, children co-operate, take turns, and play well together. In their work and play, children have already established very good relationships with others. Their developing independence is shown when they chose their own activities, and work well even when not directly supervised. Overall, good teaching is enabling children to achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development. As a result, their standards exceed the expected goals at the end of the Foundation Stage.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in the development of key skills in communication, language and literacy, as a result of good teaching.
- Activities are matched well to children's needs, and every opportunity is used to develop language and literacy skills.
- Emphasis on learning to read from an early age results in good standards.

Commentary

46. Overall, children demonstrate good listening and speaking skills, and their attainment in language is above the expectations for their age. Children talk and share ideas willingly, and respond to questions with extended sentences. They talk confidently, in small and large groups, where they are able to share, for instance, their good general knowledge of mini-beasts. In one very good lesson, every opportunity was used to promote other areas of learning, such as knowledge and understanding of the world, and a real sense of wonder was created when they listened to a recording of their question and answer session.
47. All children respond well to stories, and understand how books work. The school places great emphasis on learning to read and children from an early age are encouraged to take books home to share. As a result they handle a wide range of books appropriately, including reference books, and know the conventions of print. Children are already developing well as young readers due to the careful teaching of sounds and words, and the good variety of books available. Many children are confident to write independently. Structured activities offer good opportunities to practise and develop reading and writing skills. Children are carefully grouped to meet their learning needs, and this ensures that all, including those with special educational needs or particularly high ability, make good progress. The teaching of communication, language and literacy skills is good, and many children are working within the early stages of the National Curriculum.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

- Children's mathematical development is fostered well by good teaching.
- Mathematical resources are good, and are used effectively to support children's learning.

Commentary

48. The reception class teachers provide a good range of activities to promote children's mathematical understanding. They assess children's progress carefully, and plan wisely to take children's learning further. As a result of good teaching and well-judged activities, including mathematical play, children progress well in counting, calculations and in the development of their understanding of shapes and measures. Most children count confidently to 20, know some double numbers, and confidently use money. Teachers use practical activities effectively to introduce and reinforce children's mathematical understanding. This contributes to children's enjoyment of mathematics and to their good standards. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and children achieve well in this area of learning, exceeding the expected goals for the end of the Foundation Stage.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children benefit from a well planned range of opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Children achieve well in this area of learning, as a result of good teaching.
- Good use is made of the local environment.

Commentary

49. Most children start school with good general knowledge, and with a strong desire to learn more. Good opportunities are provided to engage, stimulate and extend the children, and they enjoy the linked experiences offered in class topics. For instance, the current topic on mini-beasts provided children with opportunities to consider different habitats and the diversity of wildlife. Good use is made of the local environment. For example, children go for walks around the village identifying key buildings, and use the school conservation area well to pond-dip, finding a wide range of creatures. The planned topic structure provides a well-balanced range of themes, across the year, to explore and extend children's understanding of the world, including their scientific understanding, and their understanding of different religious festivals, such as Easter and Diwali.
50. Children use computers confidently to draw and write, and many can print their work. They are taught to use a range of software in their class and benefit from the use of the computer suite. Children have good opportunities to build and make, using a range of resources and materials. They select different recycled materials to build a variety of mini-beasts extending their creativity alongside their knowledge of small creatures. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children will exceed the expected standards in relation to their knowledge and understanding of the world, and their scientific knowledge is particularly well developed for their ages. They achieve well in this area of learning, as a result of good teaching.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Physical education lessons in the hall are taught well.
- There are regular opportunities for children to play outside.
- Resources for large play apparatus have improved.

Commentary

51. Children in the reception classes have good physical skills, and achieve well in free physical play and in class physical education lessons. There are good daily opportunities for children to play outside, to run about and to use wheeled toys. In addition, there are ample opportunities for them to handle a range of tools and equipment, and to build up their dexterity, for example, by using pencils for drawing, brushes for painting, bean bags and balls for throwing. During play activities, children work well together and show good physical co-ordination and awareness of safety.
52. Both classes have regular physical education lessons in the hall. Children listen carefully, follow instructions, and work and move in directed ways. They show good physical control of their own bodies and awareness of those around them, and handle equipment appropriately. Most children are likely to exceed the early learning goals for physical development by the end of the reception year, as a result of the good teaching they receive.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided for children to use their creative skills.
- Good opportunities are provided for role-play.
- Children need more opportunities to paint and draw to express their own feelings.

Commentary

53. Overall, children's creative development is fostered well, through a range of interesting activities. Children enjoy singing and have a wide repertoire of songs. Some children can keep a steady beat accurately, but in lessons when both classes join together insufficient instruments are used to ensure that the maximum number of children have a turn. Teachers provide useful guidance to help children to create paintings and drawings. Their classrooms are bright and colourful with their attractive work. Children would benefit, however, from more opportunities to use paint to express their own ideas and feelings. Staff engage well in role play with children and good imaginative play is developed. Overall, children are achieving well in their creative development, as a result of good teaching, and the majority of children will reach the expected goals by the end of the year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and pupils are achieving well in lessons.
- The co-ordinators provide good leadership for the subject.
- The school makes very good use of assessment data to set clear targets for improvement for all pupils.
- Standards in reading are above average throughout the school.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on developing speaking and listening skills in all subjects.

Commentary

54. Pupils get a good start in reception and enter Year 1 with well developed skills. Results in the national tests for pupils in Years 2 and 6 have fluctuated in recent years, rising at a slightly faster rate than the national trend overall. In the national tests in 2003, taken by pupils in Year 2, results were above average in both reading and writing. The school has successfully maintained these standards, through consistently good teaching, and pupils are achieving well. The picture in Year 6 is slightly different. In the 2003 tests, results were good in reading but fewer pupils than expected achieved the higher level in writing, so that standards were below average overall. Teachers have worked hard and successfully to address this by placing greater emphasis on the improvement of writing skills. Consequently, good standards in reading have been maintained, the quality of writing is steadily improving, standards overall are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils are achieving well in individual lessons and the quality of work seen in Year 5, along with accurate forecasts provided by the school, suggests that standards will continue to rise. The good quality of support provided by teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs is enabling them to achieve just as well as their classmates. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.
55. Standards in speaking and listening are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. By Year 2 most pupils' capacity to listen closely to what others are saying and to express their own ideas clearly and confidently meets the expectations for their age. Some more confident speakers answer fluently and at greater length, when asked questions, reflecting above average standards for their age, while only a small minority at this stage use single word answers and need regular support, which is below expectations. By Year 6, the more able pupils listen and reflect carefully when asked questions and their replies are measured, mature and articulate. Most other pupils offer less sophisticated, but confident responses, at the expected standard for their age, and very few lack the confidence to contribute in question and answer sessions.

56. The good standard of reading is a strength of the subject. The school establishes good reading skills throughout the school by carefully structured teaching of the various letter sounds and blends and by regular guided reading sessions. Most pupils in Year 2 read familiar stories without help and more capable pupils achieve above-average standards, because they read with expression, are developing an interest in a favourite author and are comfortable reading non-fiction books as well as stories. This is because they develop the habit of using the library from an early age and enjoy a lot of help from teachers, support staff and from parents at home. The vast majority of pupils in Year 6 have developed healthy attitudes towards reading and the majority are familiar with books by at least two authors. Teachers make reading interesting by organising events such as book weeks or by inviting story tellers into school to read stories from different cultures. Many higher-attaining pupils make clear and sophisticated comparisons between the styles employed by different writers and have reached the stage where they are building a collection of the work of a favourite author.
57. Standards in writing are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. Most pupils in Year 2 place events in their correct sequence and write them as clear, recognisable sentences with capital letters and full stops. More able pupils achieve higher than average standards because, for example, they regularly use speech marks with accuracy. A minority, on the other hand, need regular help from teaching assistants or their teachers to space words correctly and build sentences in order to achieve the expected standards for their age. By Year 6, many pupils write stories independently, organising their work into paragraphs and are familiar with writing for different audiences through book reviews, persuasive letter writing or clearly balanced arguments. Some pupils are not yet consistently producing the required standard of work without regular guidance from teachers and support staff. The most able pupils, on the other hand, write accurately, at length and introduce a tangible sense of humour or tension to their work.
58. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Underpinning this is the school's very focused use of assessment, which ensures that teachers know pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses well. As a result, they are able to plan work at precisely the right level of difficulty for individuals and groups of pupils within their class and provide good quality support from teaching assistants for those who need it. The other main strength is that teachers plan exciting and imaginative lessons that successfully engage pupils' interest; the combined effect of these strategies is having a positive impact on achievement throughout the school. An area which could be improved is the monitoring of those groups of pupils who are not the main focus of the teacher's or the teaching assistant's attention in the activity session of literacy lessons. If the progress of these groups is not checked from time to time, their concentration and the quality of work tend to tail off and they do not achieve quite as well as their classmates.
59. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The two co-ordinators have carried out rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning through direct lesson observation. With the support of teaching colleagues and support staff, they have established a clear sense of purpose and a consistent approach to the day-to-day planning and teaching of the subject which has led to an improvement in standards and has created a solid platform for further improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. The development of literacy skills through teaching in subjects across the curriculum is satisfactory. There are examples of good quality writing in subjects such as science and religious education and teachers are making sure that they include opportunities for extended writing when they plan work for most subjects. On the other hand, the quality and presentation of work varies from subject to subject and there is scope for raising the overall expectation of the day-to-day standards of writing across the curriculum. Similarly, all teachers are conscious of the need to develop speaking and listening skills and are taking positive steps to achieve this, for example, by including opportunities for role play or partner discussions in their planning for many subjects. These are encouraging developments which all adults in the school could build on by consistently asking pupils to speak clearly and at length, whenever possible.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- The curriculum is wide and interesting and pupils are keen to learn.
- There are appropriate tasks for pupils of different abilities and this helps them to maintain confidence and interest.
- Teachers do not set individual or group targets for pupils which prevent them knowing exactly how well they are achieving and what they could do to improve further.

Commentary

61. Standards in mathematics have improved since the time of the previous inspection. The attainment of pupils in the present Year 2 is above the national average because, although many pupils attain just within the average range, almost none attain below and a good number attain above. Since pupils usually enter Year 1 with attainment that is above average, this represents satisfactory achievement. Standards of pupils in Year 6 are above the national average; when these pupils were in Year 2 they attained very well in the national tests. There has been some change in the year group since then and their achievement is satisfactory overall. There has been an improvement in standards at the end of Year 6, since last year, as the school has put much emphasis on this subject.
62. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. During the inspection the quality of teaching observed was satisfactory with some good lessons. This is corroborated by the quality of pupils' work throughout the year. The planning of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection and there is appropriate emphasis on all areas of mathematics. Work is usually suitably adapted for the wide range of age and ability in each class, but the weekly master plan is not further refined to suit the specific needs of different groups of pupils in each room. Good attention is paid to ensuring that pupils have practice in reading and solving problems. This necessitates them applying their knowledge of number in practical situations and tests their true understanding well. At the start of a lesson, teachers usually explain clearly what the pupils are going to learn and this helps them to focus. The good teaching is characterised by a brisk pace which ensures that pupils remain interested and have no time to lose concentration, activities that are introduced well, give appropriate challenge and intrigue pupils so that they want to work. Teachers use questions skilfully, which encourage pupils to think clearly and develop their speaking skills by giving coherent explanations. Assessment after lessons is used satisfactorily to highlight how successful a session has been. Characteristics of satisfactory teaching include using strategies that do not involve all pupils during mental activities, giving tasks that do not always stretch the higher attaining pupils and allowing minor inattention during tasks. These factors lower pupils' achievement.
63. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well in mathematics. Teaching assistants are well briefed and by making discreet comments ensure that pupils keep up with lessons and remain interested. Sometimes they are so helpful that pupils do not work entirely independently. However, these pupils often do achieve at higher levels than might be expected.
64. The management of the subject has improved and is now good. Both subject leaders are experienced and knowledgeable, and do much to create effective teams. Improved assessment gives a clear picture of how pupils are performing and where further work needs to be done. Teachers give useful help during lessons, but, at present, pupils do not have targets to let them know how well they are doing and marking seldom indicates how they can improve. Teaching has been monitored, pupils' work is sampled, and co-ordinators are involved in most planning so they have a clear overview of their subject.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Pupils' use of numeracy is satisfactory and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. They use charts and graphs to record investigations in science, and information and communication technology furthers their understanding of the range and uses of graphs. Pupils measure materials for projects in design and technology, and use number lines in history that help them to understand when events in the past took place.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are high at the end of Year 6 and achievement through Years 3 to 6 is good.
- The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not planned well enough.
- There is good use of investigations in Years 3 to 6.
- The management of the subject is not good enough.
- There is good use of information and communication technology within science.

Commentary

66. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in Years 1 and 2 and grades in the teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 have improved over the last six years. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Standards as measured by the national tests at the end of Year 6 have been high for several years; this is because there is great emphasis on science during pupils' last year in school. A great deal of time is spent doing revision before the tests. Pupils' use of scientific investigations has improved, especially in Years 3 to 6. Standards at the end of Year 6 are higher than average, because few pupils will not attain the national expectation in the tests and a good percentage will achieve a higher grade.
67. The way that science is taught to pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not good enough to ensure a progressive development of their skills. Science is not taught every week and there is little distinction between the work provided for pupils of different ability, or for those in Years 1 and 2. Although investigations are done, they are very tightly controlled by staff; the correct questions are asked to guide pupils' thinking, but too much is done for them for pupils to find things out for themselves. There is too little challenge for pupils in Year 2. Pupils' work shows little more advanced work for older and more able pupils. However, science is linked well to other subjects, such as when pupils study the life-cycle of frogs. The termly plans are devised to cover all the work, but not enough time is allocated to ensure a progressive development of skills. The plans are not in an easy format for individual class teachers to adapt according to the needs of each group of pupils.
68. The curriculum for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is better as they are taught regularly and investigations are built into all units of work. Information and communication technology is used very well in science, especially in Years 5 and 6. However, there are few examples of extension work for more able pupils and almost no evidence of special work for them on the teachers' planning. Pupils of all ages enjoy the 'Science Days' and finding things out through experiments.
69. The teaching is satisfactory overall. Most teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory, with some good teaching seen for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils work well together and enjoy the subject. They use technical vocabulary well. Teachers and classroom assistants give good support to lower attaining pupils and help them to plan their work. The staff sometimes do too much for pupils, especially when setting investigations, and this does not promote pupils' independence well enough. Assessment is satisfactory, and some sound systems have been

in operation this year, but the staff have not perfected their assessments of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in investigations. Pupils do not have individual targets for science and there are no targets for groups for the grades in the national tests; this is linked to the less than effective management of the subject.

70. The management of science is unsatisfactory; it has not been well organised for some time. There has been no monitoring of teaching for nearly two years, and the subject leader does not know about the standards; even the results of the teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2, for the current year. During the absence of the subject leader, no other senior member of staff has taken over the management of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching across the school and the very good specialist teaching, across the Years 5 and 6 classes, are having a significant impact on learning and pupils are achieving very well by the time they leave the school.
- The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum makes a good contribution to teaching and learning.
- The co-ordinators provide good leadership and management.
- The regular maintenance of the school's good resources has not been established and the pace of learning is slowed down when equipment fails.

Commentary

71. Standards are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. The same standards were reported in the previous inspection, but given that the expectations of standards in information and communication technology have risen considerably in recent years, the findings of the current inspection reflect good improvement.
72. By Year 2 pupils are entirely used to working at a computer, either on their own or with a partner. From an early age pupils see information and communication technology as a tool which helps them to make their work easier and more interesting. For example, the vast majority of pupils successfully label the parts of a plant as part of their science work, which clearly meets the expectations for their age, while a significant minority rotate and re-size shapes in order to attach the petals, which is above the expected level. In Year 6 all pupils are becoming aware of the wider uses of information and communication technology because they use it on a very regular basis to access information, keep a record of what they have just seen or learned, or as a means of enhancing and improving their work. A significant number of pupils have very well developed keyboard skills. They use these competently and independently for solving challenging problems and organising and presenting data, for example on how they had set up electrical circuits or measured the amount of light passing through different materials.
73. The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. The specialist teaching of all pupils in Years 5 and 6 is very effective and one lesson seen was excellent. There is a good curriculum in place and teachers use this well to plan an interesting range of activities which successfully capture the imagination and interest of pupils so that they quickly improve and develop consistently good and sometimes exemplary attitudes to their work. Teachers and pupils are occasionally frustrated and their achievement is hindered in lessons where equipment, such as laptops, fails to operate properly. The school is planning to improve technical support, through a local initiative, but accepts that, in the meantime, more immediate steps should be taken to make sure that teaching and learning can progress smoothly.

74. The subject co-ordinators are providing good leadership. By ensuring that teachers and support staff throughout the school are confident in the use of information and communication technology, they have created an ethos in which the school's good resources are regularly in use in all areas of the school at any time during the day. There is also a good assessment system in place for measuring how well pupils are doing against nationally agreed standards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

Information and communication technology is used well across the curriculum. This is because the use of computers and other forms of technology, such as light sensors and digital cameras, is formally integrated into termly planning for all subjects. There is some word-processing to re-draft work but this could be used more.

HUMANITIES

As there was little **history and geography** on pupils' timetables it was not possible to make a reliable judgement on provision. Geography was not a focus for this inspection. Inspectors saw one lesson in history, studied pupils' work and talked to pupils. **History** is taught in blocks with one or two term gaps in between, and this means that teachers cannot ensure that pupils build skills steadily. Pupils enjoy history and remember facts clearly. Samples of work indicate that they have good levels of knowledge of the topics they have studied. Younger pupils understand that life is very different from when famous people like Grace Darling and Florence Nightingale were alive. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have satisfactory knowledge about aspects of life in Victorian times and thoroughly enjoyed a morning when they dressed up, their classroom became Victorian and they had drill, wrote on slates, and were constantly reminded to sit up straight! Pupils in Year 6 showed satisfactory knowledge aspects of Ancient Egypt and British history, and talked in detail about differences between Athenians and Spartans, which they had discovered through doing research on the internet and from reference books. They were uncertain of the changes that took place in Ancient Greece, and their effect, but were able to place periods in chronological order. Evidence indicates that pupils' attainment is at broadly average levels.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is insufficient religious education taught, especially to pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils have a sound grasp of how people learn from religion.
- There is insufficient distinction between religious education, personal, social and health education, and acts of collective worship.
- The co-ordination of the subject has been unsatisfactory.

Commentary

75. Very few lessons could be observed, as only pupils in Years 3 and 4 had religious education on their timetables during the inspection week; this is indicative of the problem. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not done any religious education since last term and those in Years 1 and 2 have teaching in some weeks during sessions involving other subjects. In Years 5 and 6 the subject is given less than three per cent of the timetable; not only is this less than is required by the locally Agreed Syllabus, but, also, it does not ensure the best promotion of pupils' spiritual development. The organisation of religious education often means that it is combined with personal, social and health education or with acts of collective worship, and this is unsatisfactory for all three aspects of pupils' education. The low profile that religious education has had in recent years has affected the provision and hence pupils' attainment and their personal development. There has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection.

76. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, as sufficient work is done to ensure that they know the basic facts about Christianity, but not enough work is done to ensure that more able pupils can learn more. There are unsatisfactory elements to pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make at least satisfactory progress as they are taught regularly. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have had little reinforcement of the teaching about six major world faiths they have received since they were in Year 1. They are confused about these religions, which is not surprising. They show maturity and understanding when discussing the ideas of Buddhism, which they studied last term. This shows that they have satisfactory knowledge of the facts and sound understanding of how Buddhists feel and the values the faith promotes.
77. No definite judgement can be given about the teaching as too little was observed. The evidence in pupils' books and from discussions with older pupils, however, indicates that when it is taught their learning is at least satisfactory. The teaching for pupils in Years 3 and 4 is well informed and effective. The achievement of these pupils is at least satisfactory. The achievement of pupils in Years 5 and 6 is not as good as it should be, but they are interested in the ideas and the work. It is the deficiencies of the timetable that are affecting pupils' progress in religious education. The curriculum is very wide, and information and communication technology is used effectively to encourage pupils to research the facts about the major world faiths. There are also some sound links with other subjects, such as dance, music, and art and design.
78. The management of religious education has been unsatisfactory but has started to improve with two subject leaders that are committed and knowledgeable. The school presents six religions to pupils, over their time in school, but too little is done to check whether they have any real understanding of the basic facts about each and the difference between them. Too little monitoring of the standards has been done and so the subject leaders do not know how little has been covered and the subsequent effect on standards. Some sound monitoring of provision has been carried out, but almost none of the teaching; so necessary improvements have not been made. The very basic assessment of pupils' levels of achievement has compounded this difficulty; some is done, but this has not been used to determine how much more input is necessary.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Inspectors concentrated on checking standards in art and design and in physical education. No lessons were seen in **design and technology or music**, so no judgements can be made about provision in these subjects. Pupils were heard singing in assemblies, and this was tuneful and joyous, with older pupils providing some harmony. Samples of work around the school were examined to give an indication of standards in design and technology. These were above average in Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 and 4, but they dipped in Years 5 and 6, mainly as a result of too little time given to the subject for pupils to be assured of finishing their projects. In Years 5 and 6 there are inconsistencies about how pupils are required to plan their designs and expectations vary considerably. This has a negative impact on standards across these classes.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is led well and pupils are given a wide range of exciting activities, resulting in good standards.
- Pupils' work is displayed well to celebrate pupils' achievements.
- Assessment procedures are not used consistently across the school.

Commentary

79. Pupils' work is carefully displayed in a celebratory way, throughout the school, and a study of this indicates that the good standards seen at the time of the last inspection have been

maintained. Work in art and design is planned to ensure that pupils develop the required skills and experience a wide range of different media. Art is used successfully to support work in other curriculum areas, such as history, science, and mathematics; information communication technology is used well to support the subject.

80. Pupils are set many interesting tasks that develop their artistic skills well. For example, pupils in Year 1 and 2 discuss work by Kandinsky and create very attractive three-dimensional models, using bold colours and a range of shapes. Good use is made of information communication technology to help this work. In Years 5 and 6 pupils produce large collaborative paintings, using Turner as their stimulus, and paint in the style of Picasso. Since the last inspection there has been an increased emphasis on three-dimensional work, and pupils in Years 3 and 4 study the works of Henry Moore and then design and create imaginative sculptures using a clay substitute.
81. Insufficient teaching was observed to be able to make a valid judgement on the quality. The teaching observed in Years 3 and 4 led to good learning, whereas, in Years 1 and 2 art activities were done as part of a cycle of activities with insufficient input by the teacher, leading to satisfactory learning only. However, teachers do set challenging and interesting activities for their pupils, resulting in some high-quality work in some classes. Standards are higher than expected through the school. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 benefit from the considerable expertise of the co-ordinator, and here much of the work is well above expected standards. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 do too little work to ensure that these very high standards are continued by the time they leave the school. Sketchbooks are used and these indicate that skills are developed progressively. The management of the subject is good. The subject leader collects samples of pupils' work and levels standards so that she has a good overview of the subject and of what pupils are doing. Assessment procedures are not, however, consistently used across the school. The school has obtained a gold 'Artsmark' award, showing that the subject has a high profile within its work.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject is led well and the curriculum is broad.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 attain above average standards.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of different activities and have positive attitudes to their lessons resulting in good standards by the time they leave school.
- A generous amount of time is devoted to the subject.
- There is a wide range of sporting extra-curricular activities that enhance learning opportunities for those who attend.
- There are no assessment procedures to check standards.

Commentary

82. In the last report standards were described as good in Years 1 and 2, and average in Years 3 to 6. No dance lessons were seen, but current inspection evidence from gymnastics, games, and athletics, suggests it is now the other way round; the younger pupils display average standards and their achievement is satisfactory, and the older pupils have above average skills and their progress is good. All pupils enjoy a broad curriculum with plenty of time to develop their skills. Older pupils enjoy a residential visit, where outdoor and adventurous activities are experienced, such as orienteering, and virtually all pupils learn to swim 25 metres. There are many extra-curricular sporting activities available for pupils, and the school participates in many competitive sporting occasions. This greatly enhances the skills of those pupils who take part.
83. In the lessons observed teaching was satisfactory overall, but there was some good and very good teaching in Years 3 to 6. The best teaching was seen when the teacher had good subject expertise, and took every opportunity to develop skills and improve practice. As a result, pupils

work hard to enhance their skills, and their good, and often very good, attitudes have a very positive impact on their learning. Very effective use is made of teaching assistants, ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. In the less successful lessons, there was inefficient use of time creating a slow pace, and no extra challenge was provided for pupils who had well developed physical skills. In these lessons pupils were generally unsure of what they had to do to improve. In some lessons several pupils watched for medical reasons or because they had forgotten their kit, and took no part in the lesson. It is not the best practice for schools to allow pupils not to take part in physical education, and the school does not have tight enough procedures to ensure that absence from physical activities is kept to a minimum.

84. The subject is led well by an enthusiastic new co-ordinator who has ensured that the curriculum is broad and meets all the requirements. He has good expertise, which is used well in Years 5 and 6, where he teaches all the physical education, thus ensuring good standards at the top of the school. Through the many extra-curricular activities, pupils with particular talents are often spotted, and these pupils are encouraged to attend specialist clubs in the community. Assessment is still not good enough, except that detailed results are kept of pupils' swimming achievements. The school has been awarded a gold 'Activemark' in recognition of the work it does in physical education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skills in citizenship are planned through the school council.

Commentary

85. Provision has remained at similar levels since the last inspection. The scheme of work is comprehensive and reinforces well the school's ethos and code of behaviour. It is taught as a discrete subject, sometimes in the form of circle or discussion time. In Years 1 and 2, pupils start to learn about issues which concern them and those around them. Older pupils are encouraged to become aware of increasingly wider issues. The school council provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 to learn some basic citizenship skills. Healthy living, sex, drugs and facets of race awareness are all given satisfactory emphasis but, at present, little time is spent heightening pupils' awareness of parliament and the democratic process. Pupils have a satisfactory number of responsibilities in school, which include helping to organise charity work.
86. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching was satisfactory, with some good teaching in Years 3 and 4, where the topics were appropriate and introduced at a suitable level. Teaching in other classes ensured that the lessons were enjoyable, but they provided limited opportunities for pupils to think and consider deeply. The co-ordinator is keen, but has taken over the subject so recently that it is not possible to judge her effectiveness, and there is little other evidence to judge the previous management of the subject.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	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	3
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).