

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SEXTON'S MANOR COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124553

Headteacher: Mrs D S Talbot

Lead inspector: Mr A C Matthews

Dates of inspection: 26<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2004

Inspection number: 257434

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:	3 – 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	171
School address:	Greene Road Bury St Edmunds Suffolk
Postcode:	IP33 3HG
Telephone number:	01284 754371
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Priest
Date of previous inspection:	April 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Sexton's Manor is situated in the town of Bury St Edmunds and is in the Minden ward. Pupils come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds that are broadly average. There are 36 part-time pupils in the Nursery and 153 full-time pupils in the school. The roll has fallen by 50 since the last inspection. In line with local education authority policy, the school has a three-term entry into both the Nursery and Reception classes. The admission of fewer than 45 pupils each year necessitates split year groups in half of the eight classes in the school. Almost 40 per cent of pupils come from outside the local catchment area. The school has a very low ethnic minority mix. There is an average percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals and an average proportion with special educational needs. Pupil mobility for last year was low. Pupils' attainment on entry to the Nursery is average overall.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19410	Andrew Matthews	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology, Art and design, Citizenship, Design and technology, English as an additional language
19335	Susan Dixon	Lay inspector	
29688	Mike Brammer	Team inspector	English, Geography, History, Religious Education
32136	Lesley Brookes	Team inspector	Science, Music, Physical Education, Foundation Stage, Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Sexton's Manor Primary School provides an **acceptable** standard of education, but still has **serious weaknesses**. The main weaknesses are the pupils' falling standards and unsatisfactory achievement at the end of Year 2. The headteacher provides unsatisfactory leadership and management and has not done enough to stop the decline in standards. The leadership and management of senior subject leaders are unsatisfactory because their work has too little impact on standards. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but is unsatisfactory in Year 2. Currently, because of its serious weaknesses, the school gives unsatisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is a lack of monitoring of the quality of teaching, learning and standards in the school.
- Standards are falling in Year 2 and these pupils are underachieving.
- Higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged and are not making enough progress.
- There has been insufficient progress in addressing the key issues from the previous inspection.
- Teachers' target setting for pupils lacks rigour, does not take sufficient account of assessments and there is ineffective tracking of pupils' progress.
- Although some new subject co-ordinators have worked hard to improve the organisation of their subjects, the overall leadership and management of these co-ordinators are not having enough impact on standards.
- There has been a good improvement in information and communication technology standards since the last inspection.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support for pupils in lessons and particularly for those with special educational needs who achieve well.
- Pupils have good relationships with each other through the school, although the quality of their behaviour is variable.

The school's effectiveness is unsatisfactory and has declined significantly since the last inspection in April 1998, particularly in the quality of teaching. The school has experienced significant staffing problems due to long-term absence. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have declined noticeably because the school's monitoring has not been sufficiently rigorous or regular. Although some of the new co-ordinators have worked hard in their areas, co-ordinators overall are having too little impact on standards in their subjects. The exception is in information and communication technology where there has been a good improvement since the last inspection. The school improvement planning process is more effective, but there is not sufficient monitoring to ensure improvements in pupils' achievement is sustained.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	B	B	C	D
Writing	A	B	B	B
Mathematics	B	C	B	B

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average*

*Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Pupils' overall achievement is **satisfactory**. Attainment on entry to the school is generally average and, by the time children leave the Reception class, they make satisfactory progress, achieve satisfactorily and attain the expected standards in all six areas of learning. The present Year 2 pupils are achieving unsatisfactorily. Their standards have fallen compared to the above test results of last year, and are below average in the above subjects. Pupils' achievement improves in Years 3 and 4 because teaching is more consistently good and standards are average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 4. Since the last inspection, there has been a decline in standards at the end of Year 4 in reading and science. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they receive. Throughout the school, higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged and do not make enough progress. Pupils are achieving well in art and design through the school and in information and communication technology in Years 3 and 4. In history, art and design, design and technology and physical education standards are in line with national expectations. In science at the end of Year 2, standards are below expectations. It was not possible to make judgements on standards in the other subjects. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is **satisfactory**. Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour is satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage. Relationships are good and attendance is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall, as is the quality of teaching and learning. The quality of teaching of permanent members of staff observed during the inspection was good overall. There were some weaknesses in the way that teachers challenge pupils in the Year 2 and Year 4 classes, particularly the more able pupils who are not achieving to their full potential. The additional support and care provided by the teaching assistants is effective in enhancing the learning of pupils, and particularly those with special educational needs. Whilst the school's provision for English and science is satisfactory, the provision is unsatisfactory in mathematics. The school's target setting process lacks rigour and teachers are not consistently using the results of assessment to ensure pupils are sufficiently challenged.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, but it is not always used effectively by the teachers to ensure pupils of different abilities are suitably challenged in their learning. There have been good improvements in the provision for information and communication technology and the school's main priority now is to develop the use of computers in other subjects. The curriculum is satisfactorily enriched by its range of activities in the arts and sports. Pupils who attend the after-school dance classes thoroughly enjoy the experience and are achieving well. There are satisfactory partnerships with parents and the community and good links with local schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall leadership and management are **unsatisfactory**. Whilst the headteacher has the full confidence of the governing body, her leadership is unsatisfactory as she has failed to stop the decline in pupils' achievement, particularly in Year 2. The leadership of key staff is also unsatisfactory. Greater use could be made of the skills of co-ordinators who are having too little impact on standards. The exception is in special educational needs where the headteacher leads this department well. The governing body provides satisfactory governance, but is over-reliant on the headteacher for information about the school's performance and developments. The school is wholly committed to inclusion, but too often the headteacher's time is taken up with supporting the needs of a very small minority of pupils who have very distinctive needs. All statutory requirements are met.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Both parents and pupils are generally satisfied with the work of the school, but there was considerable concern from parents whose children were affected by the long-term absence of two senior members of staff. Whilst parents feel they would like to be consulted more regularly on school issues, such as the organisation of mixed-age classes, most have confidence in the way that the school is run. The school does not have a school council and older pupils interviewed felt they would like to be more involved in the life of the school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and ensure that pupils of all abilities, and particularly the higher attainers, achieve to their full potential.
- focus the skills of the headteacher more effectively on developments that have the maximum impact on pupils' achievement.
- set challenging targets for all pupils and monitor their progress towards these targets.
- make greater use of the expertise of co-ordinators in their subject areas.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** overall through the school. Children in the Foundation Stage make **satisfactory** progress and achieve the expected standards by the end of the Reception year. At the beginning of Year 1, standards are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily in this year. In Year 2, pupils' achievement is **unsatisfactory** and, by the end of that year, their attainment is below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In Years 3 and 4, achievement is **satisfactory** and pupils' attainment at the end of Year 4 is average in English, mathematics and science. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls in the school.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 2 are not achieving as well as they should and their standards are too low.
- Achievement of the more able pupils is too low and too few are working at the higher levels.
- Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress through the school because of the good quality support they receive.
- There has been a decline in pupils' standards since the last inspection because teachers' targets are not sufficiently challenging, and there is a lack of monitoring to ensure that pupils are achieving to their full potential.
- Pupils' achievement in information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection.

#### Commentary

##### Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage

Standards in relation to the early learning goals by the end of <b>Reception</b> in:	
Personal, social and emotional development	<b>Satisfactory</b>
Communication, language and literacy	<b>Satisfactory</b>
Mathematical development	<b>Satisfactory</b>
Knowledge and understanding of the world	<b>Satisfactory</b>
Physical development	<b>Satisfactory</b>
Creative development	<b>Satisfactory</b>

*Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.*

1. Children enter the Foundation Stage with overall average standards, although there are some weaknesses in the children's speaking and social skills. The year children turn four years old they can start in the Nursery and move into the Reception class in the term in which they are five. This means that some children spend six terms in the Foundation Stage whilst the youngest spend only four terms. This impacts on the children's attainment. The great majority of the older children reach the early learning

goals<sup>1</sup> as the above chart shows. However, some of the younger children who only spend one term in the Reception class do not achieve all six goals.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.5 (16.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.5 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.2 (16.7)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests, standards at the end of Year 2 were above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading when compared to all schools. When compared to similar schools, standards were above average in writing and mathematics but below average in reading. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels was average in writing, below average in mathematics and well below average in reading. As at the time of the last inspection, not enough pupils were working at the higher levels at the end of Year 2. There was no discernible difference between the attainment of boys and girls. There has been a steady decline in standards in reading in the last four years and this is reflected in reading being a priority in the present school improvement plan.
  
3. Standards for the present Year 2 pupils have fallen considerably since last year and are now below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. Some of this is due to the disruption to pupils' learning as a result of the long-term absence of the Year 2 teacher and also because there are fewer higher-attaining pupils in this particular group. However, the most significant reason for a decline in standards is the lack of rigour in target setting, teachers' low expectations of what pupils can achieve and a lack of monitoring by the school to ensure pupils are achieving as well as they should. As a result, pupils are not being consistently challenged in lessons. For example, during the inspection, a significant proportion of Year 2 lessons was unsatisfactory because teachers were not ensuring pupils achieved to their potential. However, since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in pupils' attainment in information and communication technology. In all other subjects, standards are in line with national expectations. In art pupils' standards are in line but they are achieving particularly well because of the effective use of teacher expertise.
  
4. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is average in English, mathematics and science, but standards have fallen in reading and science. The progress of the Year 4 pupils has, like those in Year 2, been affected by the long-term absence of a senior member of staff. Evidence from these pupils' books shows that a significant minority have not made enough progress since the beginning of the school year and there is too little challenge for the higher-attaining pupils. The behaviour of pupils in this Year 4 class was the weakest in the school and this was clearly reflected in some of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in communication, language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.*

pupils' attitudes to work and the interruption they caused to their peers' learning. A lack of monitoring by the school is denying the temporary teachers access to focused support and means that this decline in standards is not fully being addressed. The small number of Year 4 pupils who are in the Year 3/4 classes have not experienced disruption to their learning this year and, whilst the majority of these pupils are achieving satisfactorily, some are achieving well. Pupils are achieving well in information and communication technology and their standards are in line with national expectations. However, their data handling work is above average. In geography and music it was not possible to make judgements on pupils' attainment. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations with pupils achieving well in art, because of the skills of the co-ordinator who takes all three of the classes for Years 3 and 4 pupils. Present standards reflect a decline in religious education since the last inspection.

5. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good and better than other groups of pupils within the school. This is because of the careful planning for these pupils, the setting of challenging targets, the good quality support they receive in lessons and the careful monitoring of their progress. As a result, these pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. However, the more able pupils throughout the school are not being challenged sufficiently and are consistently not achieving to their potential.
6. Funding for pupils with English as an additional language does not come through straight away from the local authority when a pupil joins the school. During this time it is possible for individual pupils to be supported by teaching assistants who do not have specific language training. When this happens, these pupils do not achieve to their potential despite the best efforts of the school's temporary support.

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

The relationships amongst the pupils in this school community are **good**. The pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are **satisfactory** overall. Levels of attendance are **satisfactory** and pupils arrive on time. The spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good relationships that pupils have with each other have a positive effect upon learning.
- Pupils work and play well together.
- Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory overall, but in the Foundation Stage children have good attitudes to their work and are enthusiastic learners.
- Although pupils' behaviour is satisfactory, there are a significant minority of lessons when the unsatisfactory behaviour of a few pupils disrupts the learning of others.

### **Commentary**

7. Pupils have positive views of the school and enjoy school life. Although pupils arrive promptly for school and attendance levels are satisfactory, a significant number of parents take holidays in term time. This has a detrimental effect upon those pupils' learning. The school monitors attendance efficiently, but places insufficient emphasis on the promotion of good and improved attendance.

8. Pupils' attitudes to their work are satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage and in lessons where the quality of teaching is good, pupils are enthusiastic learners. When teachers offer challenging and stimulating lessons pupils respond well and meet their teachers high expectations. Pupils can work well alone and in groups, and some good examples of this were seen in physical education and science lessons.
9. The behaviour in school is satisfactory overall. In the Foundation Stage it is consistently good. The school offers some recognition and reward for good work and behaviour, although the promotion and celebration of good work and behaviour in the school as a whole does not have a high enough profile. The arrangements for dealing with misbehaviour are not sufficiently effective, and the support provided for pupils with behavioural problems is sometimes inappropriate. Pupils and parents reported that bullying was not an issue and pupils were taught appropriate strategies to cope with bullying in the rare cases that it arose. Only one temporary exclusion took place last year.
10. The relationships amongst pupils are good. They work and play well together and this has a positive effect upon learning. They offer each other help and encouragement and are appreciative of each other's successes. Pupils accept responsibility well, but this aspect of the school's work is underdeveloped.
11. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. In lessons where the quality of teaching is good, pupils do experience delight and wonder and reflect well upon their own learning and self worth. Pupils' moral and social development is satisfactory. Pupils understand right from wrong and there is good support for this in personal and social education lessons and circle time when pupils have time to talk about issues which are important to them. Cultural development is also satisfactory. Pupils learn to appreciate music and their own traditions, but the opportunity to learn about other cultures and the diverse society in which they live is not as fully developed.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	5.0
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

#### Exclusions

##### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – any other mixed background
No ethnic group recorded

##### *Exclusions in the last school year*

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
178	1	0
7	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0



## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory**, although the school's provision for mathematics is unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. The curriculum is **satisfactory**. There is a **satisfactory** range of additional activities that enrich the curriculum. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is **good** and meets their needs successfully. Assessment is **unsatisfactory** as the information is not used effectively to ensure teachers' planning challenges pupils of all abilities. The school's accommodation is **good** and resources are **satisfactory**

### Teaching and learning

The teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall, but unsatisfactory in Year 2 where pupils are not achieving as well as they should. The quality of assessment of pupils' work is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is unsatisfactory in Year 2, where the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are not being taught effectively.
- Teachers do not make effective use of the results of assessments to ensure that pupils of all abilities, and particularly the higher-attainers, are sufficiently challenged.
- The quality of teaching of the permanent members of staff was good overall.
- The targets that teachers set for their pupils to achieve at the end of each year are not challenging enough.
- The teaching fully meets the needs of the great majority of pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers make good use of their teaching assistants to support pupils in lessons.
- Although work is regularly marked, teachers do not consistently give pupils enough information about how to improve their work.

### Commentary

12. The quality of teaching has declined since the last inspection and is now satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching in Year 2 is unsatisfactory over time because pupils are achieving below average standards and are not making the progress of which they are capable. Children's achievement is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and, as a result, the great majority of them will achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Pupils' learning has been affected detrimentally in Years 2 and 4 by the long-term absence of two senior members of staff. In these classes, opportunities for pupils to work independently are restricted and teachers do not make enough use of pupils' good collaborative skills. Particularly evident is the way that higher-attaining pupils are not being challenged and this was one of the main reasons for a high proportion of mathematics lessons being unsatisfactory during the inspection. The school's monitoring of these classes has been inadequate during the last term and, as a result, weaknesses in pupils' achievement have not been clearly identified nor subsequently addressed. Teachers work hard to ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities, but this often leads to higher-ability pupils not being challenged consistently. The school also has a very small minority of pupils with very challenging needs. Occasionally, the needs of these individual pupils are put before those of the class and pupils lose access to the teaching assistant support who is used to ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum. However, a present strength in the teaching is the good quality teaching that was observed from the permanent teachers.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	12	10	3	0	0

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

13. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory in all areas of learning. As a result, children make satisfactory progress through the Nursery and Reception year and, apart from a small number of the youngest children, the great majority will achieve the early learning goals by the time they join Year 1. The staff in the Nursery and Reception classes work well together and these good relationships encourage the development of children’s confidence. Children respond well to the ‘plan, do, review’ system which is used in both classes. This way of working makes a good contribution to the development of children’s personal independence by encouraging them to get involved in identifying what they want to do and reflecting on how they did it. There is regular ongoing assessment by the teachers and the information is used satisfactorily to plan the children’s work and build on their previous learning. Teaching assistants in both classes work effectively to support the children, but in the Nursery during the inspection there was not enough support for the identified needs of some of the children. The separation of the classes from the discrete play area restricts teachers’ spontaneity in supplementing the children’s physical and creative development.
  
14. The teaching in Year 1 is satisfactory, but unsatisfactory in Year 2 where pupils are making insufficient progress. This is borne out by the targets the teachers have set for the present Year 2 pupils, which show clearly that pupils of average and higher ability are not being challenged sufficiently. The real weakness in the teaching is the target setting process which does not take enough account of teachers’ knowledge, and the use of assessments to set challenging targets for the pupils to achieve by the end of the year. As a result, expectations are not high enough. This was clearly evident in pupils’ mathematics folders where the work did not challenge pupils sufficiently and expectations of work output during lessons was not high enough. However, during the inspection some good teaching was observed in English. Year 2 pupils in the Year 1/2 classes benefit from the specialist teaching they receive in art and design, and history, when teachers exchange classes.
  
15. Teaching in the Year 3 and 4 classes is satisfactory. Pupils in these years are making satisfactory progress but pupils’ achievement in the Year 4 class has dipped. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils in the two Year 3/4 classes and pupils are achieving well. This was clearly evident in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and art and design lessons. As a result of high expectations, pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and experience a real sense of achievement in their work. The expectations in the Year 4 class, which has been taken by a series of supply teachers, have not been consistently high and the disruption to the pupils’ learning is evident in some of the erratic standards of work observed in their books. The quality of presentation and volume of work has often been unsatisfactory. This has led to some pupils losing enthusiasm for learning and not applying themselves well in lessons. This was clearly evident in a mathematics lesson when the behaviour of a significant minority of boys disrupted the learning of the whole class. The school is fortunate to have procured the services of an experienced teacher who took over the class full time at the end of the inspection. Teachers’ subject

knowledge has improved in information and communication technology because of well-focused training. As a result, teachers have increased confidence to teach all aspects of the subject and this has led directly to pupils' improved achievement. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching in art.

16. Homework was an issue that was highlighted by some parents. Discussions with pupils indicate that most have a clear understanding of when homework is set and its positive impact on their learning. Although pupils have individual targets for literacy and numeracy, not all pupils are clear about their targets. This weakness is further compounded by teachers' marking which, although carried out conscientiously, does not consistently inform pupils how they can improve their work or move towards their target.
17. Teaching assistants are experienced and used effectively to support the learning of individuals and groups of pupils in the classroom. Their expertise is also used when small groups are withdrawn from the classroom for extra support in numeracy and literacy and also to work alongside pupils in the information and communication technology suite. Most teaching assistants have sufficient training to carry out their duties well. Occasionally, a teaching assistant may be asked to support a pupil with very specific needs, without the focused training to meet these needs. When this happens, the needs of the pupil are often not met, and this leads to a sense of failure for the teaching assistant.
18. Pupils who have special educational needs are generally taught well and receive good support. Teachers and their assistants support these pupils' learning well and effectively develop the pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Individual education plans are carefully drawn up and are of good quality and used effectively by all staff to plan work for the pupils. The targets in these plans are clearly focused on the next stage of the pupils' learning and amended regularly to ensure pupils make progress and experience success. The school does not have a gifted and talented register of pupils and higher-attaining pupils generally are not sufficiently well challenged.
19. The assessments that teachers carry out in English and mathematics are analysed carefully. However, at present, the results of these assessments are not used effectively by teachers to plan work that will build on pupils' strengths and address their weaknesses. Co-ordinators do not regularly monitor teachers' weekly planning and, as a result, do not always have enough information to ensure that pupils of all abilities are being challenged in their work or that weaknesses in their previous assessments are being corrected.

## **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is **satisfactory**. Opportunities for enrichment are **satisfactory**. Accommodation is **good** and resources are **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum for information and communication technology has improved but the mathematics curriculum is now unsatisfactory.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The use of specialist teaching to enhance the curriculum in certain subjects works well overall.
- There is a lack of equality of opportunity for higher-attaining pupils who are not consistently challenged.

- The accommodation is good overall, but only satisfactory in the Foundation Stage.

## Commentary

20. Curriculum provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes satisfactorily promotes the six areas of learning. Teachers' expectations of what children can do are realistic and there are some good opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners. A weakness in the provision is the distance of the discrete Foundation Stage play area from the Nursery and Reception classrooms. This means that children have to be escorted to and from their activities, and there is no opportunity for the spontaneous use of the area by staff or children. This weakness has been recognised in the present school improvement plan and plans are in place to create a new play area adjacent to the Nursery classroom.
21. Curriculum provision for pupils in Years 1 to 4 is also satisfactory. A two-year rolling programme of work for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 and 4 is planned satisfactorily, and teachers make good use of National Curriculum websites to help in their lesson planning for the mixed-age classes. However, a weakness in the present system is that teachers do not consistently tailor these plans to the different needs of the pupils in their classes. As a result, pupils, and particularly the older, more able, are not always challenged and do not achieve to their potential. This is particularly the case in mathematics where the curriculum is not meeting the needs of a significant number of these pupils. The school makes good use of specialist teachers in subjects such as history, art and design and science and this generally has a positive impact on the pupils' achievement and attitudes.
22. All the required subjects and the locally-agreed syllabus for religious education are taught. Arrangements for collective worship are satisfactory. The provision for special educational needs is good. As a result, the great majority of these pupils are making good progress in their learning and achieve well in relation to their previous attainment. There is a very small minority of pupils whose needs the school is not able to meet because specialist training has not yet been undertaken.
23. The quality of provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, including sex education, drugs education and citizenship is satisfactory. Pupils have regular opportunities to share their views in circle time sessions. At present, the school does not have a school council, so that pupils' views can be heard more formally.
24. There is a satisfactory range of clubs and out of school activities that are popular with the pupils. Pupils talk enthusiastically about participating in the different clubs, particularly the dance and tap classes, and competing against other schools in football. The curriculum is enriched satisfactorily by pupils' visits to places of interest and through visitors to the school. Good use is made of the historical town centre for developing pupils' understanding and appreciation of the past.
25. The school has a satisfactory number of qualified teachers to meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers and pupils are supported by a satisfactory number of suitably trained and effective classroom assistants. The teaching assistants are keen to continue the development of their skills through focused training. Two teaching assistants require more training to help them meet the needs of specific pupils they regularly work with.
26. The school has ample space in classrooms. There is a good size hall and some good specialist facilities that provide pupils with improved access to the curriculum for design and technology and information and communication technology. The school is

bright and well maintained, providing a pleasant learning environment. Outdoors there are hard play areas and a large attractive field. The school's resources to support learning are satisfactory and there have been good improvements in the provision for information and communication technology since the last inspection.

### Care, guidance and support

This aspect of the school's work is **satisfactory** overall. Pupils are happy at school and they build good and trusting relationships with adults. The arrangements for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are **satisfactory**. The support, advice and guidance offered to pupils are **unsatisfactory**, although the support offered to pupils with special educational needs is good. The involvement of pupils in the life of the school is **satisfactory**. The support offered to pupils with special educational needs is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses.

- Pupils throughout the school build confident and trusting relationships with adults.
- The great majority of pupils with special educational needs are well supported.
- Pupils do not know enough about their own learning and how to improve.
- The arrangements for child protection are good.

### Commentary

27. The good relationships that exist in this school community contribute well to pupils' happiness at school. This has a positive effect upon their learning. The health and safety arrangements are satisfactory overall. All staff are provided with good guidance and training in relation to child protection issues. The arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils are satisfactory.
28. The personal and academic support and guidance offered to pupils is unsatisfactory. In lessons where the quality of teaching is good pupils are well motivated, success is recognised and pupils' knowledge of their own learning is good. However, teachers' marking does not consistently inform pupils how they can improve. Pupils are not sufficiently aware of their own targets for improvement and what they need to do to achieve them.
29. The school's arrangements for seeking and acting on pupils' views are satisfactory overall. The school does not formerly canvas pupils' opinions across the school, for example, through the meetings of a school council. However, pupils do feel that their teachers listen to them and that they do have opportunities to share their ideas with others in circle times.
30. The induction procedures for pupils new to the school are satisfactory. The school has recognised a need to review the current school brochure. The Nursery leaflet has recently been updated and provides better quality information for parents and their children.
31. The school has an established range of procedures for assessing and supporting children with special educational needs. It is well overseen by the headteacher, who is the special educational needs co-ordinator. Individual education plans are of good quality and developed effectively in consultation with class teachers, parents and children. The plans are reviewed regularly by class teachers and new targets are set as appropriate. Parents are also given the opportunity to be involved in setting targets

which their children can work towards at home. There is some good individual support for pupils, sometimes as part of a group, but also working one-to-one with a teaching assistant.

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

The partnership with parents and the community is **satisfactory**. The links with other schools and agencies is **good**. The information provided for parents is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good links with other schools and agencies contribute well to pupils' lives and the professional development of staff.
- A small minority of parents are unhappy with the clarity and quality of some of the information provided.

### **Commentary**

32. The school has satisfactory links with parents. Parents are generally supportive of the school. There are insufficient systems in place to seek the views of the parent body and parents feel unsure about the results of any concerns that they raise.
33. The information provided for parents about their children's progress and what they are taught is satisfactory. Some parents are understandably unhappy with the written reports provided on their child's progress. These contain information about the work that has been done and also pupils' own evaluations of the year, but they lack clear guidance and targets for improvement. Parents are invited to seasonal events, but overall do not have enough opportunities to gain insight into their children's learning or to share in the celebration of successes. Parents have expressed a desire for more encouragement to be involved in school life but there was a very small response for a recent request for help.
34. The school's links with the community are satisfactory. The local community supports the school well. Pupils make some visits to support their learning. Some visitors come into school to share their knowledge and skills and this has a positive impact on the pupils' learning.
35. The links with other schools and agencies are good. The school has good links with pre-school providers and out-of-school care agencies. There are inter-school sports and music events and teachers benefit from supportive meetings and training with staff from other schools.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **unsatisfactory**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory** and governors help to provide a strategic direction for the school. The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is **unsatisfactory** and is not being successful in addressing the serious weaknesses that the school has.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the headteacher are not sufficiently focused on addressing the school's main weaknesses.
- The school's leadership and management have not addressed important key issues from the last inspection.
- The role of subject co-ordinators is under-developed and is having too little impact on standards.
- The school's monitoring systems are not robust enough and have failed to prevent standards from falling.
- There has not been enough monitoring of teaching and learning to develop teachers' effectiveness in the classroom.
- Governors are supportive of the school and play an increasing role in helping the school identify its areas for development.

## Commentary

36. The headteacher has been in post for two years and, during that time, there have been some changes in staffing and some serious disruptions to the school's provision, due to the continuing long-term absence of two senior members of staff. The school has had difficulty in finding suitable members of staff to cover temporarily for these two positions. Due to staff changes, the pupils in these two classes have not maintained the progress of recent years and, in the case of the Year 2 pupils, they are at present achieving unsatisfactorily. Whilst some of the decline in standards may be attributed to the turnover of teachers, the headteacher has failed to implement sufficient monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning to ensure these pupils are making enough progress. As a result, the school does not have a clear picture of how well pupils are doing, and has not put into place effective strategies and support to improve the quality of provision. Improving the quality of the school's monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom was a key issue of the last inspection and has not been addressed. This has resulted in some teachers not receiving adequate professional support in the development of their teaching practice.
37. Due to staff absence, there have been some changes in the allocation of subject co-ordinator responsibilities. The team was impressed with the subject knowledge and enthusiasm of co-ordinators, such as for mathematics and information and communication technology. However, their overall role at present is unsatisfactory as they do not have regular release time to monitor teachers' planning, standards of pupils' work, or to judge the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms. As a result, their expertise is not being used effectively by the school and they are having too little impact on standards in their subjects.
38. Pupils are set targets to achieve in reading, writing and mathematics. These are set at the beginning of a school year by the class teacher and headteacher. Evidence from the targets set shows that the system does not ensure enough challenge and is too mechanistic, with all pupils expected to make the same progress from their individual starting points. The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress over the course of a year are not rigorous enough and there is a lack of formal professional dialogue between the class teachers and a member of the senior management team to ensure that pupils through the year maintain sufficient progress to enable them to meet their end-of-year targets. At present, too much is left to chance and, at present, a significant minority of pupils do not achieve as well as they should because of the lack of rigour in this tracking system.

39. The school was left, at the end of the last inspection, with some important key issues to address. The school's development planning now clearly identifies the school's priorities. Information and communication technology standards have improved, but the planning for the more able pupils is still not sufficiently challenging and, as a result, these pupils are not achieving as well as they should throughout the school in English, mathematics or science. Governors are supportive of the school and are kept up to date with developments through the headteacher's termly written report. Whilst a significant number of governors visit the classrooms to observe lessons, they still rely too heavily on the headteacher for information about the school's effectiveness and pupils' progress. Governors have a good range of skills and greater use could be made of their expertise in helping the school to evaluate its effectiveness and its developments, such as through formal discussions with pupils. Governors fulfil all their statutory duties and have an increased input into the improved school improvement planning process.
40. The school has a strong commitment to inclusion and staff work hard to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils. However, the time of the headteacher is too often taken up by supervising individual pupils whose needs teachers and their assistants are not able to meet. This takes the headteacher away from her monitoring role and is not an effective use of her time. Performance management is in place for teachers and is satisfactorily linked to planned school improvements. However, the process has not been extended to teaching assistants who are keen to discuss the effectiveness of their work with a senior manager and plan future training to help ensure they have requisite skills for the work they are asked to undertake. At present, a minority of teaching assistants are not sufficiently trained for specific tasks they are asked to carry out. This is having an adverse effect on their morale and is not making the best use of their time or experience.

### ***Financial information***

#### ***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	475 523	Balance from previous year	41 362
Total expenditure	482 854	Balance carried forward to the next	34 031
Expenditure per pupil	2 367		

41. The school's budget is monitored carefully by the finance committee. Much of the carry forward from the last financial year has been used to maintain generous staffing levels, despite a falling roll, and to meet the costs of a much higher than expected supply teacher budget.

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

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

The overall provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes receive a suitable start to their education. Teaching is satisfactory in all areas. The staff in the Nursery and Reception classes work well together and some lessons take place with the whole group. Satisfactory planning and assessment systems contribute to the sound start these children receive in the early years of their education. The new Foundation Stage co-ordinator has introduced the local authority's supplementary assessment scheme, which has the potential to improve further the information gained about the children when they join the school. Attainment on entry covers a relatively broad spectrum but most children are in line with national expectations. Some are below with regard to their speech and social skills. The children progress from Nursery to Reception at the beginning of each term according to their birth date. By the time they move into Year 1, a high percentage of the pupils, who have had more than one term in the Reception class, achieve the early learning goals in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, it is the policy of the local education authority that summer-born children have only one term in the Reception class and, although they achieve satisfactorily, do not consistently attain as well as their older peers. There are effective working relationships between the teachers and their teaching assistants. Occasionally, newly admitted children have specific needs that the school cannot meet immediately until funding comes from the local education authority. In cases such as these, the teaching assistant works with these children and this takes her away from supporting other groups, whose learning is affected. Children with special educational needs are supported well and achieve well when compared to their prior attainment.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- The 'plan, do, review' system, which is used in both classes, promotes and develops children's personal independence well.

#### **Commentary**

42. Children quickly develop their confidence and establish satisfactory relationships with one another, the class teachers and the classroom assistants. By the end of the Reception year all children achieve satisfactorily with the great majority attaining the early learning goals. They generally behave well and are encouraged to be considerate of others. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and adults capture children's interest and attention by their enthusiasm and by the good use of resources. These qualities, together with satisfactory planning, ensure that there is the right emphasis on fostering and maintaining pupils' concentration in directed activities. Children plan some of their independent learning themselves and this promotes personal independence well. All the children receive plenty of praise and encouragement. This is effective in building their self-esteem and confidence. They manage to change for physical education lessons with limited adult intervention and cope well with their own toileting.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children's speaking and listening skills are fostered effectively.
- Learning is supported and encouraged well through the well-planned use of resources.
- There are good opportunities for role-play to support the development of speech and language.

### **Commentary**

43. Suitable opportunities are provided for children to extend their speaking skills through all areas of learning and as a result, children achieve satisfactorily with most attaining the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Sensitive adult intervention encourages them to talk about what they are doing. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and a good lesson to promote children's listening skills was observed in which games, and clear enunciation by the teacher, reinforced the 'hearing' of sounds. Speaking is fostered well during role-play in the 'Police Station' home area. The adults are patient with those who need more time to think about what they want to say, and this helps to boost the children's confidence and willingness to contribute. For most, reading skills are at very early stages of development, but reading is promoted satisfactorily. Some of the children are beginning to read some simple words and enjoy their reading books. There is a good range of story books, together with some non-fiction titles, and this is supplemented by suitable books in the school library. Some children are trying to write simple phrases and sentences unaided and letter formation is usually correct. Good use is made of classroom computers to support children's early reading and writing skills.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are beginning to count with confidence.
- Learning is reinforced well through the use of well-chosen resources.
- More use could be made of mathematical puzzles to develop the children's understanding.

### **Commentary**

44. The children are achieving satisfactorily in their early understanding of number, shape and measure, with the great majority attaining the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. They can count to 10 and some can count backwards as well. One or two handle simple calculations correctly, such as 'one more than' with numbers between 5 and 10. Greater use could be made of games and puzzles, specifically designed to support early understanding of number. The children's learning is supplemented by suitable computer programs. Children develop a satisfactory understanding of different two and three-dimensional shapes and can name them. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. A very good lesson on comparing heavy

and light objects was seen in which resources were used particularly well to promote understanding.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have opportunities to explore and learn about their world in the classroom, outdoors and sometimes away from the school site.

### **Commentary**

45. Children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning because they have opportunities to experience a range of activities. They show a curiosity and interest in the activities presented to them, and are achieving satisfactorily. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and suitable resources are chosen to support learning. Children quickly learn to use computers and are developing good control of the mouse. Skills in the use of information and communication technology are fostered well with a programmable floor 'roamer' and through using equipment to listen to story tapes. The children learn more about their world by handling and discussing a variety of objects. They also develop their understanding by going on local visits and by meeting visitors to the school, such as the local firemen who brought their fire engine during the inspection. Children learn about change through regular cookery sessions; for example, they discussed how their jam buns changed shape and colour when they were cooked.

### **Physical development**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have suitable opportunities to develop their physical skills on a range of large exercise equipment.
- The well-resourced outdoor play area is not adjacent to the Foundation Stage classrooms.

### **Commentary**

46. Children have regular access to a secure outdoor area, although it is not adjacent to their classrooms. Satisfactory use is made of timetabled sessions in the school hall, and planned physical education sessions are used to develop children's large motor skills and co-ordination, for example in dance and gymnastics. Fine motor movements are satisfactorily developed through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors, and small construction apparatus. The children are encouraged to choose from a range of resources to create and construct models, such as cardboard tube policemen with pipe-cleaner hair, and are given plenty of time and support to complete them. Children have suitable opportunities to manipulate a range of small equipment with dexterity. Teaching and learning in all physical development activities are satisfactory and as a result, the great majority of children will meet the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.

## **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have plenty of opportunities for imaginative play.
- They have a suitable range of activities to develop their creativity.

### **Commentary**

47. Children have a range of opportunities to develop their creativity. Planning of this area takes account of the needs and interests of children who are given a suitable range of artistic experiences. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and most children attain the expected standards at the end of their Reception year. The children use a variety of pencils, paints and other media to create images. Displays of children's work show that they have used different techniques to create patterns, such as rolling marbles dipped in paint. They handle play-dough and use a variety of tools to create different effects. They have made two-dimensional portrait plates from clay to illustrate family members. They learn to sing a number of songs and rhymes, and are given opportunities to listen to music as well as playing percussion instruments. They have many good opportunities to use their imagination through role-play, such as the current 'police station'. The lack of an adjacent secure area does stop the spontaneity of children continuing their learning outside.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

The provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- The quality of teaching has fallen since the last inspection, although some very good teaching was observed during this inspection.
- The standards of reading and writing in Year 2 are not high enough.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to write at length.
- More able pupils should attain higher standards.
- The assessment procedures for the pupils' writing are not leading to improvements.
- Some effective links are made with history and geography, but more could be done to promote writing across other subjects.

### **Commentary**

48. In the 2003 national tests, Year 2 pupils attained standards in reading that were in line with the national average, but were below those achieved by pupils attending similar schools. The percentage of those attaining the higher levels was well below the national average. In writing, the pupils attained standards that were above the national average and above those achieved by pupils at similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels was in line with the national average. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection evidence and the school's targets indicate that standards will be lower in the 2004 tests. At the last

inspection, standards in reading and writing were in line with expectations for Year 2 pupils. They are now below expectations in both. Since the last inspection, standards for Year 4 pupils have fallen to average in reading and remain average in writing.

49. Standards in speaking and listening are average. Most pupils usually listen well to their teachers and to what other pupils say. They are keen to share opinions. Most pupils express themselves adequately and some higher-attaining pupils give clear and thoughtful explanations. A small number do not listen consistently well as was seen in a Year 4 mathematics lesson and this slows the learning of the class when things have to be explained again.
50. Standards of reading are below average in Year 2 where a majority of pupils do not read as well as they should. Due to the school being unexpectedly closed for the last day of the inspection, it was not possible to listen to readers from every year group. However, inspection findings reinforce the school's analysis of assessments that whilst many younger pupils have satisfactory reading skills, their understanding of what they are reading is weak and leads to below average standards. The school has recognised the importance of improving reading and has made it a main focus for this year's school improvement plan. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 achieve satisfactorily and attain average standards.
51. Standards of writing are below average by the end of Year 2 and these pupils are not achieving to their potential because they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills. By the end of Year 4, pupils are achieving satisfactorily and standards are average because these pupils have more opportunities to develop these skills in other subjects. For example, in one very good lesson observed, pupils used their recently acquired knowledge of figurative language most effectively in their writing. However, the more able pupils through the school are too often achieving unsatisfactorily because they are not sufficiently challenged. Greater use could be made of information and communication technology for the pupils to draft and edit their own work.
52. The quality of teaching, judged by the work in pupils' books and an analysis of their progress since the beginning of the school year, is satisfactory overall but unsatisfactory in Year 2. However, in lessons observed during the inspection, teaching and learning were good overall with no unsatisfactory teaching seen. Teachers' planning shows secure subject knowledge, with the National Literacy Strategy well established. In lessons, teaching assistants are used well to support pupils with special educational needs and this leads to these pupils making good progress and achieving well. In a very good lesson observed, the use of an African poem contributed significantly to the pupils' cultural development. A strength of teaching in the older classes is the way that pupils are asked to assess their progress at the end of a lesson so that the teacher can take this information into account when planning future work. In this way, pupils' views are valued and they are more involved in their own learning. The school tests the pupils' progress in reading, but does not track progress in writing by regularly assessing examples of their work. As a result, the co-ordinator does not have a clear knowledge of pupils' strengths and weaknesses and what is needed to improve standards. There are some good examples where marking of the pupils' work informs them how to improve, but too many teachers do not follow this good practice. The target setting process for the subject is not rigorous enough, does not involve the co-ordinator sufficiently and is not helping to drive up standards.
53. Whilst the leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall, the co-ordinator is at present having too little impact on standards. She has monitored

teaching and learning, has made a clear analysis of the current situation and has taken steps to address the decline in reading standards amongst younger pupils. However, these measures have not yet had time to take effect. The governor with responsibility for literacy is supportive and keeps other governors updated of developments in the subject.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

There are opportunities in Years 3 and 4 for pupils to develop their writing skills in history and geography. However, in other years teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to develop these skills. Although the school makes some good use of non-fiction texts in literacy lessons to support learning in other subjects, this is an area that can be developed further across the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have fallen since the last inspection and higher-attaining pupils through the school are not sufficiently challenged.
- Pupils do not achieve well in Year 2 and their standards are below average.
- A high proportion of lessons observed during the inspection was unsatisfactory.
- There is unsatisfactory use of assessment to ensure pupils of all abilities are sufficiently challenged.
- The skills of the experienced co-ordinator are not used sufficiently in target-setting or monitoring.

### **Commentary**

54. Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 improved in the 2003 National Curriculum tests and were above average. The proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 2 was well above average, but the proportion gaining the higher Level 3 was below average. These results showed an improvement over the previous year. Standards for the present Year 2 pupils have fallen since last year and are now below average, as is the proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. Achievement for these pupils is unsatisfactory because their progress is not as good as it should be, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils. By the end of Year 4, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they are attaining average standards.
55. Since the last inspection, standards have fallen at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 4. Part of the reason for this fall in standards is the long-term absence of the Year 2 and the Year 4 teachers. As a result, their classes have been taught by a succession of supply teachers who have not provided stability for the pupils. However, another important reason for the decline in standards is the unsatisfactory target-setting procedures and the way that the pupils' progress is tracked through each year. The teachers set targets and discuss these with the headteacher, and often these are not sufficiently challenging to ensure that pupils are working to their full potential. Despite the recent hard work of the new co-ordinator in monitoring resources and analysing formal assessments for the different years, her leadership and management are unsatisfactory because of her lack of time for monitoring pupils' learning in the

classrooms. As a result, weaknesses are not being identified and a significant proportion of pupils are not making enough progress through each year.

56. The quality of teaching is satisfactory over time in Years 1, 3 and 4 but unsatisfactory in Year 2. However, during the inspection a high proportion of lessons throughout the school was unsatisfactory. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy planning documents for their lessons, but in the Year 1/2 mixed-age classes, there is often not sufficient emphasis on ensuring that the older, higher-attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged and their learning extended. Much of the pupils' work in Years 1 and 2 is based on work sheets and often the same work sheet is given to pupils of different abilities. As a result, teachers' expectations for the higher-attaining pupils are too low as the work does not sufficiently challenge them. Pupils in the Year 3/4 classes are making satisfactory progress because the teachers make good use of pupils' self assessment to ensure the work is matched to their needs. They also use resources effectively to enhance learning as was seen in a lesson concerned with three-dimensional shapes. The quality of teaching from the supply teachers in the Year 4 class has ranged from good to unsatisfactory. Pupils have covered sufficient work to consolidate their new skills, particularly in their number work, but their progress is being hampered by marking which does not inform them how they can improve and a correction policy that is not consistently applied through the school. As a result, too few pupils are learning from their mistakes. The supply teachers' behaviour management for the Year 4 class has not been consistent and the learning in an unsatisfactory lesson observed was severely affected by the pupils' inability to listen and apply themselves to their work.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. Teachers, at present, plan too few opportunities for pupils to use and develop their mathematics in other subjects. A good example was, however, seen in a Year 1/2 science lesson, but generally there are too many missed opportunities for pupils to reinforce their mathematical understanding and to practise the use of basic skills.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching from the permanent members of staff is consistently good with some very good provision.
- The use of specialist teaching in Years 3 and 4 has been affected by the long-term absence of the co-ordinator.
- Monitoring of the subject is unsatisfactory.
- Assessment is not used as well as it might be to identify shortcomings and to ensure challenge for the more able pupils, who are not achieving to their potential.
- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across year groups affect pupils' achievement.

### **Commentary**

58. At the time of the last inspection, and in the 2003 national tests, standards were good throughout the school. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 4 were high. However, scrutiny of recent work, and conversations with pupils indicate that standards are below

average at the end of Year 2 and average in Year 4. A major contributory factor to the falling standards is the turbulence in staffing, which is affecting pupils' achievement in both Years 2 and 4.

59. The quality of teaching, judged from lessons observed and the scrutiny of pupils' work is satisfactory overall, but indicates a wide variation in its quality. This is particularly so for Year 2 pupils, some of whom are in the mixed-aged Year 1/ 2 classes, but a majority of whom are in the discrete Year 2 class. This class has had a series of teachers and this has adversely affected the pupils' achievement. A lack of monitoring has resulted in too many of these pupils not achieving satisfactorily. However, in the Year 1/ 2 classes, pupils are achieving well because the teachers plan carefully and ensure there are frequent opportunities for investigational work. In these classes, pupils are grasping research concepts, and are given the opportunity to present their own findings. In the discrete Year 2 class, pupils had little idea of why experiments were designed in the planned format and had no concept of a 'fair test'. Work from the previous term was limited in quantity.
60. In Years 3 and 4, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of concepts in oral and practical work, although this is not always reflected in the quality of their reporting skills. The quantity of work in their books is limited and some is not of a sufficiently high quality. A scrutiny of current work shows that there is little differentiation in tasks, and that more able pupils are insufficiently challenged. Pupils in the mixed Year 3 and 4 classes, as well as in the discrete Year 4, are taught by the co-ordinator, who is at present on long-term sick leave. Pupils have had a succession of supply teachers who have not maintained the above average standards of the last inspection. Whilst the one lesson observed was satisfactory, the teacher's subject knowledge was insecure and this restricted the progress of the more able pupils. Pupils' opportunities for independent research are unsatisfactory.
61. Assessment is carried out regularly and records of achievement kept. However, it is not at present rigorous enough, and the results are not used sufficiently well to ensure that pupils of all abilities are appropriately challenged. This is particularly so with the higher-attaining pupils who do not make the progress of which they are capable. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory and not enough has been done in the last term to ensure that pupils achieve appropriately. Long and medium-term planning is satisfactory and includes a two-year rolling programme of topics to ensure coverage in the mixed-age classes. Resources are sufficient. They are stored well, labelled and easily accessible to staff.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 as the school was closed for the last day of the inspection when it was planned to talk to pupils about their work. As a result, no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching and learning in these years.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been a good improvement in the school's provision since the last inspection.
- Teachers make good use of teaching assistants in small group work.
- Data handling skills are taught well in years 3 and 4.
- The school's information and communication technology suite enables the effective teaching of skills to small groups.

- Computers are not used consistently to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

62. There has been a good all round improvement in the school's provision. Because of this, pupils are achieving well overall and reaching the expected standards in all aspects of the subject by the time they leave the school. The exception is data handling where pupils' attainment is above expectations at the end of Year 4. The school has worked hard to raise the profile of the subject by increasing the number of computers through the school and creating a small computer suite. At present, the suite is too small for whole-class teaching and does not benefit from a large screen which would enable the pupils to follow the teachers' instructions more closely. The school is aware of this and has ordered a projector as part of the present development plan. Teachers make good use of the suite for small group work and the role of teaching assistants in supporting pupils is well developed. Despite not benefiting from official training, these assistants have developed their skills and knowledge well and play an important part in the school's support and provision for pupils. Despite the improvement in pupils' skills and knowledge, the school's main priority now is to develop the range of programs that pupils use to support their learning in other subjects. At present, there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' learning and consolidate their new skills.
63. The quality of teaching is good in Years 3 and 4. Teachers now have a greater confidence and subject knowledge to teach the subject effectively because of the well-planned in-service training that they have received since the last inspection. Teachers' questioning in group and whole-class sessions challenges pupils' learning and shows good subject knowledge. For example, the teacher's questioning in the lesson on data handling emphasised the importance of pupils ensuring all their questionnaires had been correctly filled in before processing the results on the computer. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject because they collaborate well in lessons and understand how information and communication technology can link with other subjects. The two co-ordinators have provided good leadership and management since the last inspection but, at present, the school is not benefiting from the skills of the new co-ordinator. She has no opportunity to work alongside other teachers and teaching assistants to support their work or evaluate the areas that need to be further developed. Now pupils are developing a range of skills through the year, the school has rightly recognised the need for a relevant and straightforward record sheet to plot pupils' progress in the different areas of the subject.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

64. The planned use of information and communication technology in other subjects is at present unsatisfactory as teachers do not have access to a sufficient number of relevant programs. During the inspection, children in the Foundation Stage used computers regularly and there was some good work in three-dimensional shapes in Years 3 and 4.

## HUMANITIES

No judgement could be made about provision, standards or teaching in **geography**. No lessons were seen during the inspection and only a limited amount of the pupils' work was available for scrutiny. Pupils in the Year 2 class had no completed work to analyse. As a result of time lost to the inspection team when the school closed because of bad weather, there was no discussion with older pupils about their work. National guidelines are followed in planning the curriculum. There is satisfactory development of the pupils' social and cultural awareness such as when older pupils study village life in India and younger pupils follow the travels of Barnaby Bear to different countries.

### History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Pupils benefit from the use of specialist teaching in Years 3 and 4.
- There are good links to literacy in Years 3 and 4 which enhance the pupils' understanding.
- The role of the subject leader is limited and insufficient use is made of her expertise.

### Commentary

65. Standards in history are in line with national expectations and remain the same since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school makes good use of the skills of a specialist teacher who teaches all pupils in Years 3 and 4. Careful joint-planning by the teachers in the two Year 1/ 2 classes is leading to higher standards than in the discrete Year 2 class, as more work is recorded and the teaching approach is more imaginative. The development of the Year 1/ 2 pupils' understanding of chronology is increased by the effective use of the experiences of grandparents and parents that allow the pupils to compare the toys of three generations. The school has built some good curriculum links with the middle school that helps to ensure that pupils build on what they know when they move into Year 5.
66. Teachers in Years 3 and 4 regularly plan for pupils to use their literacy skills in the subject. For example, using booklets on World War II, the pupils reflected on and recorded the advantages and disadvantages of evacuating children from the cities. However, links with literacy are not successful when younger pupils are expected to copy work and there is insufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils. There are good links with information and communication technology, such as when pupils use the Internet to find information about the life of the Ancient Greeks. However, more use could be made of computers for pupils to draft and edit their own work.
67. The role of the co-ordinator is unsatisfactory because it is not developed sufficiently by the school. She has no planned opportunities to monitor teaching and learning and, because of this, she does not fully understand the strengths of the subject or the areas that need to be developed.

## Religious education

No judgement could be made about provision, the quality of teaching or standards in Years 3 and 4 in **religious education** as only one lesson was seen during the inspection and a limited amount of work was available for scrutiny. The time lost to the inspection when the school closed on the final morning of the inspection resulted in no opportunities for the planned discussions with pupils.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 helps pupils to relate to their own experiences.
- The skills of the co-ordinator are not used effectively.

## Commentary

68. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for the subject. In the one lesson observed in a Year 1/2 class, the teaching was good. Pupils learned how the story they listened to related to their own experiences and this successfully deepened their understanding of right and wrong. Standards are in line with the agreed syllabus in Years 1 and 2 but there was not enough work in pupils' books in Years 3 and 4 to make a judgement about standards in these years.
69. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has worked hard. Her subject action plan notes the need for monitoring. However, her role at present is unsatisfactory as she has no time for monitoring teaching and learning and has too little impact on standards. The subject is brought to life for some younger pupils who take part in Advent activities at the cathedral. The school makes good use of a governor who is also a vicar of a local church. She knows the pupils well and contributes knowledgeably to units or work on Christianity. There have been no visitors or visits made in connection with non-Christian faiths, and artefacts of different faiths are not used effectively to increase the pupils' understanding of the different faiths they study.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. Only one lesson was seen in **art and design**, and **music**, and none in **design and technology**. It is therefore not possible to judge the school's provision in these subjects. Judgements are based on interviews with pupils, discussion with teachers and the subject co-ordinators and on scrutiny of pupils' work.
71. In **art and design**, pupils achieve well throughout the school and attain standards that are in line with expectations by the time they reach the end of Year 4. Pupils benefit from the skills of two specialist teachers who teach the classes of their colleagues. By the end of Year 2, pupils experience an adequate range and variety of materials, tools and techniques and have opportunities to express their ideas through drawing, painting and using two and three-dimensional materials. Pupils benefit from experimenting in their sketch books and the more able Year 2 pupils' sketches of pine cones and leaves are of high quality. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 benefit from the skills and expertise of the art co-ordinator. In one lesson observed, pupils made particularly good progress in their design work, which prefaced their work on making a model chair. Particularly good questioning by the teacher and the use of a wide range of exemplars enabled pupils to appreciate the importance of evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of their designs before the making process. Carefully mounted art displays around the school enrich the environment and also raise the status of the subject. Pupils from the school

regularly take part in local and national art competitions and have won several prizes and commendations for the quality of their work.

72. Standards in **design and technology** are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4 and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Teachers' planning and samples of work show that pupils plan, design, make and evaluate their work. Teachers make good use of focused tasks, such as in Years 1 and 2 where pupils practised a range of different stitches before sewing together their hand puppets. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 work with a satisfactory range of materials. They show good evaluative skills. For example, pupils talked knowledgeably about the importance of choosing the correct material for their wallets and ensuring that fastenings were both strong and reliable.
73. **Music** was not a focus of this inspection. One lesson was observed in which the teaching and learning was of good quality. The subject has a dedicated room and is suitably resourced.

### **Physical Education**

74. From the observations made of three lessons, standards are in line with expectations. Pupils were seen taking part in a dance session, gymnastics on apparatus, and practising ball skills. The teaching and learning in each of these lessons were of a satisfactory standard and pupils achieved satisfactorily. Teachers' planning is based on the national guidelines, supplemented by the local authority's scheme of work. A strength of the school is the expertise in dance of a member of staff. Her skills are used to develop planning across the classes. Pupils were observed taking part in an after-school dance club and performed a devised routine with grace and enthusiasm. There are also football and tap dance clubs, and the school recently benefited from a local football team who worked with all classes for a day. However, other out-of-school sports provision is limited. In addition to small and large school halls, the school has a variety of outdoor areas. The school's own swimming pool has been closed, but pupils visit a local leisure centre for concentrated swimming tuition. The subject is suitably resourced with a range of gymnastic apparatus together with sufficient resources for other activities.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

75. No lessons were seen in personal, social and health education and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision. However, the available evidence and the way that the school integrates the subject into aspects of the school's work, indicate that the provision is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' social development has declined since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Although the school is basically an ordered community where pupils generally have a clear understanding of right and wrong, there were instances during the inspection when pupils did not collaborate successfully nor show an awareness of the needs of others. Whilst pupils have regular circle time to discuss issues, older pupils who were interviewed during the inspection felt they would welcome the establishment of a forum, such as a school council, where they could discuss school issues with representatives of different classes.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

