

INSPECTION REPORT

SHORTBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107102

Headteacher: Mrs J Alexander

Lead inspector: Mrs M Gough

Dates of inspection: February 9th – 12th 2004

Inspection number: 257469

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	177
School address:	Westfield Northway Westfield Sheffield South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S20 8FB
Telephone number:	0114 248 2497
Fax number:	0114 248 6844
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Bromley
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is set in the centre of a housing estate in Westfield, near the city of Sheffield. The area is one of deprivation, and this is reflected in the free-school meals figure which is well above the national average. There are currently one hundred and eighty seven pupils on roll, including twenty one Nursery children who attend on a part-time basis. Numbers are falling in the school, and this trend is predicted to continue in the near future. Almost all pupils are of white ethnicity, and the school has no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school has 3 Traveller pupils on roll. Fifty one pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, this represents 27 per cent of the school population and is above average. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs. Levels of pupil mobility are high overall with thirty pupils having joined other than at the usual time of admission, and twenty eight pupils having left other than at the usual point of transfer. There is little mobility in Key Stage 1, but within individual year groups in Key Stage 2, levels of mobility are often exceptionally high. The school is part of an Excellence in Cities initiative and part of the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary schools. The children's attainment when they join the nursery is very low.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22361	Mrs M Gough	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Science, Art and Design, Design and Technology, Music, Physical Education, Special Educational Needs, English as an additional language
14756	Mr J Lovell	Lay inspector	
12997	Mrs C Cheong	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, History, Geography, Citizenship
22556	Mr E Morgan	Team inspector	English, Religious education, Information and communication technology

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education Limited

102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 7JX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	13
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	19
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	21
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	35

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school that provides a **good** standard of education for all pupils within a very caring and supportive learning environment. Although standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 2 in most subjects, pupils throughout the school achieve well, especially in English, mathematics and science. Teaching and learning are good, and pupils have positive attitudes to school. The headteacher provides good and firm leadership for the school. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The provision for the Foundation Stage children is good, and they have a good start to their education.
- Good teaching throughout the school enables pupils of all ages and abilities to achieve well.
- Although the school concentrates well on English, mathematics and science not enough time is given to the other National Curriculum subjects, or to religious education.
- The school provides very high levels of pastoral care and is very supportive of the many pupils and their families who have difficult home circumstances.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The headteacher provides good leadership for the school, but the monitoring of some aspects of the school's life and work is unsatisfactory.
- The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities and visits that enriches the pupils' learning.
- The school has formed a good partnership with parents and has very good links with the local community.
- The school, through no fault of its own, has a very large deficit budget.

There has been good overall improvement since the last inspection, and all of the issues have been addressed. Standards are rising well in mathematics and science and steadily in English. There has been very good improvement in the resource provision for information and communication technology and the computer suite is an excellent and well used resource. Standards in religious education at the end of Key Stage 2 are not as good as they were because insufficient time is allocated to the subject. The school has worked hard and successfully to improve pupils' behaviour, and to maintain the high levels of pastoral support it provides for pupils and their families. Although the school is well placed for further improvement, the significant financial difficulties constrain the school's development in some areas.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	E	E	C
Mathematics	E	D	D	A
Science	D	D	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' achievement is **good**, although their overall attainment is below the expected level.

The children's attainment when they join the Nursery class is very low, and although they make good progress, and achieve well in relation to their ability, their attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage is well below the expected level in communication, language and literacy, and below the expected level in all other areas of learning, with the exception of physical development where their attainment is at the expected level.

The results of the 2003 end of Key Stage 1 national tests show that pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is well below the national average and that their attainment in writing is average. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is above average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics. Pupils achieve well as they move through Key Stage 1, but their poor language skills slow down their rate of progress in most subjects. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is well below the expected level in English, below the expected level in mathematics, and average in science. In information and communication technology and religious education, pupils' attainment is below the expected level, and in physical education, most pupils attain the expected level in their work.

The results of the 2003 end of Key Stage 2 national tests show that pupils' attainment is well below the national average in English, below the national average in mathematics and in line with the national average in science. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance is average in English, but well above average in mathematics and science. Standards are steadily rising in all subjects, although the improvement is less evident in English where the impact of pupils with special educational needs is greater. The inspection findings indicate that the current Year 6 group is on course to attain standards that are well below the national expectation in English and mathematics and in line with national expectations in science. This group is not typical, in that more than half of the pupils have special educational needs. Most of these pupils have language problems, and this adversely affects their attainment in other subjects where they are required to process and interpret written information. The Year 5 group is already attaining higher standards than the Year 6 group in many areas of work, and their attainment at the end of Year 6 will give a much clearer indication of the overall progress that the school has made in raising standards in the core subjects. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology and physical education is in line with national expectations, but their attainment in religious education is well below the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Pupils demonstrate good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their behaviour is **good** overall, and most have positive attitudes to school and to work. Attendance is well below the national average and is poor.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **good** quality of education overall. Teaching and learning are **good** across the school. Assessment is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, it is very good in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is good, but the curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is unsatisfactory because too much time is given to English, mathematics and science, and not enough time is given to other subjects. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The school provides good levels of care and support for pupils, and effectively seeks their views. Links with parents are good, and links with the community are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The school has suffered from a sharp and unanticipated fall in pupil numbers which has resulted in a significant deficit budget. This hampers some aspects of school development. The headteacher provides good leadership for the school, and she is very effective in the way in which she supports pupils who have difficulties in their lives. Co-ordinators lead and manage their subjects satisfactorily, but have no non-contact time to enable them to carry out some aspects of their monitoring role. The senior management team is not sufficiently rigorous in the way in which it monitors some aspects of the school's work. The Governing Body provides satisfactory governance for the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Only a very small percentage of parents expressed their views of the school either by attending the pre-inspection meeting for parents, or by returning questionnaires. Most parents are pleased with the school, and most appreciate the open-door policy.

Most pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive views. Some pupils say that bullying is a problem, but that incidents are generally dealt with effectively. Pupils like their teachers and the headteacher and agree that all staff are very approachable.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ensure that an appropriate amount of time is given to all subjects of the National Curriculum in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and to religious education in Key Stage 2;
- be more rigorous in monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's work, especially the curriculum;
- continue with its efforts to raise levels of attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 achieve well in English, mathematics and science and physical education.
- Foundation Stage children achieve well in all areas of learning.
- At the end of the Reception year, the children's attainment is below the expected level for their age. Their speaking, listening and writing skills are very low.
- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology have improved since the time of the last inspection.
- Standards in religious education at the end of Key Stage 2 are well below the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

1. Over the last few years the number of pupils on roll has started to fall quite dramatically. This means that the comparison of test results must be treated with some caution, as the classes are considerably smaller than they were, and the performance of one pupil can sometimes have a significant impact on the overall average points score. There are sometimes quite significant differences in the natural ability of different groups of pupils. For example, about half of the current Year 6 group has special educational needs, and the results for this group are likely to be considerably lower than in recent years. By contrast, the current Year 5 group contains a good percentage of higher attaining pupils, and the performance of this group is likely to be much better than in recent years. The low standards of the current Year 6 group mask the good improvement in standards that is evident in other year groups, and do not reflect the hard work and commitment of the headteacher and staff to raising standards in the core subjects.

Foundation Stage

2. The children's overall attainment when they join the Nursery class is very low. The children's language skills, and their personal and social skills are especially low, and many children have very little experience beyond their immediate home environment. From this very low starting point, children of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. However, by the end of the Reception year, their attainment in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development is below the expected level. Their attainment in communication, language and literacy is well below the expected level. In the area of physical development, most children attain the expected level for their age.

Key Stage 1

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.6 (14.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.5 (12.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.1 (15.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 19 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- The results of the 2003 end of Key Stage 1 national tests show that pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is well below the national average and that their attainment in writing is average. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is above average in reading, well above average in writing and average in mathematics. Standards have been relatively consistent in reading and mathematics over the last few years, but there has been good improvement in writing as a result of a whole-school initiative. The 2003 teacher assessments for science show that pupils' attainment is above the national average. These results were externally moderated.
- The inspection findings indicate that the overall attainment of the current Year 2 group is well below national expectations in English, below national expectations in mathematics, and in line with national expectations in science. Standards in reading, speaking and listening are well below national expectations, and standards in writing are below national expectations. Standards in writing and science are not as high for the current Year 2 group as they were for the group that sat the 2003 tests and teacher assessments. This is because there are fewer higher attaining pupils in the current group, and a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
- In English, mathematics and science, Key Stage 1 pupils achieve well in relation to their ability. However, their learning is often hampered by their limited experience of life outside their immediate locality, their lack of imagination, and for some pupils, the lack of parental support. The pupils' poor language skills often slow down their rate of learning in other areas, especially when they have to decode instructional text.
- In information and communication technology and religious education, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is below the expected level for their age. Their achievement in these subjects is satisfactory. In physical education, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2, and pupils achieve well. Not enough evidence was collected to make secure judgements about pupils' attainment in other subjects.

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.1 (25.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.4 (25.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.1 (27.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

7. The 2003 end of Key Stage 2 test results show that standards in English are well below the national average, standards in mathematics are below the national average, and standards in science are in line with the national average. Based on prior attainment, the pupils' performance is average in English, but very good in mathematics and science. Standards in English have been relatively consistent for the last few years, but standards in mathematics and science have improved very steadily. The majority of pupils who have special educational needs have language difficulties, and this makes it difficult for the school to significantly raise the standards in English. In all three subjects, pupils achieve well, and reach their potential.
8. The inspection findings indicate that the attainment of the current Year 6 group is likely to be very low in English and mathematics because more than half of the pupils are on the school's special educational needs register. This group is not typical, and their attainment does not do justice to the good work that has taken place over recent years in terms of raising standards in these subjects. The current group of Year 5 pupils is on course to attain standards that are much higher than those of the current Year 6 group, reflecting the good progress that the school has made. In science, the inspection findings more closely match the 2003 test results. All pupils, including those with special educational needs have a secure scientific knowledge, and much of their learning is practical, ensuring their investigative skills are well developed.
9. In information and communication technology and physical education, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with national expectations, and pupils achieve well. In religious education, standards have declined since the last inspection, and are well below the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' achievement in this subject is unsatisfactory and pupils could do better.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are **good** overall. Pupils show **good** gains in maturity as they move through the school. The school is **effective** in the way in which it promotes pupils' personal development. Attendance is **poor**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very supportive and caring ethos. The very strong pastoral leadership provided by the headteacher successfully promotes the pupils' personal development.
- The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good, but a small number of pupils lack self-discipline and have difficulty in managing their behaviour.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to school and to learning.
- Attendance levels are poor.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Commentary

10. The headteacher provides very strong pastoral leadership and promotes a very caring ethos in which pupils are valued as individuals. Adults are very effective in the way in which they promote and raise pupils' self esteem which is often very low, and they set positive role models for the pupils through the friendly way in which they interact with one another. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and teachers and support staff are very sensitive and fair in the way in which they deal with pupils whose behaviour is challenging or disruptive. As pupils move through the school, they make noticeable gains in terms of their levels of maturity and confidence.

11. The majority of pupils work well when they are asked to work independently or in groups. However, opportunities for them to show initiative and independence in their work and to contribute to the community of the school are limited. Pupils of all ages and abilities co-operate well and, as they move through the school, they become increasingly able to collaborate, sharing ideas, and often concentrating well on activities, particularly when the objectives are clear and the task is challenging. Younger pupils sometimes have difficulty in maintaining good levels of concentration, and this is especially the case in the Foundation Stage where the children have very short spans of attention.
12. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good and at times very good. Parents and pupils are very positive about the fair way in which staff treat all pupils. The majority of pupils are well behaved, polite and courteous, and respond well to the supportive ethos of the school, although there are a minority of pupils who lack self-discipline and behave in a silly or immature manner. Staff work effectively to reinforce high expectations and to promote good behaviour. The effective deployment of support staff minimises the disruptive impact of poor behaviour on the learning of other pupils.
13. Pupils and parents express some concerns about bullying. The inspection findings indicate that occasionally a minority of pupils act in a physically aggressive manner, without thought for others, or taunt their classmates with name-calling. The headteacher and staff are aware of these issues which pupils agree are dealt with quickly and effectively. In the past year there were thirteen fixed term exclusions, relating to eleven pupils. The school is very rigorous in implementing this sanction when the clearly established boundaries have been overstepped, but most of the fixed term exclusions were for very short periods of time, sometimes less than half of one school day. There have been no racist incidents recorded.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	162	13	0
White - Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British - any other Black background	2	0	0
Information not obtained	2	0	0

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

14. Attendance is poor. It is well below the national average and levels of unauthorised absence are very high in comparison with the national average. The rate of attendance has dropped since the last inspection. The school has very good procedures and strategies to promote good attendance, and the breakfast club is a very positive initiative that is helping to improve punctuality. The learning mentor works very effectively with the Education Welfare Officer to reduce absence, and to ensure that parents provide explanations for absence.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6%	School data	2.5%
National data	5.4%	National data	0.4%

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

15. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Most pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong which is promoted consistently throughout the school. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and residential experiences, which have a very positive impact on the pupils' personal, spiritual and social development. Monitorial tasks are usually undertaken with commitment and pride, and pupils are keen to be elected onto the School Council. Pupils have very good understanding through their charity work of those less fortunate than themselves, and a growing awareness of other cultures through the visits they make to different places of worship. Pupils are encouraged, through all school activities, to be honest, trustworthy, and courteous, and to respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education overall. Teaching and learning are **good** across the school. Assessment is **satisfactory**. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is **good**, but the curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is **unsatisfactory**. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**. The school provides **good** levels of care and support for pupils, and **effectively** seeks their views. Links with parents are **good**, and links with the community are **very good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. Assessment is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of the Foundation Stage children is good, enabling them to achieve well from a very low starting point.
- Teachers are very effective in the way in which they use resources to enliven teaching and to capture the pupils' attention and interest.
- The sharing of learning objectives at the start of lessons enables pupils to know exactly what is expected of them.
- Support staff are used well to work with pupils with special educational needs.
- Good use is made of assessment information in English, mathematics and science to highlight areas of strength and weakness in pupils' learning.
- Teachers do not always take enough account of pupils' individual education plans when planning work in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Teachers use praise and encouragement well to motivate pupils and to raise their self-esteem, and manage difficult behaviour well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	6 (19)	18 (58)	7 (23)			

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

16. Teaching is good throughout the school, and has improved since the time of the last inspection. Good whole-school systems, such as the sharing of lesson objectives at the start of the lesson provide good levels of consistency for the pupils, even when they are taught by other teachers. Lessons are well planned and prepared, and most lessons are well paced so that pupils' levels of concentration and interest are maintained. Teachers achieve a good balance between instruction, and the opportunity for pupils to find things out for themselves or to complete tasks. In the Nursery and Reception classes there is a good balance between the activities that are led by an adult, and those that the children initiate or choose themselves.
17. A strength of teaching is the way in which teachers throughout the school use resources, both to enliven teaching and learning, and also to illustrate important teaching points. In the Nursery and Reception classes resources are often used to capture the children's attention, and to maintain their interest when their concentration starts to wane. In mathematics in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the opportunity for pupils to handle resources such as three-dimensional shapes does much to enhance their understanding. Likewise, in a Key Stage 2 science lesson seen during the inspection, a demonstration of the moon moving around the earth, using a model moon, served to highlight clearly the different shapes that could be seen as the moon moved into different phases.
18. Teachers place good emphasis on pupils learning through practical, first-hand experience, and pupils respond especially well when they have the opportunity to take a full and active part in lessons. In both mathematics and science there are good and frequent opportunities for pupils of all ages and abilities to handle equipment, and to explore new ideas. This practical experience is often of particular value to lower attaining pupils who sometimes have difficulty in grasping abstract concepts.
19. In most classes, pupils' behaviour is well managed, and this means that lessons proceed smoothly even when one or two of the most challenging pupils have unexpected outbursts. Support staff work well with these pupils in class, and with pupils who have difficulties with their learning, or who have special educational needs.
20. Teachers cater well for the mixed range of abilities in their classes, and often provide work that is carefully matched to the needs of individuals. Higher attainers are appropriately challenged, enabling them to achieve their potential. Teachers use individual education plans well when planning work for pupils with special educational needs in English or mathematics, but do not always pay enough attention to the individual education plans when planning work in other subjects. As a result, there are times in subjects such as religious education, history or geography, when the reading level of some texts is too difficult for these pupils, or when the recording tasks are too onerous.
21. Teachers are conscious of the need to raise the self-esteem of pupils, many of whom have low levels of personal confidence. Discussion sessions are used well to

encourage pupils to share their ideas with others within a secure learning context. Praise and encouragement effectively motivate pupils in their learning, and where teaching is at its best, the judicious use of praise helps to raise the standard of pupils' work and enables them to feel secure about taking calculated risks. In some lessons teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to share their achievements with others. This is particularly the case in physical education, and the sharing of good practice helps others to see how they might improve their own performance.

22. In general, the quality of learning reflects the good quality of teaching. The exception is in the Nursery class where the learning is often unsatisfactory. Despite the best efforts of the teacher, there are times when the children will not engage in the lesson or activities. In the Reception class, and the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes, pupils mostly respond well, and are attentive learners. They often put a good amount of effort into their work, and this is typically the case in physical education where pupils are often exhausted at the end of a session. Most pupils take pride in the presentation of their written work, and older pupils present their work neatly and carefully.
23. Assessment information is used well in English, mathematics and science to highlight strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and to match work to pupils' abilities. In other subjects assessment is satisfactory, and teachers make regular evaluations of pupils' achievements in relation to the learning objectives for each lesson. In the Foundation Stage, assessment and record keeping are very good, enabling teachers to closely match work to the needs of individual children.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum for Foundation Stage children. However, the curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils lacks balance, and is **unsatisfactory** overall. The school provides a **very good** range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Statutory requirements are not met in respect of religious education in Key Stage 2.
- The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is good, but the curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils lacks balance.
- The school provides a very good range of additional learning opportunities outside the school day.
- The rota of Wednesday afternoon activities for Key Stage 2 pupils is very innovative and has good features, but it is not sufficiently well monitored or evaluated.
- Support staff are used well to enable pupils with special educational needs to take a full part in all activities.

Commentary

24. The school provides a good curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes, that fully meets their needs. It is broad and well-balanced and good emphasis is placed on the children learning through practical experience. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is unsatisfactory. For the past few years, the school has devoted much of the curriculum time available in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 to the teaching of English, mathematics and science. This strategy has been effective, and has enabled the school to raise standards in these subjects. However, the lack of time for other subjects means that some of the National Curriculum Programmes of

Study cannot be covered in enough depth. In religious education in Key Stage 2, the lack of teaching time means that statutory requirements are not met.

25. Currently there is no-one in the school who has responsibility for leading and managing the whole-school curriculum. As a result, the monitoring of the curriculum has not been sufficiently rigorous, and some weaknesses have not been identified. For example, on a Wednesday afternoon, all Key Stage 2 pupils are split into mixed age groups to work on a variety of activities for a period of six weeks. The activities are mainly linked to art and design, design and technology, drama and information and communication technology. Whilst in principle this is an innovative idea that is very effective in promoting pupils' personal and social development, there is no monitoring mechanism to enable teachers to track the standards that pupils have attained, or to measure their achievement and progress. Additionally, there are eight activities within the programme, but only six opportunities for pupils to select an activity, and therefore all pupils will miss the experience of taking in part in two of the activities.
26. The school provides a very good range of additional learning opportunities outside the school day that are very well attended and very popular with the pupils. Some of the sports activities are particularly effective in raising the standard of pupils' skills, and in helping them to learn how to work as part of a team. Breakfast club games and break time 'thinking' games are also very effective in bringing together pupils of different ages, and in providing them with the opportunity to work collaboratively with others. All classes offer homework clubs to pupils, enabling those pupils who do not have suitable resources or facilities at home to complete their homework tasks. Teachers provide a good range of educational visits to support pupils' learning, and regular visitors to the school provide a good and wide range of enrichment activities.
27. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, and the good use of support staff enables pupils to make good progress towards their individual targets. Much of this support is given in class, and this benefits the pupils as it enables them to take a full part in lessons and to work alongside their classmates. By contrast, the withdrawal of pupils for additional literacy support, or for support with their behaviour and personal development means that pupils sometimes miss important parts of class lessons. The school has monitored the withdrawal of pupils and has evaluated the impact of the additional activities in terms of the pupils' attainment and achievement.
28. The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum is good at the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in the rest of the school. The internal accommodation is well maintained, attractive, and is a good size for the current number of pupils. The school benefits from having two halls. The new computer suite is an excellent resource that is having a very positive impact on the provision for information and communication technology. Learning resources are satisfactory overall.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a **very caring** learning environment for all pupils, and **satisfactorily** ensures their welfare, health and safety. Teachers provide **good** levels of informal support and guidance. The school **effectively** involves pupils in decisions about its life and work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has good induction arrangements for children joining the school in the Nursery and Reception classes ensuring that they have a happy start to their education.
- The headteacher and staff are very supportive of all pupils, and especially those who have difficult home circumstances, or who have difficulty in managing their behaviour.
- Pupils are well known to all staff and adults, but there are no formal systems for recording pupils' personal progress and achievements.
- Risk assessments have only recently been drawn up, and some are outstanding.
- Systems for child protection are not fully known to all staff.
- The school effectively seeks and acts upon the views of the pupils.

Commentary

29. Good induction arrangements ensure that Nursery and Reception children have a secure and happy start to their education. Parents are welcomed into school with their children at the start of the school day, and these arrangements help the children to settle in quickly.
30. The headteacher and staff know the pupils and their families well and are very sensitive to the pupils' individual needs. They provide very good levels of emotional support for pupils who are experiencing difficulties at home, with their work, or in managing their behaviour, and pupils know that they are highly valued by their teachers and other adults in the school. Although teachers monitor the pupils' personal development satisfactorily on an informal basis, the school does not have a formal mechanism for measuring and tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. This makes it difficult for the headteacher and senior management team to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies they put in place.
31. Pupils are encouraged to express their views about the school through the School Council, which is made up of representatives from all year groups, and through personal and social education sessions, many of which are led by the learning mentor. Adults treat pupils' views with courtesy and respect, and in this, set a very good model for the pupils. Pupils agree that their views are taken into account, and in the main, pupils are happy with the school and the way in which issues are dealt with.
32. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils are satisfactory as they were at the time of the last inspection. First aid provision is good and most staff are qualified to provide assistance in the event of an emergency. Accidents are properly recorded but they are not analysed sufficiently to identify potential risks. Emergency evacuations are practised and equipment is regularly checked and tested. The school completes appropriate risk assessments for visits and is beginning to develop a portfolio of risk assessments within and around the school buildings.
33. Child protection procedures are based on national guidelines and meet requirements. The headteacher and learning mentor have both been trained appropriately, although

the headteacher who has responsibility for child protection, has not attended any recent training. The school exercises its responsibilities with vigilance and care. However, staff are not sufficiently aware of the escalation procedures in the event of the absence of the headteacher.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established a **good** partnership with parents. Links with other local schools are **satisfactory**, and links with the local community are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents are very appreciative of the school's efforts, and the ease with which they can access teachers and the headteacher.
- A minority of parents do not support their children's learning at home.
- Links with the community are very good and effectively enrich and enhance the pupils' learning.
- The school makes very good use of grants to develop community learning.
- The school has developed very good links with external agencies which result in very good levels of additional support.

Commentary

34. The school has maintained the good partnership with parents described at the time of the last inspection. Most parents are very appreciative of the way in which the school supports their children, and the way in which they are welcomed into the school to discuss any problems or concerns. Whilst most parents are keen to support their children's learning at home, by helping with homework, a minority of parents do not provide enough support. Parents are very supportive of school events such as concerts and class assemblies, but the take up of courses in literacy or numeracy that the school provides is often low. A small number of parents provide very effective help in school on a regular basis and this is appreciated by staff and pupils.
35. The percentage of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting, or who returned questionnaires was very small. However the views of most of these parents were very positive. A small number of parents expressed concern about the overall standard of behaviour. Whilst there are a small number of challenging pupils in the school, in the main behaviour is good. The school provides good levels of information for parents, and parents are satisfied with the information they receive. Reports of pupils' progress are satisfactory.
36. Links with the community are very good, and many have been established as the result of the hard work and effort of the learning mentor. The school shares its site and buildings with a variety of community groups, and the school is regarded as a focal point of the local community. Wider links include the reading partnership which has been set up with a local branch of a national telecommunications business. The school has established very good links with external agencies such as family workers and the Traveller Support Service within the Local Education Authority, and these links have a positive impact on the well-being of pupils and their families.
37. Links with other schools are satisfactory overall. The school plays an active part within the local cluster of primary schools. Links with secondary schools satisfactorily support the transfer of pupils at the age of eleven, and pupils benefit from opportunities to visit the main receiving high schools prior to transfer.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. The leadership by other senior staff is satisfactory. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong commitment from all staff to raising standards and to ensuring that pupils achieve their potential.
- The headteacher provides good and clear leadership.
- The monitoring of the school's work is too informal, and is insufficiently rigorous. The monitoring role of co-ordinators is hampered by their lack of non-contact time.
- The extremely large deficit budget hampers some aspects of the school's development.
- The school has made good improvement overall since the last inspection.
- Statutory requirements are not met in religious education in Key Stage 2.
- The school has been very proactive in securing additional funding which has enhanced the pupils' learning.

Commentary

38. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The headteacher has been in post for many years, and she has a very good knowledge of the pupils and their families. Whilst taking good account of the pupils' sometimes adverse home circumstances, she nevertheless expects high standards from the pupils, both in terms of their academic achievement and their behaviour. She has created a very strong team of staff who are equally committed to raising standards and to ensuring that pupils achieve their best. This commitment has resulted in a good improvement in standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology since the last inspection, although standards in religious education in Key Stage 2 have declined.
39. The headteacher has introduced a number of initiatives to support pupils' learning and to raise standards. Additional literacy and numeracy strategies, and booster classes, support lower attaining pupils throughout the school, but currently the monitoring of these activities by the senior management team is not sufficiently rigorous, and the school is not able to demonstrate their impact in terms of the standards pupils achieve. The very good work of the headteacher and learning mentor in providing additional activities for pupils at break times and before the start of the school day has had a very positive impact on the overall quality of pupils' behaviour, and on their personal and social development. Much of the funding for these extra activities has been secured by the learning mentor, enabling the school to buy extra resources and to buy in the expertise of sports coaches.
40. Co-ordinators are in place for all subjects, and in the main, they satisfactorily lead and manage their areas, providing good advice and support for colleagues, and identifying areas for development which feed into the School Development Plan. However, co-ordinators are not as effective as they were at the time of the last inspection because of staff changes. Until very recently there were two co-ordinators for each subject. Because of reductions in the number of teaching staff, there is now only one co-ordinator for each subject. This transition has temporarily had an adverse impact on the leadership and management of co-ordinators, as they tend to have an in-depth overview of the key stage in which they are based, and a rather patchy overview of the key stage which was formerly the responsibility of the partner co-ordinator. The effect

has been most significant in religious education where in Key Stage 2, statutory requirements are not being met. In this subject, the leadership and management are unsatisfactory overall. Co-ordinators are working well to overcome the recent problems, and are beginning to become more familiar with the whole-school picture through the monitoring of colleagues' planning, discussions with pupils and the monitoring of pupils' work. However, they do not currently have any non-contact time, and this limits what they can achieve.

41. The school has recently increased the hours of the part-time special educational needs co-ordinator, enabling her to assume more responsibility for the provision for pupils with special educational needs. This aspect of the school's work is satisfactorily led, and well managed, but as with other co-ordinators, the special educational needs co-ordinator's monitoring role is under-developed. Good support from classroom assistants enables pupils with special educational needs to be fully included in all activities.
42. The governance of the school is satisfactory overall. Governors meet regularly, and have a satisfactory overview of the life and work of the school. The Governing Body has a good working relationship with the headteacher and staff, and a few governors visit the school on a very regular basis. Governors play a satisfactory part in shaping the educational direction of the school, and are involved in drawing up the School Development Plan. However, the monitoring role of the Governing Body is not sufficiently rigorous, and governors have not picked up some of the curriculum weaknesses that exist in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	665 204	Balance from previous year	(58 258)
Total expenditure	692 085	Balance carried forward to the next year	(85 139)
Expenditure per pupil	3 189		

43. The school manages its budget satisfactorily on a day-to-day basis. However, through no fault of its own, the school has a significant deficit budget, which has been licensed by the Local Education Authority. The deficit is the result of two main factors. The building is shared with other agencies, and until recently their financial responsibilities had not been clarified. This situation was ongoing for several years. The other main factor has been the significant unexpected and quite recent drop in pupil numbers which has resulted in less income coming into the school. This situation was masked to some extent by the financial complications arising from the building, and has only recently been made clear to the school. Although the school does not have to repay the deficit to the Local Education Authority, it has no reserves on which to draw, and must henceforth work closely within its delegated budget. This means that there is little manoeuvrability for the school, and that some of its plans for the future cannot easily be realised.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. However, although the quality of learning is good in the Reception class, it is unsatisfactory in the Nursery class.
- Teachers provide a good and well balanced curriculum and very good emphasis is placed on the children learning through practical experience.
- Support staff are used well and have a positive impact on the children's learning.
- Although children of all abilities achieve well, few attain the Early Learning Goals in any area of learning. Standards of speaking, listening and writing are especially low.
- Assessment information is used very well when planning the next stage of the children's learning. Very good records are kept of the children's progress.
- The Reception children have positive attitudes to learning, but many of the Nursery children are passive and have poor levels of concentration.
- Teachers are very effective in the way in which they promote the children's personal, social and emotional development.

Commentary

44. As at the time of the last inspection, the school makes good provision for children in the Foundation Stage, enabling them to have a secure and happy start to their education. The Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery class and a Reception class. Children in the Nursery class attend on a part-time basis. The children are taught in two adjacent open-plan areas, which have access to a secure outside play area.
45. The children's overall attainment when they join the Nursery class is very low. The children's language skills, and their personal and social skills are especially low, and many children have very little experience beyond their immediate home environment. From this very low starting point, children of all abilities make good progress and achieve well. However, by the end of the Reception year, their attainment in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development is below the expected level. Their attainment in communication, language and literacy is well below the expected level. In the area of physical development, most children attain the expected level for their age.
46. The quality of teaching is good overall, and teachers and support staff work effectively to provide a good and wide range of exciting learning experiences for the children. However, the quality of learning is more variable. In the Reception class, the children learn well, and show good attitudes. In the Nursery class, few of the children have satisfactory levels of concentration and their learning is unsatisfactory. Assessment and record keeping in the Foundation stage are very good. Teachers have put clear comprehensive systems in place which they use well to highlight strengths and weaknesses in the children's learning and to ensure that tasks are well matched to the children's needs. Staff observe and question children regularly and make very good records of their findings.

47. Parents of children in the Nursery and Reception classes are made to feel welcome, and they receive good levels of information before their children start school. Regular discussions between parents and staff at the start and end of the school day mean that minor concerns are quickly dealt with. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is good overall.
48. The vast majority of children achieve well in their **personal, social and emotional development**, but few attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the end of the Reception year. Teachers and support staff provide good opportunities for the children to make choices and decisions about their work, and for them to learn how to work amicably with partners and within small groups. Teaching is good, and all staff are gently supportive of the children as they learn through experience how to behave towards others, how to take turns, and how to become more independent. Despite good teaching, many of the children in the Nursery class find it difficult to work and play with others, and many children have very low levels of concentration. In the Reception class, the children are more mature, but many still have difficulty in remembering class rules, such as not shouting out, and in controlling their behaviour when they are not directly supervised by an adult. Staff have high expectations, and set consistent parameters for the children so that they know exactly what is required of them. Routines are clear and well established, and teachers use visual aids well to help the children to understand the daily work plan. Relationships between the children and staff are good, and adults provide very good role models for the children.
49. By the end of the Reception year, the children's attainment in **communication, language and literacy** is well below the expected level, with very few children attaining the Early Learning Goals. The children start school in the Nursery class with very poor language skills. They have little experience of nursery rhymes or well-known stories, and many are not familiar with books or the notion of writing. The children often have very poor speaking and listening skills, and some use very little spoken language to communicate their needs, and frequently rely on gestures and physical prompts to gain the attention of others. Teaching is good, and focuses well on the need to develop the children's language skills. However, although the children achieve well in relation to their ability, their overall progress is slow because of their very low starting point and their lack of experiences outside school. Teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes provide a good range of speaking and listening activities where children are encouraged to widen their vocabularies, and to articulate words clearly so that they can be easily understood by others. There is a good balance between whole class discussion sessions, and individual imaginative work. Teachers and other adults are very effective in the way in which they repeat activities so that the children gain confidence and self-esteem. Reading is well taught, especially in the Reception class where the children start to see themselves as 'readers' and enjoy looking at books. By the end of the Reception year, a small minority of children read independently. In writing, progress is very slow in spite of the very strong emphases staff give to phonic development and the individual support children are given to encourage them to write for themselves. However, by the end of the Reception year, many children are aware of the link between reading and writing.
50. The children's attainment in **mathematical development** is below the expected level by the end of the Reception year. However, most children achieve well, and they make especially good progress in their understanding and knowledge of number. This aspect of learning is taught particularly well, and daily reinforcement in both the Nursery and Reception classes helps the children to remember the order of numbers, and to gain good levels of confidence in counting forwards and backwards. Mathematical activities are often presented in an exciting way that captures and maintains the children's attention. For example, during the inspection, children in the Reception class played

'musical shapes' and when the music stopped, tried hard to describe the shape they were holding. In the Nursery class, the teacher has to work extremely hard to maintain the children's attention. Despite the good and persistent use of visual aids, and movement when encouraging the children to join in with counting songs, the children's poor levels of concentration slow down the rate of their learning.

51. The children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** in which they live is below the expected level at the end of the Reception year. The children's starting point when they join the Nursery class is often well below the expected level for their age, and few children have experience of life beyond the immediate area in which they live. Children of all abilities achieve well, but their progress is slower in the Nursery class than in the Reception class because children in the Nursery class have difficulty in maintaining good levels of interest and concentration. In both classes, the children's ability to communicate their ideas clearly is hampered by their lack of vocabulary. Teachers in both the Nursery and Reception classes make very good use of displays to widen the children's experience, and to provide opportunities for the children to handle and explore a range of objects. For example, in the Reception class, children returned regularly to a display that showed how food decays over time. Children in the Nursery class are encouraged to take an interest in their classmates by looking at photographs and noting the changes they see. Many of the children show satisfactory levels of observation, and point out the differences they see. Religious education is taught on a regular basis to children of statutory school age in the Reception class. There are regular opportunities for children to use the class based computers, and children quickly gain in confidence and competence as they explore a variety of programs.
52. In **physical development**, the children achieve well, and most attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of their learning by the time they transfer to Year 1. By the end of the Reception year, most children have satisfactory control of their bodies during physical development lessons and when playing outside. The teaching of physical development is good, especially in the Reception class where children are introduced to more formal physical activities in the school hall. In these lessons, there is good attention to matters of health and safety and good emphasis is placed on the children following instructions, which a few of the children find hard to do within a large space. The children's ability to handle small objects is low when they join the Nursery class, and, although they achieve well in both the Nursery and Reception classes, and are given a wide variety of good experiences, the manual dexterity of some children is still poor.
53. Although children of all abilities achieve well in the **creative** area of learning, their attainment is below the expected level by the end of the Reception year. Teachers and support staff have high expectations of the children and activities are suitably challenging. Many of the free-choice activities, such as model making and playing musical instruments are very effective in supporting the children's personal and social development as they learn to share resources with others, and to take turns. Teaching is good, and there is a good balance between activities that the children choose themselves and those that are led by an adult. Role-play activities are used well to promote the children's imaginations, and good adult intervention extends the children's knowledge and understanding, and helps to extend their vocabulary.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- Because of a whole-school initiative, standards in writing across the school are starting to improve.
- As they move through the school, pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well.
- Teaching is good, and teachers are especially effective in the way in which they promote the pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Pupils' progress and attainment are well tracked and monitored.
- The school is not sufficiently rigorous in monitoring the impact of the many various government initiatives for raising the attainment of the lower attaining pupils.
- The school has clearly identified priorities for continued development.
- The role of the subject co-ordinator in monitoring standards, and the quality of teaching and learning has declined since the last inspection because of staff changes.

Commentary

54. The results of the 2003 end of Key Stage 1 national tests show that pupils' attainment in reading is well below the national average, and that their attainment in writing is average. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is above average in reading and well above average in writing. The inspection findings indicate that the overall attainment of the current Year 2 group is well below national expectations in English. Standards in reading, speaking and listening are well below national expectations, and standards in writing are below national expectations. The difference in writing between the test results and the inspection findings is because there are fewer higher attaining pupils in the current Year 2 group.
55. The 2003 end of Key Stage 2 test results show that standards in English are well below the national average, as they have been for several years. However, based on prior attainment the pupils' performance is average. The inspection findings indicate that the attainment of the current Year 6 group is likely to be very low because more than half of the pupils are on the school's special educational needs register. This group is not typical, and their attainment does not do justice to the good work that has taken place over recent years in terms of raising standards in English. The current Year 5 and Year 4 groups of pupils are on course to attain standards that are much higher than those of the current Year 6 group, reflecting the good progress that the school has made.
56. Pupils throughout the school achieve well, often from a very low starting point. Because of good teaching, and their own positive attitudes to learning, pupils make steady and consistent progress as they move through the school. Their progress in writing is particularly good, and in this aspect of the curriculum, the school has been very successful in terms of improving the attainment of the lowest attaining pupils. Many pupils have special educational needs, and good support in class enables these pupils to make good progress towards their individual targets, although their attainment is often well below the nationally expected level.

57. There are daily opportunities for pupils to practise their reading skills in class, but for many pupils, there are few reading opportunities at home. This lack of additional support hinders the rate of their progress. Pupils of all ages often have difficulty in recalling the detail of the books they have read, and many pupils find it difficult to read beyond the literal level. Most pupils cope adequately in class when they are asked to read text books or written instructions, although lower attaining pupils have difficulty in interpreting what is being asked of them. The school's focus on raising standards in writing has had a positive impact on the standards pupils attain. Pupils of all ages are confident about putting their ideas on paper, although most still struggle to develop and extend their ideas, and to plan the next stage of their writing. Pupils' writing is of a better standard when they are writing within a given framework, such as composing a letter, or writing a piece of persuasive writing. Despite the teachers' efforts, pupils' speaking skills tend to be well below average across the school. Although their vocabulary becomes progressively wider and richer, a significant number of pupils in all classes use only a limited range of words to express their ideas. Most pupils take an active part in class discussions, although their comments are often brief, and most listen well to the contributions of others.
58. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to take part in speaking and listening activities, and class discussions at the start and end of lessons are used well to explore new ideas, clarify instructions and to recap on pupils' learning. Teachers use questions well to probe pupils' thinking, and vary the level of questioning well to cater for the wide range of ability within each class. Teachers provide 'thinking' time for the pupils, and this is of particular benefit to the lower attaining pupils, some of whom take time to formulate their answers and comments. Good relationships between teachers and pupils foster a good learning environment, and help to raise the self-esteem of the pupils. Support staff are used well to work with groups of lower attaining pupils, and they are helpful in supporting pupils who have difficulty in managing their own behaviour. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but the marking does not always indicate clearly to the pupils the improvements they need to make. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to English lessons, and co-operate well when working on group tasks, although some pupils in both key stages have difficulty in maintaining good levels of concentration. Pupils often take pride in the presentation of their written work.
59. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, but are not as good as they were at the time of the last inspection. The co-ordination of the subject was previously shared with another member of staff, and it is only very recently that the current co-ordinator has assumed full whole-school responsibility for the subject. As a result, her overview of how English is taught across the school is limited. The co-ordinator has taken a good lead in helping the school to raise standards in writing, and has a good understanding of what still needs to be done to continue to raise standards across all aspects of the English curriculum. Assessment information is used well to monitor pupils' progress and attainment, and to highlight strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum. Currently the co-ordinator has no non-contact time, and this limits the opportunities for her to monitor some aspects of teaching and learning, and to evaluate the impact of initiatives, such as ELS, which require the pupils to be withdrawn from their lessons in other subjects. Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection, and the school is well placed for further improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Although the pupils' use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory, it is within a narrow range of contexts. This is because other subjects currently receive too little time, and therefore writing and research opportunities are limited. Pupils are

encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills well as they participate in dramatic productions, and in class assemblies.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well and attain the standards of which they are capable.
- Practical activities are used very well to help pupils to gain a secure understanding of new or difficult mathematical concepts.
- Pupils throughout the school have difficulty in solving word problems, and in using and applying their mathematical knowledge and understanding to new situations.
- Good use is made of assessment information to track and monitor the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils.
- There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- The co-ordinator has no non-contact time and this limits her ability to rigorously monitor the subject.

Commentary

61. The 2003 end of Key Stage 1 test results show that pupils' attainment is well below the national average, and this has been the picture for several years. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is average. The inspection findings paint a more positive picture of attainment, reflecting recent improvement, and indicate that overall, standards are below the nationally expected level. Pupils achieve well in relation to their ability, but their rate of progress between the end of the Foundation Stage and the end of Key Stage 1 is slow. This is because many pupils have difficulty in retaining information, and in applying their knowledge and understanding in different contexts. They also have difficulty in mastering the recording of mathematics in written form, having been used previously to a very practical approach to learning mathematics. For many pupils, poor language skills make it difficult for them to decode and process written and verbal instructions.
62. The end of Key Stage 2 results show steady but slow improvement over recent years, and the 2003 results indicate that pupils' attainment is below the national average, not well below average as in previous years. The pupils' performance, based on their prior attainment, is very good. The attainment of the current Year 6 group is well below national expectations. These pupils are likely to attain very low results in the forthcoming national tests. This is because more than half of the group has special educational needs. Pupils in Year 5 are already working at a higher level than those in Year 6, and their attainment, which is close to national expectations is much more reflective of the good progress the school has made in raising standards. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well.
63. There has been a good overall improvement in standards since the last inspection, although this is not always seen in the test results. The school has been successful in supporting the lowest attaining pupils in both key stages, whilst at the same time stretching the highest attaining pupils. Good use is made of support staff who work well with individual pupils and groups of pupils giving them additional support, and helping them to decode written instructions.

64. Throughout the school, pupils are confident when manipulating numbers, both mentally and on paper, although the lowest attaining pupils have difficulty in handling large numbers, and rarely check the reasonableness of their answers. Pupils' concept of place value is firmly understood from an early age, and higher attaining Key Stage 2 pupils therefore have little trouble in using decimals. Pupils throughout the school benefit from the very good opportunities that are provided for them to learn through practical experience, and as a result, their understanding of space, shape and measure is well established. During the inspection some very good work was seen in Year 3 where pupils used balances to measure out 100g amounts. The main weakness in pupils' learning is their ability to make generalisations, using information they already have at their disposal. For example, having looked at the correlation between the number of sides and the number of corners in triangles and squares, Year 2 pupils could not then predict how many corners a six-sided figure would have. Pupils also have difficulty in making accurate estimates of measure, despite repeated opportunities for them to practise this skill.
65. The teaching of mathematics is good, and the pupils are effective learners. The practice of sharing learning objectives with pupils at the start of lessons is very helpful in setting out the expectations of the lesson, and provides a good focus for evaluation at the end of the lesson. Teachers use good quality learning resources very well to capture the pupils' attention, and to help pupils to understand complex explanations. Lessons are well planned and prepared, and often have a lively pace. A good combination of activities promotes and sustains the pupils' interest, and shared activities are very successful in promoting pupils' personal and social development as they work co-operatively with one another. The vast majority of pupils show positive attitudes to their learning, and take a good part in class discussions and produce good amounts of neatly presented work. A minority of pupils in most classes lack concentration and demand a high level of adult attention.
66. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over responsibility for mathematics throughout the school, having previously been responsible for just one key stage. The leadership and management of the subject were shared until recently. As a result, although the leadership and management are satisfactory overall, the new co-ordinator does not yet have a full whole-school overview of the subject, nor does she have any non-contact time, to enable her to monitor classroom practice. Assessment in mathematics is good, and is used well when planning the next stage of pupils' learning, and to highlight whole-school issues.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67. There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use mathematics across the curriculum. Although incidental opportunities are used well when they arise, such as in some design and technology lessons, and in some science activities, these are not sufficient to give pupils the practice they need in learning how to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well across all aspects of the science curriculum.

- The recording of work in Key Stage 1 is too inconsistent. It is good in Year 1, and unsatisfactory in Year 2.
- The teaching of investigative work is a strength, and pupils have many good opportunities to carry out practical work.
- Pupils have difficulty in making generalisations about their work and in applying their knowledge to new situations.
- Because of a lack of scientific vocabulary pupils in both key stages sometimes have difficulty in giving clear verbal explanations.
- Assessment is used effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning.
- The co-ordinator has insufficient time to rigorously monitor teaching and learning to effect further improvement.

Commentary

68. The 2003 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, which were externally moderated, show that pupils' attainment is above the national average. The 2003 end of Key Stage 2 national test results show that standards are in line with the national average. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance in Key Stage 2 is well above average. There has been very good overall improvement in science since the last inspection, and standards have risen steadily in both key stages. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The difference between the Key Stage 1 teacher assessments, and the inspection findings, is because of differences in the natural ability of the groups of pupils. Throughout the school, pupils of all abilities achieve well, and attain the standards of which they are capable.
69. Standards at the end of both key stages have improved significantly since the last inspection because of better teaching, and because of the very good emphasis that is now placed on pupils learning through practical experience. In both key stages the pupils' investigative skills are strong, although many pupils still have difficulty in using scientific language accurately and appropriately to explain their ideas. Pupils have a secure scientific knowledge, and their experience is broad. However, many pupils are not able to make generalisations based on their prior knowledge. For example, Year 6 pupils confidently explain a food chain where a fox eats a bird which has eaten a slug which has eaten a lettuce leaf, but can not easily transfer this knowledge to a different context. Pupils record their work well in Key Stage 2, and this provides a good basis for them to revise their previous learning. However, in Key Stage 1, Year 2 pupils do not have enough written records of the work they have carried out, and their written work does not reflect the extent of their actual knowledge and understanding. By contrast, the recording of work by Year 1 pupils is good, and pupils confidently write their own accounts and complete tables to record their observations.
70. Teaching is good throughout the school, and pupils of all ages and abilities have positive attitudes to learning. Coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study is good, enabling pupils to have a broad and well-balanced range of learning experiences. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils at the start of lessons so that they know what is expected of them. Well-led discussions at the end of lessons help pupils to clarify their thinking and enable the teacher to check that they have learned the main teaching points. Teachers use resources well to enliven their teaching and to capture the interest of the pupils. The teaching of investigative work is a strength of teaching in both key stages and as a result, pupils have some very good opportunities to practically handle equipment, and to try new ideas out for themselves. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, but a small number of pupils lack self-

discipline and tend to become over-excited in practical lessons. Teachers manage pupils well, and support staff play a key role in helping pupils with challenging behaviour, and those with special educational needs, to take a full part in all activities.

71. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall, and some good work has been done in recent years to enable standards to be raised. However, the co-ordinator has no non-contact time, and this reduces the opportunity for her to work alongside colleagues, or to rigorously monitor classroom practice so that good practice can be shared and any weaknesses addressed. Assessment information is used well to highlight whole-school issues and strengths in pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The quality of provision for information and communication technology is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The computer suite is an excellent resource that has a very positive impact on the standards pupils attain and their overall progress.
- The information and communication technology teaching assistant makes a good contribution to the overall quality of teaching and learning.
- Although all teachers have had training, some still lack confidence in some aspects of the information and communication technology curriculum.
- The co-ordinator has no non-contact time, and this limits the range of monitoring she can carry out.
- There is no whole-school approach to assessing and tracking pupils' progress and attainment.

Commentary

72. Since the last inspection there has been good overall improvement in the provision for information and communication technology. The improvement in the resources has been very good, and, in addition to the classroom computers, the school now has an excellent computer suite that will comfortably accommodate whole class groups. Although standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are still below the national expectation, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards are close to the national average, although there are some weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and understanding of aspects of control technology. This represents a good overall improvement in standards since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school.
73. In both key stages, the stronger element of pupils' learning is their knowledge of word-processing. As they move through the school pupils become more confident about changing the appearance of text, and by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils successfully combine text and graphics when producing multi-media presentations. In Key Stage 1, most pupils need a great deal of adult support to save and print their work, and a number of pupils struggle to co-ordinate their hand to eye movements as they use the mouse to move the on-screen cursor. Key Stage 1 pupils have only limited understanding of using computers to control external objects, such as a robotic toy, and this is an area of weakness for Key Stage 2 pupils as well, who have missed out on early experiences of the control aspect of the information and communication technology curriculum. Throughout the school pupils use computers effectively to

generate art work, and even the youngest pupils know how to use the different painting tools to create 'spray' and 'fill' effects.

74. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and the input of the information and communication technology assistant makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning. However, although teachers plan lessons, the delivery of activities is often the responsibility of the information and communication technology assistant. In the main, this practice works well, but prevents the teachers who are less confident about teaching the subject from gaining first-hand experience, and from becoming more proficient. Although all teachers have undergone training in the subject, some aspects, such as working with interactive whiteboards and projectors, have not yet been covered, and teachers lack the skills to use these resources competently. Lessons in the computer suite are well planned and prepared, and build well on the pupils' previous learning. Learning objectives are shared with the pupils so that they know what is expected of them, and instructions are clearly expressed so that pupils can get on independently. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, but many have difficulty in retaining information and in recalling their past learning. As a result, parts of most lessons are spent in recapping previous learning. The subject is very effective in promoting personal and social skills as the pupils work co-operatively in pairs on shared projects.
75. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has ensured that a suitable scheme of work is in place but does not have sufficient time to monitor standards or the teaching of the curriculum. Accommodation and resources for learning are good. However, the computer suite is often used only by half class groups, and this is not an efficient use of time or of the suite. Assessment is in the early stages of development, and although teachers keep informal records of what pupils have covered, there is no formal whole-school approach to assessment which enables the progress and attainment of individual pupils to be tracked as they move through the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum.

76. Opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology on a day-to-day basis to support their learning are limited. However there are regular sessions in the computer suite when pupils use information and communication technology within a subject context, such as when they produce pictures using art and design programs. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident about accessing information from the Internet or from CD ROMs, and appreciate the wealth of information that can be accessed from a computer.

HUMANITIES

The inspection focused on **religious education**. Not enough work was seen in **history** or **geography** to make firm judgements about standards, or about the quality of teaching and learning. However, discussions with pupils and co-ordinators indicate that the school does not give enough time to either geography or history to ensure in-depth coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Although co-ordinators provide satisfactory leadership in their subjects in terms of supporting colleagues, sharing information from professional development courses, and monitoring planning and resources, they do not play a sufficiently proactive role in monitoring the curriculum.

Religious Education

The provision in religious **education** is **satisfactory** in Year 1 and Year 2, and **unsatisfactory** for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 6 are well below the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and could be higher.
- Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is unsatisfactory.
- The monitoring of the curriculum provision is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

77. By the end of Year 2 standards are below the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. However, Key Stage 1 pupils achieve satisfactorily, and make satisfactory gains in their learning about Christianity, Islam and Judaism. This secure start is not maintained in Key Stage 2 where insufficient time is given to the subject in most classes. As a result, pupils do not cover the curriculum as defined in the Locally Agreed Syllabus in enough depth, and their attainment is well below the expected level at the end of Year 6. The pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2, and most pupils are capable of attaining higher standards in their work.
78. Throughout the school, emphasis is placed on the pupils learning about Christianity, and by the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils know the main Christian festivals and celebrations. With prompting, the pupils relate some key stories of the Bible, and higher attainers draw out the main messages of these stories. The pupils' knowledge of churches and Christian artefacts is very limited. As they move through Key Stage 1 pupils gain some knowledge of other world faiths, such as Islam and Judaism, but their knowledge is very limited and patchy. In Key Stage 2, the pupils' knowledge and understanding are not sufficiently extended, and their recall of what they have learned is very weak. A small number of higher attaining Year 6 pupils recall a few facts about the faiths of Islam and Judaism, but even these pupils have difficulty in drawing out similarities and differences between the faiths they have studied and in making comparisons.
79. It is not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. Only one religious education lesson was scheduled during the period of the inspection, and in that lesson the teaching was good, although the lesson itself was very brief. Based on the evidence of discussions with pupils, co-ordinators, and the sampling of pupils' work, the quality of teaching appears to be satisfactory, although pupils do not record enough work in their books, making it difficult for them to recall their previous learning.
80. The leadership and management of religious education are unsatisfactory. The lack of time given to the subject in Key Stage 2 has not been identified and addressed, and there has not been enough rigorous monitoring of standards, teaching and learning. Until recently the co-ordination of the subject was shared between two members of staff. Because of falling roles and staff changes, the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator now has responsibility for co-ordinating the subject throughout the school. Whilst she has a clear idea of what must be done to raise standards in Key Stage 2, she does not have any non-contact time, and this makes it very difficult for her to monitor classroom practice, and to work alongside colleagues.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The inspection focused on **physical education**, and it is therefore not possible to fully evaluate the provision for **art and design**, design and technology and **music**.

On the basis of discussions with pupils, scrutiny of their work, and the observation of a small number of lessons, standards in **art and design** and **design and technology** are judged to be satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school, but currently too little time is given to the subjects to enable some of the topics studied to be covered in sufficient depth. In **music**, no lessons were observed, but pupils were heard singing in assemblies and hymn practices. The standard of singing is good, and pupils of all ages sing tunefully and enthusiastically, with older pupils confidently maintaining parts. Although art and design, design and technology and music are satisfactorily led and managed, the co-ordinators' role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and the standards pupils achieve, is limited because they have no non-contact time during the school day to enable them to work alongside colleagues, or to observe the pupils at work.

Physical education

The provision for physical education is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good amount of time is given to physical education in both key stages enabling pupils to take part in a good range of activities during the course of the year.
- Pupils achieve well because of good instruction from teachers about how they can improve their performance.
- Good use is made of the expertise of outside coaches.
- The school provides a very good range of additional learning opportunities that significantly enhance and enrich the pupils' learning.
- A number of pupils in both key stages have difficulty in managing their behaviour and lack self-discipline.

Commentary

81. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are at the nationally expected level. Pupils achieve well, and make steady and noticeable progress across all aspects of the physical education curriculum as they move through the school. Standards are broadly the same as they were at the time of the last inspection, but the school has substantially increased the range of extra-curricular activities it provides, and there has been very good improvement in this aspect of the overall provision.
82. The range of additional activities is very good. Sessions are often led by skilled coaches, who set very high levels of challenge for the pupils within a 'fun' learning environment. These additional sessions are well attended, and have a significant and positive impact on the achievement of individual pupils. Of particular note is the impact these sessions have on the pupils' personal and social development as they learn to compete in a friendly way, and to accept defeat gracefully. Pupils also learn the importance and value of teamwork.
83. Pupils have access to the full physical education curriculum during their time in school, and during the inspection lessons were seen in dance, gymnastics and games. In

addition, Key Stage 2 pupils have sessions in a local swimming pool and are encouraged to take part in a residential visit where they can experience a wide range of outdoor and adventurous activities. Although the leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory, the co-ordinator has no non-contact time in which to monitor teaching and learning.

84. The teaching of physical education is good overall, and some very good teaching was seen during the inspection. Teachers and outside coaches set high expectations for the pupils, and provide good support and advice which enable pupils to improve the standard of their work. Where teaching is at its best, pupils are actively encouraged to be creative and original in their work, and they respond very well. In all lessons teachers use warm up and cool down sessions well, enabling pupils to have a good understanding of the impact of exercise on their bodies. Often teachers use pupil demonstration very well to illustrate important teaching points, and in the best examples, teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their own work and that of their classmates, helping them to see how they might further improve their own performance. Pupils generally respond well, but because some of them lack self-discipline, there is a tendency for them to become over-excited if they are not tightly controlled and managed by their teachers. Pupils of all ages put a good amount of effort into their work, and are often physically exhausted at the end of sessions.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The learning mentor provides very good support for pupils who have difficulty in managing their own behaviour.
- The school provides a good formal programme of lessons which effectively promote pupils' personal, social and health education.
- The breakfast club and thinking skills sessions that are held at breaktimes provide very valuable additional learning opportunities for pupils.
- Staff effectively monitor pupils' personal development on an informal basis but have no formal mechanism for tracking pupils' progress and attainment as they move through the school.

Commentary

85. The school recognises that many pupils have very low levels of self-esteem, and teachers are very successful in the way in which they celebrate pupils' achievements and praise their efforts. Nevertheless, pupils' self-image when they leave school at the age of eleven is often negative. Through a formal programme of timetabled lessons, supplemented by additional and incidental opportunities, the school is working effectively to help pupils to overcome their fear of failure, and to help them to learn how to work harmoniously with others within the community of the school.
86. The headteacher takes a very clear lead in personal, social and health education through her own work with pupils at breaktimes. On several days each week, pupils are encouraged to meet together to join in with a variety of activities, designed to promote thinking skills, and also to develop their social skills as they work collaboratively to solve problems. These sessions are very successful and fully achieve their aims, although because the activities are not compulsory, some of the

pupils who would benefit most, do not attend. The breakfast club, and breakfast activities, supervised by the learning mentor are another example of the school's commitment to promoting pupils' personal and social education. The main breakfast club, which is for parents and their children, has the additional advantage of encouraging parents to spend quality time with their children.

87. The role of the learning mentor is well established, and she is very effective in the way in which she manages disaffected pupils, and helps those who have difficulty in managing their own behaviour.
88. Teachers know their pupils very well, and informally monitor their progress and attainment. However, the school has no formal mechanism for tracking and monitoring the pupils' progress and attainment as they move through the school, and therefore no mechanism for measuring the effectiveness of the strategies that have been put into place.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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