

INSPECTION REPORT

NEATISHEAD VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Neatishead, Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121090

Acting Headteacher: Mrs K Elliott

Lead inspector: Mrs Joy Richardson

Dates of inspection: 25 – 27 November 2003

Inspection number: 256989

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	79
School address:	School Road Neatishead Norwich
Postcode:	NR12 8XN
Telephone number:	01692 630241
Fax number:	01692 630241
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Hunt
Date of previous inspection:	3 July 2000

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school with 79 pupils in three classes. Pupils come from Neatishead and nearby villages. A significant number join the school late, including some who transfer from Horning First School and start in Year 4. Almost all the pupils are of white British origin, and none speaks English as additional language. Four of the pupils are in public care. Twenty pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, including two who have statements, and this is above the national average. Around half of those on the special educational needs register have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Children enter Reception in September when they are four, starting part time for the mornings only. Pupils' attainment on entry varies widely, but it is average overall. The school has been affected this term by serious staff illness, resulting in the absence of key teaching and support staff, and also of the headteacher who had been seconded to the school for the term. A new permanent headteacher has been appointed to start in January 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6676	Joy Richardson	Lead inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language
9779	Suzanne Smith	Lay inspector	
3961	Michael Raven	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art Citizenship Design and technology Music Physical education Foundation stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides an acceptable standard of education and gives satisfactory value for money. Pupils make a very good start in the younger years and achieve well over their time in school. Despite these strengths, the school has serious weaknesses because of instability in its leadership and management. This has had an adverse effect on the school's ethos, on standards of behaviour and parental confidence, and on the learning of some pupils.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards have gone up in recent years.
- Much of the teaching is good or very good.
- Foundations are very well laid in reading and writing.
- Experienced teachers and support staff work together well in helping pupils to succeed.
- Despite the best efforts of individuals, the school lacks overall guidance and direction.
- School-wide standards of behaviour have not been clearly and firmly maintained.
- Many parents lack confidence in the way the school communicates and deals with problems.
- Some pupils are not doing as well as they should, because of discontinuity in teaching.

The school was previously inspected in December 2001 when it was judged to provide an acceptable standard of education and no longer to require special measures. Since then, the school's talented and committed staff have continued to develop the curriculum and to raise standards. However, initiatives to develop the partnership with parents, to improve the management of behaviour and to share good practice across the school have not yet become embedded, and the loss of sustained leadership has exposed weaknesses in these areas.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement is good overall and has improved in recent years. Children make a good start in the Reception year. Most achieve and many exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception, in all the areas of learning. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve standards which are above average overall, and well above average in reading.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	D	A	A*
mathematics	C	B	E	C
science	E	B	C	A

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

Pupils in Year 6 in 2003 did better for their age than they had done in Year 2, achieving very well over the intervening years. The standard of work by pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 is above average in English, and broadly average in mathematics and science. Pupils throughout the school are reaching the standard expected for their age in information and communication technology.

Pupils' attitudes and personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are satisfactory. Behaviour is unsatisfactory because poor behaviour by a small minority has had an unsettling effect. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In Reception and Years 1 and 2, teaching is mainly good and frequently very good. In Years 3 to 6, there is much good teaching, but also some unsatisfactory teaching resulting in ineffective learning. This reflects a lack of continuity in teaching provision this term.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, enriched by clubs and other activities. Staff care well for individual pupils, although there are currently gaps in the management and monitoring of support and guidance across the school as a whole. The school has close links with the community but there are weaknesses in its partnership with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school's leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is currently a lack of sustained leadership, pending the arrival of the new headteacher, and this has compounded the problems arising from long-term staff absence through illness. Many people, including teachers and support staff, local authority personnel and the chair of governors, have worked hard to tide the school over this difficult time. However, the school has lacked a leader to embody its ethos and to communicate its values and expectations. Pupils' behaviour and parents' confidence have suffered as a result. The governing body ensures that statutory responsibilities are met and is working to improve the partnership with parents.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and carers are interested and supportive, as shown in the high level of response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and in attendance at the parents' meeting. Most of those who expressed a view are satisfied with the teaching their children receive and the progress they make, although some are concerned about a lack of continuity in teaching this term. Parents consider that children are expected to do their best at school and are helped to be responsible. However, more than a third have concerns about behaviour and about children being bullied. A similar proportion feel that they lack information about how their children are getting on, and do not feel that the school is responsive to their suggestions and concerns. Parents find much to commend about the school and are warmly appreciative of the teachers' hard work, but many consider that the partnership between home and school is not working as well as it should.

Pupils generally enjoy school, but some are concerned about the behaviour of other children, and feel troubled by incidents of name-calling and unfriendliness.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Establish continuity and stability in the school's leadership and management.
- Set and secure consistently high standards of behaviour across the school.
- Improve the quality of play and playground relationships.
- Communicate more effectively with parents, in support of pupils' learning.
- Develop consistency in the quality of teaching and learning, sharing good practice.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is very good in Reception and in Years 1 and 2, and pupils reach standards that are well above average. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards are average in mathematics and science and above average in English.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen in recent years.
- Pupils make a very good start in the younger years.
- Pupils do well in literacy throughout the school.
- Some older pupils are not challenged enough in mathematics.

Commentary

1. Children in the Reception year generally reach, and many exceed, the goals for this age, in all the areas of learning. They achieve particularly well in literacy because basic skills are very well taught.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.4 (17.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.0 (16.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.2 (19.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 10 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards which are well above the national average. In 2003, all pupils reached at least Level 2, the level expected at this age, in reading, writing and mathematics, and about half achieved beyond this, reaching Level 3. These results were well above the national average, and very high in reading. Standards, as assessed by the teacher, were much lower in science, and work is in hand to raise achievement in this area of the curriculum.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.6 (26.4)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.4 (27.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.2 (29.4)	28.6 (28.3)

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

3. The results in 2003 were average overall in the three core subjects taken together, but well above average in English. Results were lower in mathematics because few pupils achieved beyond Level 4, the level expected at this age.

4. There has been a rising trend over recent years in the results of pupils in the national tests for seven year olds and eleven year olds. Although attainment varies between year groups because of small numbers, pupils generally achieve well, typically making more progress than expected over the years. However, discontinuity in teaching this term means that pupils in one class are currently achieving less than they should. Because of instability in the school's leadership, there has been a lack of overall direction in sharing good practice, setting targets and harnessing efforts across the school in order to achieve them.
5. Pupils throughout the school broadly reach the standards expected for their age in information and communication technology.
6. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported so that they achieve the learning targets set for them. The school is beginning to identify gifted and talented pupils and to make provision for them, mainly through working with older pupils. However, there is insufficient challenge for high-attaining older pupils in mathematics and science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Most pupils have positive attitudes and are keen to learn. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Behaviour is unsatisfactory overall because of the unsettling impact of poor behaviour by a minority, particularly in the playground. The school's values are not being impressed upon pupils to consistent effect.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- From an early age pupils are helpful and willingly take responsibility.
- Pupils like coming to school, enjoy their lessons, and grow in confidence.
- A few pupils are repeatedly unkind to others.
- Insufficient constructive play leads to over-boisterous behaviour.

Commentary

7. Pupils like school and enjoy their work. They are enthusiastic about practical activities and respond well to the variety of learning experiences planned for them. Most pupils show a growing independence in learning. Positive relationships with teachers result in good levels of co-operation and the majority of pupils strive to fulfil the high expectations of staff. This is less evident where there has been discontinuity in staffing. Pupils are enthusiastic about the range of activities provided outside lessons and attendance at these is good. They respond well to opportunities for taking responsibility.
8. Throughout the school, there are instances of challenging behaviour in lessons. These are usually managed effectively, particularly by established staff who know pupils well. The current instability of leadership at the school results in limited options for staff when dealing with behaviour issues. Many parents are concerned about playground behaviour. It was observed during the inspection that the promotion of constructive play is limited. In consequence, unsuitable activities, for example play fighting, occasionally become over boisterous, resulting in unnecessary 'bumps and spills'.
9. Some pupils are often unkind to their peers and a high proportion of both pupils and parents would like to see a halt brought to this. Although the school regards acts of unkindness towards others as serious, action taken has not prevented the few pupils involved from repeating this behaviour. The recent assembly about behaviour, and exclusion of a pupil, have given a clear indication that aggression is not acceptable. Parents want to see expectations of behaviour consistently reinforced by the school's leadership over the longer term.

10. Opportunities for personal development are planned effectively. Pupils develop confidence and self esteem, responding well to the acknowledgement of their achievements. They contribute well to discussion, and most show respect for the views and opinions of others. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and usually abide by the code of conduct that they have helped to develop for their class. Pupils understand that around the world there are different cultures, customs and faiths. Their awareness about living with diversity is less well developed.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.1
National data	0.4

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

11. Pupils attend regularly and almost all arrive in good time for the start of the day, ensuring lessons get off to a good start. Attendance, though broadly in line with the national average, has dropped a little over the last school year because of an increasing number of families taking holidays during term time. Effective registration procedures are in place ensuring accurate records of those present. Despite recent staffing problems, the school has maintained the routine of contacting parents during the first morning of any unexplained absence.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – any other mixed background

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
78	0	0
1	0	0

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

12. No pupil was excluded last year, but there have been two fixed period exclusions during the current term.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The teaching seen was frequently good and often very good, and this is reflected in pupils' learning and achievement over time. However, discontinuity in the staffing of one class has unsettled pupils and the quality of teaching and learning was unsatisfactory in some lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the younger years lays very good foundations for learning.
- Teaching assistants support and extend pupils' learning to good effect.
- Good practice and high expectations are not shared sufficiently across the school.

Commentary

13. Teaching in the youngest class is very systematic and well planned. Space, time and resources are effectively organised with a view to meeting the needs of different pupils across three year groups. The teaching is vigorous and purposeful, and expectations are high. Pupils enjoy their activities while working hard and taking pride in their achievements.
14. The school is well staffed with qualified and experienced teaching assistants, though the team has been affected by illness this term. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers, planning the next steps in learning and supporting pupils in taking them. They work well with individuals and groups, particularly in supporting literacy and helping pupils to keep up.
15. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported on the basis of clear individual education plans. Able pupils with behavioural difficulties are not always challenged enough through high expectations of their work.
16. Teaching is generally lively and interesting. Teachers share their enthusiasm with pupils and help them to contribute. They ask questions well and work to ensure that pupils understand. Assessment is thorough, particularly in the younger years. Pupils' progress is tracked through the school, and the use of this information, to set targets and to guide teaching, is developing.
17. Learning objectives are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons. As with the targets set for individual pupils, these are sometimes expressed in terms too general to be of real help. At the end of some of the lessons seen, pupils were helped to assess how well their learning had met the objectives for the lesson. In some instances this was done imaginatively, enabling pupils to celebrate their successes.
18. The staff team is hardworking and committed. It is keen to build on what is being achieved and to develop and share good practice across the school, but there is a lack of leadership at present to bring this about. Teaching was unsatisfactory in several lessons observed during the inspection because the management of pupils was uncertain and not enough learning took place.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	6	10	6	3	0	0

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The programme of work is well planned for the mixed-age classes.
- There are too few computers for whole-class work in information and communication technology.
- Activities beyond lessons enrich pupils' learning.

Commentary

19. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It meets all statutory requirements and includes an appropriate programme of personal, social and health education. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now carefully planned on the basis of a two-year rolling programme, with due regard to national guidance on what should be covered in all subjects. The two-year plan enables the school to ensure that pupils do not repeat the same lessons from one year to the next in the mixed-age classes. Particular care and imagination are applied to the planning of the curriculum in Class 1, for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. For example, work in science for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is carefully planned to link with work in the 'knowledge and understanding of the world' area of learning for the Reception children.
20. The school gives careful attention to the planning of provision for pupils with special educational needs. The progress of these pupils is closely monitored by teachers and support staff.
21. The curriculum is suitably enriched in a number of ways, including through the provision of activities outside lessons. Visits from African drummers and an Indian dancer have provided enrichment, as do individual instrumental lessons. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 go on a residential visit to the north Norfolk coast, where they have the opportunity to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities as well as environmental studies. After-school clubs extend opportunities for pupils. There are clubs for netball, football, design and technology, needlework and the choir, run with the help of support staff and members of the community.
22. The staffing situation is unsatisfactory at present because of the shortage of permanent teachers. The accommodation and learning resources are generally appropriate to the needs of pupils and the demands of the curriculum. There are limitations in the availability of computers, which mean that the teaching of skills to a whole class of pupils is very difficult. There is a suitable dedicated outdoor area for physical activity for the youngest children, and an extension is being built which will improve facilities further. Attractive displays create interest and reflect the pupils' achievements.

Care, guidance and support

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most of the staff know pupils well and this results in positive relationships.
- Effective guidance from teaching assistants helps pupils to develop as confident learners.
- There is a lack of overall monitoring of behaviour and welfare across the school.

Commentary

23. Staff are aware of their responsibilities to care for and protect pupils. There are suitable child protection procedures in place that meet local guidance. Class teachers monitor children in care effectively. There is suitable contact with support services where this is needed. A local authority contractor has recently carried out a full risk assessment of the premises and the resultant recommendations are in the process of being addressed. The person responsible for

school visits has been trained in necessary planning requirements. These have not yet been fully implemented pending further guidance from the local authority.

24. There are suitable arrangements to deal with first-aid emergencies and prescribed medicines. First-aid records are kept but not routinely monitored. Regular fire drills ensure everyone knows what to do in the event of an emergency. Checks on equipment and appliances used in the school meet statutory requirements. There are effective arrangements in place to limit access to the Internet.
25. Teachers usually know individual pupils and their personal circumstances very well. This enables them to respond effectively to pupils' personal and academic needs. Positive relationships ensure pupils are confident about sharing concerns when they need to. This is less well established where there are temporary cover arrangements. Pupils with special educational needs, or other individual needs, are well supported and teaching assistants are skilful in the guidance they provide.
26. There are effective arrangements for children to get to know the school and staff before they start in Class 1. Suitable arrangements for pupils transferring to the next stage in their education ensure that this is accomplished with minimum disruption to learning.
27. The school council provides a forum for all pupils to express their views. They elect their own representatives from each year group annually. Pupils' views, opinions and requests, made known through the council, are recorded and published on the school notice board. This has resulted in pupils contributing to charities of their own choice. The council is a suitable vehicle for taking into account pupils views and opinions. At this stage in the school year membership is new and receiving strong guidance. This limits spontaneity in expressing views and opinions.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is unsatisfactory. Links with other schools and the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is overall goodwill and a desire to be actively involved from many parents.
- Instability in leadership has disrupted communication and relationships with some parents.
- Some initiatives to improve links have been suspended because of staffing problems.

Commentary

28. Many parents are disappointed and frustrated by the instability of staffing and leadership at the school, while appreciating the particular difficulties faced by the school this term. They value the school as part of their community and want to support and contribute where they can. This is seen in the number returning questionnaires and attending the meeting before the inspection.
29. A number of initiatives have been taken in recent years to extend communication with parents, although not all have proved successful. Some have been discontinued because of limited support; for example, curriculum workshops and invitations to assemblies on Fridays. Although the school sought parents' views through a questionnaire about two years ago this has not become an established practice.
30. The governors' annual report provides good quality information, but the prospectus is not fully up to date. Parents new to the school this year have not been encouraged to sign up to the home/school agreement. Although staff are very accessible, some parents feel uncertain

about how to approach the school when they have a problem. Discontinuity in the school's leadership has contributed to this uncertainty.

31. The parents' and teachers' association (Friends of Neatishead School) has a small but active committee that works hard to raise funds to support the work of the school. Parents and carers provide valuable support for extra-curricular activities and a few volunteers help regularly in classrooms.
32. Many parents who returned questionnaires are dissatisfied with the information they receive about progress. Annual progress reports inform parents effectively about attendance, attitudes to learning, behaviour and personal development. A useful outline of the work covered is provided. In English, mathematics and science, parents are informed about what their children can do. This is not always set in the context of relative strengths and areas for development, or of the standards generally expected at that age, although parents are suitably informed about the results of national tests at the end of each key stage. There are some good examples of effective target-setting, helping parents and pupils to understand what must be done to improve. Some targets, particularly for more able pupils, are not sufficiently specific.
33. Parents have good opportunities to discuss their children's progress during consultations held in the autumn term and after the publication of annual reports. A monthly forum in Class 1 provides a valuable opportunity for parents to keep in touch with what their children are doing, and all the staff are readily accessible to parents. Reading records and homework diaries are in use throughout the school. There is a lack of consistency between classes in the quality of communication between home and school which these generate. Parents are not routinely involved in reviewing the progress of pupils with special educational needs.
34. The school makes effective use of the community to enhance pupils' learning. There are positive links with the local church, including regular and effective contributions to assemblies. Links with playgroups ensure that parents and children have opportunities to familiarise themselves with the school and its staff before starting in Class 1. Arrangements with the local secondary school help to provide a smooth transition when pupils transfer at the end of Year 6.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Instability in the school's leadership has had an impact on teaching, learning and behaviour, and discontinuity in management has disrupted communication with parents. Governance is satisfactory, ensuring that statutory responsibilities are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school lacks consistent leadership.
- There are weaknesses in the management of pupils' behaviour.
- Policies and procedures are not fully embedded to ensure consistency.
- The staff team works well together, intent on taking the school forward.

Commentary

35. The previous headteacher was in post for seven terms, following an earlier period of instability in the school's leadership. The school now has systems and policies in place to articulate its intentions and help to achieve them, in pursuit of higher standards. However, many of its procedures, for example in managing behaviour, are not yet well established or being implemented consistently.
36. The small size of the staff means that individuals carry many responsibilities, and the challenge has been compounded by the high incidence of serious staff illness this term. This has been a very difficult time for the school. An experienced part-time teacher, a longstanding teaching assistant, the secretary, the caretaker and the headteacher seconded for this term were all absent during the period of the inspection.
37. The permanent teachers have worked hard to maintain the quality of education for pupils. They are skilled and enthusiastic in co-ordinating subjects for which they are responsible, and thoughtful in considering what could be done better. Support staff have taken on extra duties, as well as contributing extensively to extra-curricular activities. A county headteacher, standing in during the inspection, has given valuable short-term support.
38. The staff work together effectively as a team and share ideas, but their efforts need guidance and direction to set priorities for the school as a whole. A stronger overview is needed in monitoring the quality of pupils' work across the school, pursuing consistency and sharing good practice.
39. The process of planning for school improvement is developing, though not yet well established, and it is now on hold awaiting the arrival of the new headteacher. Procedures are in place for the performance-management of teachers and support staff, and there is a strong emphasis on staff development.
40. The chair of governors is actively and supportively involved in school, contributing to the teaching of information and communication technology, and helping to provide a sense of continuity within the school community. Governors understand and fulfil their statutory responsibilities, and are seeking to strengthen their overview of the school's work. They recognise the need to improve the partnership with parents and are developing ideas about how they can contribute to this.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	234,000
Total expenditure	226,000
Expenditure per pupil	2,860

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	9,000
Balance carried forward to the next	17,000

41. Financial planning and decisions about expenditure are taken carefully, in order to achieve the school's educational aims. A large surplus carried forward to this year, partly because of the late allocation of funds, is being used to cover increased costs and to maintain staffing levels. An extension to the school building is underway, and this has been planned to improve facilities including play space for the youngest children.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in all the areas of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The class teacher provides expert teaching which is built upon to good effect by support staff.
- The children develop their independence and social skills.
- Foundations are very well laid in reading and writing.
- Children's learning is reinforced well through practical activities.

Commentary

42. At the time of the inspection, there were only seven children in the Reception year and three of these were part-time. Most children have experience of some form of pre-school provision. They start school with attainment overall that is broadly average for children of this age. Children achieve well in Reception. Most are on course to reach, and some are on course to exceed, the goals set nationally for this stage in all the areas of learning, because of the good teaching they receive. Work is well planned for children in Reception within a class including pupils in Years 1 and 2. Children develop positive attitudes to learning in response to the stimulating curriculum provided. The expertise of the class teacher and the skilled support of teaching assistants foster effective learning, laying strong foundations for the future.
43. Children's **personal, social and emotional development** is carefully cultivated. When the children first come into school at the start of the day they settle quickly because the teacher insists on good, quiet behaviour. Adults and the older pupils set a good example, so that the Reception children know what is expected of them. Children answer their names politely as the teacher completes the register. They enjoy taking responsibility for some of the routines of the day, for example delivering the register to the office. The children are encouraged to be independent, as in learning to clear up after themselves. They develop good skills of concentration, because the teaching is interesting and lively, so that they want to listen and learn. A few of the children have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The teacher and teaching assistants are very supportive and work hard to establish appropriate social skills.
44. Foundations are very well laid in **communication, language and literacy**. The classroom is rich in language-related displays and resources to support the learning of literacy skills. The children have regular opportunities to look at books and to share them with one another or an adult. They 'read' by following letters and words with their finger. They are learning to identify sounds and letters, and some are beginning to read independently. Most of the children write some letters of the alphabet, forming them correctly. Writing is a regular activity that is rightly regarded as a high priority. This builds children's confidence. They progress from copying to writing on their own and are pleased with what they can do. The close attention paid to handwriting and spelling helps children to make a good start in writing.
45. Children's **mathematical development** is supported by practical activities which help children to learn effectively. Most children count to 20 and some count beyond, using a number line to guide them. They show the correct number of fingers to match the numbers 1 to 10, enjoying number rhymes to reinforce their learning. They apply their knowledge in the course of activities such as cooking and shopping. For example, children enjoy buying goods in the role-play shop, exchanging coins for their purchases. Expectations are high, but work is generally well planned to extend children's understanding step by step.

46. Lively and imaginative teaching extends children's **knowledge and understanding of the world**. Learning is related to real life, as when mothers brought in their babies to help children learn about human growth and development. The children enjoyed thinking up and asking appropriate questions, for example about the food that babies eat. They were fascinated to examine the clothes that some of the babies had worn when they were first born, comparing them with those worn now and with their own clothes. The children have regular opportunities to use the classroom computers and they quickly develop their skills, for example in using the mouse to manipulate images on the screen.
47. Children's **physical development** is promoted through a range of activities. Children have access to an appropriate outdoor area where there is a range of suitable equipment to encourage the exercise of physical skills. In the classroom, children learn to handle tools such as brushes, pens, pencils and scissors with increasing control. Children join in with the rest of the class in dance lessons, achieving very well for their age in their awareness of body movements.
48. Children engage in a good variety of work which fosters their creative development. They enjoy role-play. Children learn to observe closely and to develop their ideas in drawing and painting. They take care in mixing paint colours. They join in with music lessons, listening carefully to identify sounds and taking delight in the use of percussion instruments.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Basic skills in literacy are very well taught in the early years.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and enjoy a wide range of books.
- Pupils write confidently and fluently for different purposes.
- Handwriting and pupils' checking of their work are not consistently developed.

Commentary

49. Pupils achieve very well in Years 1 and 2 and reach standards which are well above average by the end of Year 2. They achieve well overall in Years 3 to 6, building on their prior attainment. Standards in the older years, taking Years 5 and 6 together, are above average. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have well established skills in literacy, although they are not currently achieving as well as they should because of the lack of continuity in teaching. Standards have risen since the last inspection, particularly in writing, and the school has pursued improvement in its use of time for reading and writing.
50. Teaching in English is good overall, although there were shortcomings in some lessons in Years 3 and 4. Teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and work is well planned. Teaching assistants work well with groups, extending their learning.
51. Pupils are articulate and confident in speaking. Teachers encourage them to explain their ideas to explore meanings. Most pupils listen well, although some have a tendency to interrupt.
52. Very good foundations are laid in reading in Years 1 and 2. Pupils learn how words are built and they use their knowledge of sounds and letters in extending their reading vocabulary. They

learn to recognise a range of common words. Pupils become confident in reading through practice at home and at school, enjoying their growing skills. The school has worked to develop the purposefulness of independent and guided reading sessions. These sessions are well organised in the younger and older classes, although not currently in the middle class. Reading journals are being used to good effect, fostering thought and discussion amongst pupils, and with the teacher, about the books being read. In Years 5 and 6, reading and writing are linked together well, for example in taking notes about characters. Pupils have access to a wide range of books, and many become adventurous and successful readers. However, arrangements to ensure that pupils read regularly at home are not secure in Years 3 to 6.

53. Pupils make a confident start in writing because of very effective teaching. They learn how to write letters correctly and how to build words from sounds. They learn to spell common words and they practise spellings at home. Pupils write at length, for example in retelling a familiar story, and they develop a fluent joined handwriting style. Pupils build on these foundations in Years 3 to 6, writing readily and interestingly, often choosing words and expressions carefully for effect. Targets are set, highlighting how pupils can improve their writing, and pupils take note of these. Pupils continue to practise spelling, using a spelling log to correct words they have mis-spelt. However, pupils are not consistently challenged to apply what they have learned previously in handwriting, spelling and punctuation. Pupils do not regularly check and edit their work, or take sufficient care with presentation.
54. Support programmes, to help pupils keep up in literacy, are well organised and taught effectively by teaching assistants. This intervention, and careful attention to pupils' special educational needs, result in a high proportion of pupils reaching at least the level expected for their age.
55. The management of the subject is satisfactory and useful initiatives have been taken in developing guided reading and writing, although there is more to be done. The subject leader recognises the need to build further on strengths in literacy, by developing a shared, school-wide overview of expectations and progress from year to year.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Language and literacy are developed well across the curriculum. Pupils are introduced to a good range of non-fiction books and these support learning in other subjects. They often use writing effectively to organise their ideas and to recall what they have learned in other subjects, although the use of worksheets sometimes restricts the challenge for higher attaining pupils.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 2.
- The curriculum is well balanced, giving pupils a varied mathematical diet.
- The most able are not always challenged as well as they might be.

Commentary

57. Pupils achieve well in Year 2, reaching standards that are above average. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Standards are below average in the present Year 6, where there is an unusually small group of pupils this year, a high proportion of whom have special educational needs. In the larger and more representative Year 5 group of pupils, standards are above average for this age. Standards since the previous inspection have been broadly maintained. Results in the Year 6 tests went up in 2002 but fell back in 2003, mainly because only one pupil, in a cohort of 11, achieved beyond Level 4.
58. Throughout the school pupils benefit from a wide range of mathematical experiences. There is an appropriate emphasis on the use of numbers, but pupils also have good opportunities to learn about shape and measuring and also to collect, organise and analyse data. Pupils in Year 2 measure length in centimetres, working at a level more typical of older pupils. They work out simple multiplications using the two and three times tables, achieving well for their age.
59. Pupils in Year 6 analyse data on the speed at which different animals travel and represent this in block graphs. This is at a level more appropriate to pupils in Year 4 and illustrates the below average standards reached by most of the pupils currently in Year 6. However, there is also some work at the expected level. For example, most Year 6 pupils multiply and divide one and two digit numbers and find simple fractions of quantities, such as one sixth of 24. They are beginning to draw and measure angles, although few are secure in this. They find the area of a regular figure, using the formula length x breadth. Pupils in Year 5 complete similar work, achieving better for their age.
60. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall. The strength of the teaching lies in the carefully planned curriculum that ensures pupils receive a balanced range of mathematical experiences. Care is usually taken to match work appropriately to pupils' varying needs, although there are some occasions when too little challenge is provided for the most able. This was seen, for example, in a Year 5 and 6 lesson when the whole class worked on the same problems. The ablest in both year groups were able to solve the problems easily and so did not achieve as much as they could have done.
61. The subject leader for mathematics is currently absent through illness.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils measured and recorded their pulse rate before and after exercise, recording the data they gathered and representing it in block graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of scientific experience is provided, including opportunities for investigation.
- Standards are rising in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

63. The provision for science and the standards reached have improved since the last inspection. Standards in Year 2 are now above average, with more pupils on course to reach and exceed expectations for their age than has previously been the case. Although the standard of work in Year 6 is currently below average, this reflects a small year group with a high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs. The work seen in Year 5 is above average for this age.
64. Pupils in Year 2 are developing skills of scientific enquiry and acquiring a good basis of scientific knowledge. They investigate forces and the properties of different materials, for example in changing the shape of play dough by pushing, pulling, twisting and stretching. They push toy cars and measure how far they travel on different surfaces. Pupils relate their learning to real life, knowing that many different materials are used around the home and understanding how their particular properties fit them for their use. Pupils learn about the human body and were fascinated to learn about early development when mothers visited with their babies. They know what a life cycle is and understand, in simple terms, the life cycle of the frog and the butterfly.
65. Pupils in Year 6 know some of the main components of a healthy diet. They know about the functioning of the heart and the circulation of the blood. Pupils carry out investigations, working sensibly and co-operatively in groups. They observe carefully, record their findings and discuss their conclusions, as when carrying out simple experiments to explore the question 'How do we know air is there?'
66. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in the wide range of work covered, including good opportunities for investigation; this is an improvement since the last inspection. Although around half the pupils in Year 6 last year exceeded the expectation for their age in the national tests, there is not always enough challenge in lessons for able pupils. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 usually do the same work. Although higher attaining pupils in both years produce more and present it better, they are not sufficiently encouraged to ask and answer questions that open up more advanced lines of enquiry.
67. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There has been some helpful monitoring and evaluation of teaching. The subject leader plays a central role in planning the two year rolling programme for science, so ensuring the smooth progression of pupils' learning as they go through the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The chair of governors provides very good support for teaching and learning.
- There are too few computers for whole class lessons.

Commentary

68. In Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and pupils throughout the school reach standards broadly in line with those expected nationally for their age. This is a similar situation to that at the time of the last inspection.
69. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are familiar with basic word-processing. They load an appropriate word-processing program, such as 'Talking First Word' and type, save and print out

their work. They correct their own mistakes on screen, changing letters and words as necessary. They use the mouse and arrow keys appropriately to move around their documents. By the end of Year 6 pupils use the computer to prepare presentations using a combination of images, text and sound. They combine images using the scanner and clip art. Pupils use ICT competently for a range of purposes, for example to produce the programme for a play and the agenda for school council meetings. They use art programs to draw and colour their own pictures on the screen, for instance in the style of the artist Mondrian. Pupils use a computer database to good effect, for example compiling and analysing data on their height and how it changes with age.

70. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2, pupils were carefully introduced to a program for the labelling of body parts, linked with their work in science. They then took turns to use the program, working sensibly in pairs, successfully following the teacher's clear instructions. Teaching and learning in some class lessons is restricted by the shortage of computers. In one lesson, for example, although the teacher had good subject knowledge and explained clearly how to insert a table into text, pupils' learning was limited. This was because many pupils could not see the screen properly, and lacked the opportunity to practise what they were being taught.
71. The chair of governors gives expert and valuable help on a regular basis, working with individual pupils and small groups throughout the school. During the inspection, for example, he provided very good support for two pupils in Class 2 in learning to program a sequence of movements for a wheeled toy. As a result, these pupils made good progress. Although the number of computers is limited, pupils have a wide range of opportunities over time to develop their skills.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. Pupils learn to use ICT as a tool to support learning in many areas of the curriculum. They use word-processing programs in connection with some of their work in English, history and geography, for example. They use spreadsheets and databases in mathematics and science lessons. There are some appropriate opportunities for pupils to use the Internet for research, as when older pupils found out about aspects of life in Victorian times. Good use is made of the digital camera in a number of subjects, including art.

HUMANITIES

73. One lesson in geography and one in history were observed during the inspection, but no lessons in religious education were taught during this period. Teachers' plans and pupils' work, in books and on display, were scrutinised. Teachers follow a two-year rolling programme of work in these subjects within the mixed-age classes, and history and geography are taught for different parts of each year. Visits and visitors extend pupils' learning in these subjects.
74. The part-time teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating all three subjects is currently absent.
75. In **geography** pupils show an interest in places, and are knowledgeable about their locality. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 are very interested in maps, although at an early stage in being able to follow a route on a map and interpret symbols. They worked with enthusiasm in constructing a large map of the surrounding area and marking out its features.
76. Work in **history** is linked with work in geography, for example in considering the origins of village names, or, in the context of early invaders, why people move away from where they are born. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, studying the Victorians, have a good basic knowledge of social conditions of the time, and higher-attaining pupils have a sound grasp of chronology. Pupils read and interpret written sources, and make use of the Internet, in finding out information about the past.

77. **Religious education** is planned on the basis of a weekly lesson in each class throughout the year. Pupils' work, in Years 5 and 6, includes the study of aspects of Christianity and Islam, including, during Ramadan, consideration of the practice of fasting. Pupils gain knowledge and understanding of different religions, though the work planned for Years 3 and 4 has been covered only superficially this term.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. Inspectors observed one lesson in design and technology, one in music and two in physical education. Only part of a lesson was seen in art and design, but inspectors looked at displayed examples of pupils' work in art and design, and in design and technology.
79. Pupils have produced attractive tile patterns in **art and design**, for instance in the style of Islamic art. They have explored patterns in nature. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have experimented with using natural objects for printing. They learn to handle materials well from the start, for example in mixing colours, and using fine brushes for painting.
80. In **design and technology** pupils in Years 3 and 4 have designed and made moving 'monsters'. In the lesson seen, they were engaged in evaluating their designs and products and trying to decide what they could do to improve them. A teaching assistant provides lunchtime clubs in design and technology and these are very popular. Pupils clearly enjoy this subject.
81. In the one **music** lesson observed, pupils in Class 1 enjoyed making the sounds that a train might make, paying careful attention to rhythm and speed. They enjoyed playing the percussion instruments, carefully keeping in time with the teacher's conducting. Pupils were also heard singing tunefully and enthusiastically in assembly.
82. In **physical education**, two lessons were seen in dance. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 responded well to high quality teaching, practising movements and holding positions as they created and performed dances about toys. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 interpreted music through movement as they enacted the story of 'A Christmas Carol' in response to a tape. Pupils were not fully engaged by this and their movements and use of space were somewhat inhibited at times. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 swim regularly, and most pupils learn to swim by the time they leave the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

83. The programme for personal, social and health education has recently been revised and updated, and work on citizenship has been successfully incorporated. There is now a coherent programme for pupils through the years. Appropriate attention is paid to sex and relationships education, the use and misuse of drugs and the responsibilities of living as part of a community. Lessons are supported well with newly purchased and suitable resources.
84. The provision of 'circle time' in all classes makes a useful contribution to pupils' personal and social education. Pupils have the opportunity to talk about things that are important to them and to express any concerns, for example about friendships and other relationships. In a lesson in Years 1 and 2, the teacher made very good use of puppets and a picture poster, to help pupils consider discuss how people should behave towards each other and how to look after the environment. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed maturity in discussing case studies about stealing, exploring different perspectives on the impact of crime.
85. Work in this area of the curriculum is less effective where relationships and strategies for class management are insecure, because of discontinuity in teaching.
86. The teacher with responsibility for the subject is currently absent.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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