

INSPECTION REPORT

BONNYGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

South Ockenden

LEA area: Thurrock

Unique reference number: 114968

Headteacher: Mr. Derek Trollope

Lead inspector: Sue Orpin

Dates of inspection: 20th – 23rd September 2004

Inspection number: 266454

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	327
School address:	Arisdale Avenue South Ockenden Essex
Postcode:	RM15 5BA
Telephone number:	01708 853316
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Edna Robinson
Date of previous inspection:	7 th October 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is an above average sized primary school with 327 pupils, including nursery provision. Pupils are organised in twelve classes, two of which are mixed age groups. Pupils come from a wide area and are in families from a wide range of social circumstances but are broadly considerably lower than the national picture. Thirty six per cent of the pupils have free school meals, which is well above the national average. Pupils' attainment when they start school is well below the level expected for their age. One hundred and fifteen pupils, a well above average proportion, have been identified as having special educational needs, which are mainly moderate learning, with some social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties. Almost all pupils are from white British backgrounds. There are four pupils learning English as an additional language. Twelve per cent of pupils come from travelling communities. The school gained the Schools Achievement and Healthy Schools Awards in 2002, Investors in People in 2003 and is involved in the Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools. There have been very high levels of staff and pupil mobility in recent years. At the time of the last inspection, the school was found to be providing an acceptable standard of education, but with serious weaknesses.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17808	Sue Orpin	Lead inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, history, geography, religious education
22222	Margaret Cain	Lay inspector	
10226	Sue Senior	Team inspector	Science, art and design, music, citizenship, Foundation Stage
30244	Roger Tapley	Team inspector	English, design and technology, physical education, special educational needs, English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory and improving school that is well placed to build on its current successes. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Despite the very good efforts to promote attendance, high levels of absence and the very high numbers of pupils and staff leaving and joining the school, have adversely affected achievement and some aspects of the school's development. The quality of teaching and the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Test results are improving at a rate that is slightly above the national trend, although standards are well below national averages except in reading and information and communication technology (ICT) where they are below
- Achievements in ICT and reading are good, and reflect successful improvements in teaching and resources
- Attendance is steadily improving due to the school's actions but remains unsatisfactory because not all families make school a high priority
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes in lessons are very good and have a positive effect on their learning
- The school cares for its pupils well, relationships are very good and there is good provision for pupils' personal, moral and social development
- Although teaching is satisfactory and much of it is good, in those few lessons that are not as good, teachers make insufficient use of assessment to plan activities that meet pupils' needs

Since the last inspection, improvement has been satisfactory and the key issues from the last inspection have been dealt with fully. Standards remain low but are rising despite a decline in the levels of attainment of children joining the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Children start at the school with standards that are well below those that are typical nationally. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage but very few reach the goals expected by the end of reception. At the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain standards that are well below average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils reach standards that are well below those expected in all other subjects except ICT and reading. Although standards in ICT and reading are below average pupils make good progress and they achieve well. The grades for similar schools do not take full account of the high number of pupils who join and leave the school. Many pupils who have spent most of their time at Bonnygate have improved well on the test results they gained when they were in Year 2. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is satisfactory.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils' self-confidence and sense of right from wrong are very good and everyone is included in all aspects of school life. Pupils' respect for each other and their social development are good. Pupils' spiritual awareness, and their appreciation of their own and other cultures are satisfactory. Their behaviour and attitudes to their work and school are very good, but attendance is unsatisfactory. Pupils in the Foundation Stage behave well and their attitudes to school are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and improving. Teachers manage their pupils well and have high expectations of their behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to learn so they are interested and engaged well in their lessons. As a result, when given the opportunity, they work well, together and independently. Activities are usually stimulating and lessons generally paced well. In those few lessons, where teaching was less effective, the teacher's planning for activities and their use of language did not sufficiently match the pupils' differing levels of understanding, with loss of learning for some pupils. Teachers assess their pupils in a satisfactory way, but some are not yet fully using the information they have to plan their lessons. Pupils' progress is tracked well in English and mathematics. Pupils are generally clear about how well they are doing in these subjects but are less sure about their level of work or what they need to do to improve. Assessment is weaker in other subjects. The curriculum and extra activities provide a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils. The school provides well for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and listens to pupils' views effectively. Links with parents and the community are satisfactory and with other schools they are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher provides sound leadership and has established improvement despite barriers relating to pupil and staff mobility that are beyond the school's control. The governors perform their role in a satisfactory way, with a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

The management of the school is satisfactory. Teachers are provided with good induction and their work is monitored well. Whole school planning is satisfactory but lacking some direction. Financial management is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the work of the school, the care it provides and the progress their children are making. Most pupils are very happy at school and feel they are taught well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Improve attendance
- Ensure that assessments are used by teachers to plan lessons for pupils' differing levels of attainment

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are well below average and their achievement is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' test results in English, mathematics and science have been well below average over recent years but they are rising at a rate that is faster than the national trend
- Standards seen during the inspection were also generally well below those expected but confirm the trend of rising results
- Pupils' achievements in reading and information and communication technology (ICT) are good although standards are below those expected nationally
- In some lessons, a few higher attaining or lower attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they might but the significant minority of pupils from travelling communities achieve as well as their peers

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.0 (14.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.8 (12.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.5 (17.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.0 (25.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.1 (25.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.5 (26.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. National test results in English and mathematics at Years 2 and 6 and science at Year 6 have risen steadily in recent years at a rate that is above the national trend because of improvements in teaching, the curriculum and resources. The improvement in standards is despite a declining level of attainment when children enter the school, and very high levels of staff and pupil mobility. In 2003, pupils attained results that were well below national averages. The results for Year 6 in 2004 indicate similar standards. However, the pupils who have spent most of their time at Bonnygate have improved well. Most pupils start the school with standards that are well below those usual nationally. They make satisfactory progress and their achievements are satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes. Nevertheless, few are likely to achieve the learning goals expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils' standards in reading and information and communication technology are below those expected representing good achievement as a consequence of improved teaching and equipment. In a small number of lessons, a few higher or lower attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they might because the teaching is not taking sufficient account of their varying levels of understanding.
2. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in most lessons and their progress towards the targets set for them is sound. Well-trained teaching assistants help them learn effectively in group activities, and usually tasks are adapted appropriately for the needs of each pupil. There are very few pupils learning English as an additional language but their needs are met in a satisfactory way so their achievement is satisfactory. The needs of pupils who are particularly talented in music or art are met.

3. Pupils' gains in knowledge and understanding are better than their achievements in developing particular skills. Pupils' language skills are notably weak and this has an impact on the development of their investigational and research work throughout the school. For example, pupils' lack of skills in speaking and listening limit the way in which they discuss and investigate mathematics or record scientific experiments. Recent developments to improve the teaching of skills are helping pupils to overcome some of their difficulties but they have yet to impact on standards.
4. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to work hard to improve standards and test results. There has been some success in raising standards despite high levels of staff mobility. Better teaching and ICT provision, and an improved curriculum are factors in this success. Although the focus has been to improve standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science in particular, the school has ensured that pupils learn a broad range of subjects through interesting activities, and so standards are rising across the curriculum. The continuing low levels of attendance combined with very high levels of pupil mobility depress the achievement of some pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is well below that of other schools because of the poor attendance of a few pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A small number of parents do not ensure that pupils attend regularly and arrive at school on time
- The school is making very good efforts to improve attendance and punctuality
- The school sets high standards for behaviour and takes appropriate action so pupils are very interested in school and very keen to take responsibility, particularly in helping younger pupils
- The school instils a very clear sense of right and wrong
- Opportunities for learning about other cultures in the modern world, or to encourage awareness of spiritual development are sometimes missed

Commentary

5. Attendance levels at Bonnygate School were very low in comparison with other primary schools in 2002/2003 and the rate of unauthorised absence was above that of most primary schools.
6. However, attendance has improved in 2003/2004 and during the first 16 days of the current academic year there has been significant improvement, reflecting the growing success of the school's wide-ranging measures to promote attendance and its tough stance on challenging parental excuses for absence or lateness. There is no evidence of truancy.
7. The importance of attendance is stressed at every interaction with parents. Most are now responding positively. However, there remains a small group who makes little effort to cooperate. Attendance rates are also affected considerably by comparatively high numbers of families from travelling communities.
8. The attendance officer appointed last year is dedicated to working with intransigent families and is working very effectively with the support of the headteacher, including such innovative measures as discounts from a local travel agent for Bonnygate families taking trips during school holidays.
9. The school's procedures for recording and monitoring attendance are very rigorous. Registrations are efficient. Although there a very small number of pupils are occasionally late, on the whole punctuality is satisfactory. Class teachers warmly commend individual improvements in attendance and punctuality, so the majority of pupils are very keen to come to school and are happy to be there.
10. When necessary, the school quickly and appropriately involves other agencies. Educational welfare officers praise the school's very prompt and efficient approach, and its ability to break down and analyse its statistics to identify trends.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	9.5	School data	0.6
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.

11. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, representing good improvement since the last inspection. The school system for rewards, known as the 'Learning Zone', has had a major impact in creating a learning culture. Pupils are keen to explain the system to visitors and express pride in their reward stickers.
12. Pupils set high standards for themselves and disapprove of the uncooperative attitudes of a few pupils. For example, they were disappointed to find litter in the new school pond and quickly removed it. Their very good behaviour extends beyond the school, for example, the local rector described the very respectful behaviour of pupils visiting a garden of remembrance.
13. Pupils form firm friendships and enjoy taking responsibility for younger pupils. They are welcoming to late joiners and to those who attend the school intermittently. They are confident they can inform an adult about bullying and know that the school has clear procedures to deal with any incidents. The school responds rapidly to any instances of bullying or racism.
14. There were three fixed-term exclusions last year, which were appropriately used and when the school was keen to gain the support of all families involved.

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	284	3	
White – Irish	16		
White - any other White background	11		
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	1		
Black or Black British – African	4		
Any other ethnic group	2		
Parent / pupil preferred not to say	25		

15. Taken as a whole, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their moral development is very good, with the school helping pupils gain a clear sense of right and wrong. Social development is good: pupils are tolerant of one another's differences; understand their role in the school community; and cooperate effectively in learning. They respect the views, beliefs and opinions of others well.
16. Although provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory, there are aspects that are not developed as well. While assemblies provide a sound start to the day, some chances for pupils to reflect and consider the wonder of the world around them are missed. There was a notable absence of music as pupils enter and leave the hall, so there was a lack of calm, thoughtfulness and spirituality. However, in some lessons, such as a Year 5 religious education lesson, the teacher's use of quiet, calm music at the beginning of the lesson helped pupils to think and conveyed an atmosphere that was reflective. Pupils are provided with a good insight into their own culture, for example through art, music, history and English, but there are too few occasions for pupils to learn about other cultures. Although there are resources for learning about other cultures and beliefs in the modern world these are not widely displayed, easily accessible or regularly used.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory although there is not yet enough consistently good teaching to drive up standards faster, particularly in the school context of very high levels of pupil and staff mobility. The assessment of pupils is satisfactory but the use of the information to plan for individual needs is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory and there are good links with other schools and satisfactory links with the community that make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. The school cares for its pupils well and has a satisfactory partnership with parents, apart from the fact that too many of them do not respond to the school's very good efforts to raise attendance.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and some is good. Teachers assess their pupils soundly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a significant amount of good teaching but the school and Local Education Authority documentation shows these improvements are recent so have not yet fully impacted upon pupils' achievements
- Teachers manage their pupils well and provide good encouragement through the effective use of praise and the school system of rewards. Relationships are very good so pupils are highly motivated
- In some lessons, the tasks do not sufficiently challenge all pupils at differing levels of attainment and at times, the pace of the lesson is too slow so pupils do not learn as well as they might
- Although assessment is detailed and regular in English and mathematics, it is not fully used and needs developing in other subjects
- Teaching assistants are used well, particularly in group activities and help pupils with special educational needs learn, although they are not always fully used throughout lessons

Commentary

17. Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school and much is good, although one lesson observed during the inspection was unsatisfactory. As a result of regular monitoring and advice on improvement, the school has successfully improved teaching. Teachers now plan together, working hard and sharing ideas so the improvement continues, but they do not take sufficient account of pupils' assessments when planning activities. As a result of the very high levels of staff mobility, improvements to teaching are only just beginning to take effect and so pupils' achievement remains satisfactory. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson clear and generally provide interesting and stimulating activities, so pupils usually enjoy their work and are very keen to do well. They are encouraged by the praise their teachers give and are therefore confident to answer questions. The school has recently introduced "The Learning Zone" which is a system of rewards that encourages pupils and helps them focus their attention on their lessons and what they are learning. Although a new initiative, this approach is already having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and application to their work. It also provides consistency in teacher's use of rewards throughout the school, despite the many staff changes. In the better lessons, teachers have prepared a range of activities well, they expect their pupils to work hard at a challenging level and they maintain the pace of the lesson. For example, in a Year 5 religious education lesson, the class were learning about David and Goliath and they had to identify and consider David's personal qualities. The teacher's questions were suitably demanding, encouraging pupils to think. She gave them the opportunity to discuss their views with a partner, but made sure that no time was wasted by clear guidance about how long this should take. As a result, pupils thought about David's qualities, his feelings, his belief and faith, and thereby achieved well. In better lessons, teachers made good use of specific technical language to help develop pupils' understanding of terms and help them develop their speaking and listening skills. In most lessons, teachers were skilled in explaining or demonstrating what their pupils would need to learn successfully. Although used effectively at other times, occasionally during these explanations, teaching assistants were less skilled in helping pupils with special educational needs to contribute.

18. In some lessons that were less successful, teachers talked to the class for too long so there was a loss of interest and enthusiasm from the pupils. In some other lessons, the teacher had not made full use of assessment information and so the level of work planned for pupils to do was either too easy or too difficult because it did not fully take their differing levels of ability into account. Another feature of less successful lessons was that the pace of work slowed with a consequent diminution of achievement. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson about the properties of various materials and their suitability for different products, the teacher took too long introducing the lesson so that by the time the group tasks were explained, many pupils had lost interest and stopped listening. As a result there was misunderstanding about what was expected. When this was combined with tasks that were not well matched to their levels of attainment, it led to pupils who were slow to begin, were very noisy and starting to behave inappropriately. Also, as a consequence of their lack of literacy skills, pupils had difficulty in recording their activities and as an overall result, did not achieve as well as they might have.
19. Teachers make sure that all pupils, including those from travelling communities and those with special educational needs are fully involved. Tasks for pupils with special educational needs are usually appropriate to their needs, but when they are required to do the same work as other pupils they are usually well supported by a teaching assistant. For example, in a maths lesson for Years 3 and 4, a pupil who had difficulty concentrating on the task of cutting out and making mathematical shapes made satisfactory progress, because the teaching assistant kept his attention by giving him simple instructions which he could follow. However, in a few lessons opportunities were missed to support pupils in their ability to listen to the teacher at the beginning and end of lessons. On one occasion, a Year 3 pupil who spoke English as an additional language did not achieve as much as other pupils in the group, because support was not given at the end of the lesson. The pupil was not able to listen to the teacher and could not remember what had been learnt.
20. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is less effective than the rest of the school. This is mainly because the planning of activities and the use of time are insufficiently focussed on children's learning. Not enough is expected from children in reception, so their achievement, while being satisfactory overall, is not as good as it might be.
21. Teachers mark pupils' English and mathematics work regularly and most provide detailed and helpful comments that explain what they need to do next. Assessment of pupils' work and learning in these subjects is satisfactory and recorded soundly. Good use is made of the wealth of resulting information to track how well pupils are achieving and to identify where additional help is needed. However, sometimes teachers make insufficient use of assessments when they are planning activities for their lessons and at times, this affects a few pupils of differing levels of attainment.
22. Pupils are involved in their own learning through the use of individual targets in English and mathematics. As a result, pupils have some understanding of how well they are doing in these subjects, although this is not yet sufficiently linked to National Curriculum levels so they are less well placed to judge their progress. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory because there are insufficient records and when planning activities, too little account is taken of children's differing levels of attainment.
23. Assessment of pupils' special educational needs is also satisfactory and individual education plans are carefully written so that pupils with special educational needs are just as keen as others to tackle new work and they achieve soundly in most lessons. Targets that are set for these pupils are regularly monitored to ensure that all pupils have full access to the curriculum. However, as for other pupils in the school, where the planning of activities does not match their levels of attainment, their achievement is more limited. However, in most lessons, interesting and stimulating activities ensure that everyone has the same chance to learn.
24. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory because now almost all lessons are satisfactory or better.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (45%)	17 (52%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The curriculum

There is a satisfactory curriculum that helps pupils learn. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for enrichment through activities outside lessons. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good number of teaching assistants are generally deployed effectively
- The Learning Zone initiative improves pupil management and the focus on learning
- Schemes of work do not clearly indicate how a subject should be taught
- Personal, social and health education is provided well through different subjects
- Induction procedures successfully prepare pupils for their next school

Commentary

25. The school makes satisfactory provision for the interests and needs of its pupils by providing a broad curriculum. Personal and social education (PSHE) has a high profile in all classes through timetabled lessons and circle time, where pupils are able to offer their opinions and listen to each other, across the school. Links between subjects, such as art, English and geography help make learning more effective. For example, the Year 4 PSHE focus upon relationships and body language helps pupils to interpret and appreciate the artist's skill in painting portraits and in portraying the interaction between people. The school has improved its focus on creativity by introducing whole days which are devoted to art, and design and technology. The recently introduced "Learning Zone" works well to encourage pupils to behave well and for maintaining their attention on learning and their lessons.
26. Although the curriculum is broad, there are aspects of the curriculum which are not yet covered consistently or in sufficient depth. For example, there is insufficient time spent on the skills of research in geography and history. However, there have been recent developments to improve the teaching of pupils' skills. Curriculum planning for each age group is detailed and while satisfactory overall, is less effective for mixed age classes because it does not make clear how pupils will cover the work in a logical way. Schemes of work do not specifically indicate how a subject should be taught, which is an important omission, bearing in mind the previous high staff turnover within the school.
27. Teaching assistants are well deployed and generally work effectively to support learning in all classes. The use of support staff to help pupils from travelling communities, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is as an additional language is satisfactory. The remainder assist in working with groups of pupils on tasks set by the teacher.
28. As they progress through the school, pupils are successfully prepared to move into new classes by talks to parents and the use of school "Buddies", who are older pupils, to smooth transition from one stage of education to the next.
29. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes good care of its pupils. It provides satisfactory support, advice and guidance. Pupils trust adults in school and know that their views are valued and acted upon well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults at the school are vigilant of pupils' care, welfare, health and safety, inside and outside the classroom
- Lunch-time arrangements make it difficult for staff to supervise a large area with multiple activities
- Induction arrangements for late joiners and traveller children ensure they make an effective start on their careers at the school
- Pupils trust adults and feel able to approach them with a problem

Commentary

30. Bonnygate School takes good steps to safeguard its pupils' physical and emotional wellbeing. The school encourages learning by ensuring that the pupils can work in a secure and happy setting where they feel valued. Pupils across the age range report little about the school that they would like to change.
31. Procedures for children's care and welfare, judged as satisfactory at the last inspection, are now good. The school's procedures for dealing with accidents, illness and administration of medicines are well documented and implemented consistently. The school has a long-term programme for training high numbers of qualified first aiders and a well-equipped first aid room. Fire safety measures are also well planned and rehearsed.
32. A good network of security locks protects the school site, balanced by ramp to the reception area and automatic door to make wheel-chair access to the reception area easier. Staff were seen to react quickly to perceived risks, such as intrusion. However, the very large area available for lunch-time play makes it difficult for midday supervisors to see all pupils at playtimes.
33. Child protection arrangements are secure, with the designated teacher receiving appropriate training. Parents are given relevant information about the school's strategy. Furthermore, child protection is well supported by governors and, since the last inspection, has become the focus of whole-school training so that all adults feel confident of their ability to identify and refer problems. The school works well with external agencies to draw on additional resources for pupils and their families. There is good support for pupils in public care.
34. Pupils questioned had at least one adult whom they would feel comfortable approaching with a problem. During the inspection, a teaching assistant was observed offering sensitive care to an upset older pupil. One teaching assistant is also a trained counsellor.
35. The school is flexible in responding to pupils' different personal and home circumstances. Induction arrangements for pupils joining the school are good so that they settle happily into their school life. Pupils joining the school later in their careers and pupils from travelling communities report being helped to integrate quickly into the school community; for example, by being matched to the most appropriate class.
36. Older pupils are given information on the next step in their education at an early stage and helped to become familiar with their next school. As a result, pupils report feeling equipped to look forward to the change with confidence.
37. The elected school council enables pupils to contribute to the life of the school and has been extended to involve younger pupils. In the main, its agenda and decisions revolve around lunch-time development and the school environment. One example of its impact on school life is the new 'friendship bench' of which pupils are particularly proud. However, to date the school has taken only limited steps to act on pupils' views in developing the curriculum and other areas of its work.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and with the community are satisfactory. Links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's active participation with local schools (the Lakeside Consortium) is having a beneficial effect on teaching and learning
- Annual reports to parents on their children's progress do not consistently provide clear, measurable targets for improvement but other written communications are lively and easy to read
- Parents are not widely and actively involved in the day-to-day life of the school or its long-term development
- Links with local businesses and the use of the local area for visits are not fully utilised

Commentary

38. Links with parents remain satisfactory as at the last report. The school has obvious strengths in providing information about its work, but is not fully consulting with parents on a regular basis and thereby taking full account of their views when planning long-term development.
39. Pupils' annual reports to parents meet statutory requirements and are informative. However, some observations on pupils' progress are too brief and, as identified at the last inspection, reports are not consistent in giving clear, well-focused targets for improvement or specific advice on how parents can help their children to improve their behaviour and academic achievement.
40. The governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus are well structured, if formal, documents which fully meet statutory requirements and give a clear picture of the school's work, and the support it expects to receive and give. Increasingly, personalised letters home are written in a simple, unambiguous style. The weekly newsletters are delightfully lively vehicles of communication.
41. The school receives only broadly satisfactory support from parents and recognises that work remains to encourage a spirit of partnership with some hard-to-reach parents. The high number of families moving in and out of the area means that the school faces a significant challenge in forging long-term links. In addition, lack of interest means that some parents do not take sufficient advantage of opportunities to make a stronger contribution to pupils' learning. For example, many are reluctant to become involved in the current work or future development of the school and there is an uneven response to workshops which would inform them of what is planned for the curriculum.
42. The school has a good range of strategies to handle complaints and concerns. Parents feel comfortable about approaching teachers but can quickly escalate a problem if they are not satisfied with the outcome. The weekly 'Key Stage Forum' is an important 'step on the ladder' which aims to identify problems early and offers an easily arranged and effective channel of communication for both parties.
43. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly invited into school to discuss the progress of their children.
44. Links with the community are satisfactory. The school welcomes visitors from the community who reinforce and extend the curriculum, but educational visits into the local community and further afield that enrich pupils' experience and assist their learning are inconsistent. Over the last year, the school has begun to forge links with the local church community who praise its openness and readiness to collaborate.
45. There are few links with local businesses, which could form a valuable resource to help pupils learn.
46. The productive partnerships formed through the Lakeside Consortium of schools are contributing well to teaching and learning at the school. The group have contributed to the development of the Learning Zone initiative, described elsewhere as having a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The Consortium has also added a new dimension in staff development programmes, so teachers can discuss what they do and learn from others. It has successfully obtained additional 'Children's Fund' support for vulnerable families. It also acts as an opportunity for managers to discuss educational issues affecting the school. Collaboration has improved transfer arrangements

so that pupils make a smooth transition to local secondary schools. The school has developed its links with other schools well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Governance is satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher and of other members of staff with responsibilities is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the school have improved since the last inspection
- The school improvement plan does not focus sufficiently on raising standards of attainment
- Governors are supportive of the school and while strategic planning is satisfactory, it is insufficiently long term
- There are good systems for the performance management and induction of staff
- The school finances are managed well

Commentary

47. The headteacher in partnership with the deputy head teacher has a clear vision about what the school needs to do to improve. Planning to achieve this vision and to improve standards is satisfactory. The school improvement plan is satisfactory and it is the result of the close working partnership forged between the governing body, the headteacher, the staff and some parents. Each year a meeting is held to gather views of all who have connections with the school before the improvement plan is set. The plan is successful in identifying the most important things that the school needs to do and explains the actions necessary to be successful but it does not yet project actions beyond one year in order to help standards rise further. In recent years the school has experienced difficulties in attracting and retaining teachers. Recently these difficulties have been overcome. The school gained an award for Investors in People in 2003 and is currently involved in the Leadership Development Strategy. The school now has a settled staff and this has begun to improve provision.
48. Governors are well informed about the school. They ensure that the school meets its statutory responsibilities, and has clear aims and policies. Many governors are regular visitors and there is an effective programme in place that enables them to see the school working directly. Governors are also linked with subject co-ordinators and this helps governors to have an understanding of provision made for each subject. They are not afraid to challenge the school when discussing school development issues. There is a businesslike relationship between governors and senior staff in leading the school but governors need to ensure that the school's improvement is planned more strategically, as currently there are no long term plans for the next three years.
49. Most subject co-ordinators are new to their role, following a review of responsibilities and the arrival of new staff in the Autumn Term 2004. They fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily. Most co-ordinators have undertaken a review of the provision in their subject and have provided plans for improvement that feed into the school improvement plan. Those who have been at the school for some time have been supported through training in the development of their role. In some aspects of the school's work, such as assessment in some subjects, development is at an early stage and practice is inconsistent, although it more secure in English and mathematics.
50. The management of staff performance is being used effectively so as to improve teaching. It sets clear objectives to support the improvement of pupils' achievement and is robustly followed through. There are good induction arrangements so newly appointed staff quickly settle down to the school routine.
51. The management and leadership of special educational needs (SEN) are generally satisfactory. The tracking system recording the progress of pupils with SEN, while satisfactory, is cumbersome and limits quick access of data, thereby wasting time.
52. The quality of financial management is good. The office staff works closely with the local education authority to monitor the progress of the budget and to keep the headteacher and governors fully informed about its progress. All matters relating to a recent audit by the local education authority of

the school accounts have been fully dealt with. The contribution of the office staff to the smooth day-to-day running of the school is good.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004)

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,054,884
Total expenditure	1,033,316
Expenditure per pupil	2,873

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	2,591
Balance carried forward to the next	24,159

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Attainment on entry into the nursery is well below average with language skills being particularly poorly developed. The provision is satisfactory overall with weaknesses in assessment and in developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them. There are no children currently identified as needing provision for special educational needs. The process for the identification of children with special needs is unsatisfactory because it is dependent upon the results of the assessment of children's progress in learning. This is the weakest aspect of the Foundation Stage assessment. The satisfactory teaching across most areas leads to satisfactory achievement overall but children will not meet the early learning goals in any area. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in outdoor provision. The standards achieved are lower now than they were at the time of the previous inspection, but children enter the nursery with fewer skills than were identified then. The quality of teaching is as high as it was at the time of the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good procedures for settling children into school
- Children have difficulty in maintaining concentration
- Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and give support to children's learning
- Children know the routines and work independently
- Children find it difficult to resolve their own conflicts

Commentary

53. Children's achievement in developing their personal and social skills is satisfactory. An appropriate emphasis is placed upon this area of learning because children enter with immature personal and social skills. Good procedures for introducing children to the nursery and the reception class result in children being familiar with their surroundings and developing trusting relationships with adults. The resulting positive attitudes to school encourage children to feel confident in taking part in differing experiences and trying new activities. In the nursery classroom, rules are clear, few in number and well reinforced. Classroom organisation in nursery and reception encourages independence. Children are willing to take responsibility for deciding which activities they will do and for putting equipment away. Children achieve more during focus activities than from child initiated play. Adult intervention during child initiated sessions does not extend concentration by encouraging children to complete an activity. Teaching assistants are used effectively to lead focus sessions which encourage children to work in groups and to share through turn taking in games and discussions. Children in reception continue to have difficulty in sharing and cannot resolve their own conflicts. Many children have difficulty in maintaining concentration but they sit and listen well to stories.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a focus upon developing speaking and listening skills in the nursery
- Assessment does not help teachers plan to meet children's differing learning needs
- Praise is used well to develop confidence
- Children listen with enjoyment and respond to stories and songs
- There are missed opportunities for developing language skills

Commentary

54. Achievement in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory. Children enter the nursery with very low speaking and listening skills and this becomes the focus for teaching. Adult directed sessions are more successful than child initiated activities in developing communication skills. Children enjoy listening to stories and joining in the singing and chanting of nursery rhymes. They achieve well during focus sessions when they are encouraged to listen to others and to respond to what they have heard. For example, in a book session in the nursery, children listening to a rhyming story were encouraged to repeat the focus word and predict the rhyme. In child initiated activities there are missed opportunities for introducing specific language and improving pronunciation. In reception, phonics sessions successfully introduce children to initial sounds and the very early stages of word building. Praise is used well to encourage children to take part. Some children, such as a child using the pictures of a book to “read” an absorbing story to two friends, are ready to extend their skills. However, key word recognition is not an integral part of the reception class teaching at this stage of the year therefore a few higher attaining children are insufficiently challenged. Assessment is not fully used to plan activities for children’s differing levels of understanding and the information which is gathered from observations and periodic testing is not sufficiently acted upon.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning
- A few higher attaining children are not fully challenged
- Teachers’ planning does not identify clearly how the specific resources will be used to help children learn
- Incidental opportunities for counting are used well

Commentary

55. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory. Emphasis is given to developing counting and ordering through rhymes and songs. Good use is made of incidental opportunities for counting and reinforcing vocabulary such as “add” and “total”. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to developing children’s numerical and matching skills through leading games and activities such as the Snail Race. Whole class sessions are successful when the activities involve children and build upon previously learned skills. When there is continual repetition of the same skill, higher attaining children learn less well because there is insufficient challenge. Planning does not identify teaching to help children with differing levels of understanding. It lists the opportunities for learning but does not indicate how the use of specific resources, for example for developing understanding of shape and space, will achieve help children learn.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is insufficient direct teaching of this area of the curriculum
- Poor social and communication skills limit the exchange of information
- There are too few materials and activities provided to stimulate curiosity
- Children use computers confidently

Commentary

56. Children’s achievement in knowledge and understanding of the world is unsatisfactory. They enter school with poor social and communication skills which limits the amount of information which they will gain from talking to one another. Consequently teaching is unsatisfactory because planning does not take this into account by providing sufficient opportunities for the direct teaching of information about the world. There is too high an emphasis on children acquiring knowledge from self chosen activities, through conversations with other children and their own desire to learn. The activities highlighted, the range of resources provided and adult interaction do not stimulate

children's interest sufficiently nor arouse their curiosity about where, how and when things happen. The opportunities provided by the improved outdoor area are not used to their best advantage in this area of learning. For example, on a windy day outside, children were encouraged to play with windmills and kites. The windmills worked spasmodically and the kites were identical in shape and size. Interaction with the children did not challenge them to explain why the windmills did not work or to consider the effect of larger, smaller pieces of paper or the effect of the wind upon children's bodies when walking in different directions. Where teaching is more explicit, such as in cooking or during focus activities of building with bricks and construction toys, children have better opportunities to develop understanding and acquire knowledge. Important events in a child's life, such as birthdays and the birth of a new baby are insufficiently used as incidental opportunities to develop a sense of the sequence of life. Story books focussing upon similar events are better used. Children use computers confidently.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have access to an outside area which promotes physical development well
- Brain Gym, which encourages children to use the different sides of their brain, contributes well to coordination skills
- Pencil control is insufficiently taught

Commentary

57. Planning for physical development makes full use of available resources inside and outside to develop specific skills such as hand/ eye coordination and body control skills such as climbing and balancing. The outside area is accessed directly from the classroom and is well equipped to develop coordination skills when using wheeled toys and the use of space. The indoor climbing frame, outdoor equipment and regular use of apparatus in the hall ensure that children develop good control of their body in moving up, over and along apparatus. They find balancing a challenge which they enjoy. Short bursts of Brain Gym improve coordination skills in the reception class. Pencil control is insufficiently developed because handwriting skills are not well taught.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is satisfactory.

Main strengths

- Children enjoy making music
- A variety of creative opportunities is offered

Commentary

58. Children are able to express their creativity through their senses, role play and a good range of materials, such as tissue, ribbons, pasta, pipe cleaners and straws. Children's achievement is satisfactory overall. They enjoy their music sessions in the hall where they experiment with the sound of percussion instruments and combine this with movement. Children do not always respond well to the instruction to stop and this limits their learning about the difference between loud and soft sounds. Creative activities support learning in other areas. The music session makes a good contribution to speaking and listening and personal development because children need to exercise self control in keeping in time with the beat.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening and writing are well below average by the end of Years 2 and 6
- Standards in reading and handwriting have improved since the time of the last inspection
- Teaching assistants are deployed well during practical activities
- The marking of pupils work does not always identify what pupils need to do next to improve
- Not enough use is made of ICT to develop writing

Commentary

59. Standards in speaking and listening, and writing are well below average in Year 6 and Year 2. Standards in reading are below average overall. Standards are lower than those found at the previous inspection, but this represents satisfactory achievement because pupils start in the school with abilities that are well below national expectations and lower than those reported in the last inspection. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language is satisfactory. Several pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 classes have language difficulties and many have a range of complex special educational needs. Mobility of pupils and teachers has been very high over recent years, which has also contributed to lower standards when compared to the last inspection. The school is aware of this and is striving hard to motivate and support all groups of pupils and to improve standards. Recently better progress has been made in all aspects of the subject. The new methods of teaching reading and handwriting are beginning to have a positive effect on standards.
60. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are some good features. Teachers have developed very good relationships with pupils. This is particularly important when a significant number of pupils have learning difficulties. The open and friendly working relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that lessons run smoothly. Teaching assistants are well deployed. They are usually effective and professional in their work. They offer good support to pupils with special educational needs and make every effort to ensure they are included in practical activities. However, they do not support pupils as well during the introduction to lessons when opportunities are lost to develop pupils listening skills. In some lessons seen, teachers' introductions were too long and many pupils in the class found it difficult to concentrate without further support. Teachers' planning is not always effective in ensuring that the content of lesson introductions meets the needs of all pupils.
61. The teaching of reading has improved since the last inspection. In Years 1 and 2, teachers give good attention to teaching letter sound patterns. This helps the pupils tackle unfamiliar words with more confidence. In the older years, teachers are using a wider variety of teaching approaches to make learning fun. As a result pupils have a better knowledge of children's literature. By Year 6, the higher attaining pupils locate information in non-fiction books. For example, one boy was able to find a library book on aircraft and, by using the index, locate information on the 'gypsy moth'. The teaching of handwriting is now more consistent than at the time of the last inspection. Regular practise in all classes has raised pupils' achievement. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are beginning to form their letters correctly. By Year 6, many pupils are developing a cursive script. However, the pupils' poor speaking and listening skills are limiting narrative and descriptive writing. While teachers are alert to this and lessons focus correctly on developing the quality of writing, the higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not given enough opportunities to write independently in different subjects of the curriculum. The marking of pupils work is inconsistent overall and although there are good examples, such as in Year 4, marking generally does not inform pupils sufficiently about what they need to do next to improve their work. Targets for individual pupils are now beginning to be set, but there has not been enough time for these to improve standards.
62. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The role of the co-ordinator has been clearly defined. Provision has been carefully evaluated and a number of relevant priorities identified. Consequently additional opportunities for literacy have been given to a few pupils who will benefit and planning is being monitored more closely so as to ensure consistency. Book weeks and

book fairs have increased pupils' enjoyment in reading. New resources and teaching approaches are beginning to successfully raise the profile of the subject. However, these initiatives have not been in place long enough to have had significant effect on raising standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

63. The use and development of pupils' language and literacy skills in other subjects is satisfactory. Teachers are alert to teaching speaking and listening skills in other subjects. For example, in a Year 2 class the teacher told the pupils to watch her lips as she explained the properties of simple shapes and as a result the pupils carefully listened to what she had to say. Appropriate use is made of subjects such as science. For example, Year 2 pupils have written notelets describing creatures found in ponds, "It jumps in the air, it feels slimy, what is it? A frog." In religious education, pupils are encouraged to write reflectively as well as in narrative. In subjects such as design and technology, teachers ensure pupils learn the specific vocabulary that will help them to make progress. However, not enough use is made of ICT during lessons to develop pupils' writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results at the end of Years 2 and 6 are improving at a rate that is slightly above the national trend
- The recent focus on improving the teaching of investigational skills is beginning to show improvement in pupils' achievements
- Pupils' lack of language skills limits their achievements particularly in investigational activities
- Gaps in pupils' prior learning, especially their quick recall of number, hinder their work in Years 5 and 6
- Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good and pupils work with enjoyment and enthusiasm
- Although the recently introduced system of assessment is beginning to provide useful data, it is not yet consistently used by teachers to plan activities for pupils' differing levels of attainment

Commentary

64. Standards in mathematics in Years 2 and 6 are well below average and improving slowly, despite the decline in the standards of attainment when children enter the school and the difficulties created by very high levels of pupil and staff mobility. In the tests of 2003, Year 2 pupils achieved slightly higher levels in mathematics than in English. When the results of pupils who have attended the school throughout their school careers are compared with similar schools, the results are better. Older pupils' achievements are sometimes limited by the difficulties that some experience in using number and particularly their tables, which is the result of gaps in their earlier learning. However, more consistent teaching throughout the school is beginning to improve these shortcomings. Throughout the school, pupils' lack of skills in the use of technical language sometimes limits the development of their understanding and particularly their ability to work independently of the teacher. Recent developments in the teaching of investigational skills is beginning to show some improvement in pupils work, The national strategy for numeracy is used for planning and it is improving provision generally. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and teaching assistants usually support them well, especially when engaged on task and activities.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and much seen during the inspection was good. Improvements to teaching are beginning to take effect, particularly in relation to the development of pupils' investigational skills. Lessons generally begin with brisk challenging mental activities that pupils enjoy. All pupils are keen to answer questions and want to do well. Teachers manage pupils well and provide good explanations and demonstrations to show pupils what they need to do. As a result, pupils are interested and behave very well. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and demonstrate this through the correct use of terminology. For example, in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were learning to add and subtract numbers less than ten, the teacher provided an interesting, fun activity. Toy dogs were dropped into a bucket so pupils could learn mental addition, which was then developed through a range of different tasks, such as Bingo, that

suitably matched all the pupils differing levels of understanding. In those lessons that were less successful, the teacher talked for too long and occasionally confused pupils. At times, the tasks were insufficiently challenging for a few higher attaining pupils. In a small number of lessons, the teacher had not sufficiently taken into account some of the pupils' weaknesses, for example in multiplying simple numbers or their investigational skills.

66. Overall, assessment is satisfactory. Thorough and regular assessments are made with good analysis of trends. However, this information is not yet sufficiently used to inform pupils about how well they are doing or how they might improve. A few teachers are not using assessment information sufficiently to plan their lessons with the results that tasks sometimes do not suit all pupils' levels of attainment. The coordinator and head teacher have begun to monitor standards of teaching and pupils' work, although because of many staff changes, this has not yet had sufficient time to fully impact on the current teachers. Work is marked regularly with some constructive comments from teachers, but as yet there is little indication of the level of the work to the pupil, nor regular opportunities for pupils to assess themselves. As a result, pupils are generally not clear about precisely how well they are doing and the areas they need to concentrate upon to improve.
67. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-coordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear vision for the subject and a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Detailed long term planning for the subject ensures that all aspects are covered soundly. The use of ICT is insufficient, as it was at the time of the last inspection. However, standards are rising slowly and there have been significant improvements in teaching, so improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. The use and development of pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects are unsatisfactory. Pupils use their skills in subjects such as science and design and technology, but much of this work shows little progress from year to year. For example, pupils in several years use tally charts block graphs to represent data with little difference in the level of challenge. There is little use of computers to develop or extend pupils' understanding of different types of pictorial representation. However, measuring activities show sensible estimation and reasonably accurate results.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' writing skills limit how well they can learn, but there strong focus on using and developing an understanding of scientific vocabulary helps overcome some pupils' language difficulties
- Teachers do not sufficiently use assessment to plan lessons and activities
- Some teachers spend too long on the introductory part of the lesson but clear explanations aid pupils' understanding
- There is no clear sequence to the teaching of investigational skills

Commentary

69. Teacher assessments for Year 2 in 2003 indicate that standards overall were well below the national expectations. Results in 2003 national tests indicate that, by the end of Year 6 standards were well below expectations.
70. Well below average standards were seen in the younger pupils' work and the work and lessons in older classes. Pupils' inability to express themselves clearly through speaking and writing inhibits the raising of standards. At this early stage in the year there is some evidence in lessons that standards are beginning to rise. This is a result of an improved focus on learning through the "Learning Zone" approach (the school system of rewards), increased teacher confidence in teaching science and clearer lesson objectives. The focus upon teaching subject content through investigations has improved the coverage of the curriculum but the lack of a clear progression in teaching investigational skills limits the standards achieved.
71. Pupils' achievement in the current work and lessons seen is satisfactory. Pupils show enthusiasm for science and work hard to find answers to scientific questions. They are introduced to new knowledge through discussion and practical investigations. Pupils learn well when they have

concrete experiences within a structured framework. For example, a Year 6 class achieved results which led to correct conclusions about solubility because they were systematic in applying the fair test procedure to their group investigations. Long introductory sessions, which limit the time remaining for “hands on” experiences, slow pupils’ learning.

72. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with good teaching in some classes. Teachers use learning objectives well to introduce scientific vocabulary. Clear explanations and effective question and answer sessions successfully test and expand pupils’ understanding of this terminology and correct misconceptions. In good lessons resources are well prepared to add pace and create a smooth transition from exposition to experimentation. Good use is made of information displays to reinforce learning and of the Learning Zone to develop thinking processes. Teaching assistants are used well to support learning for specific groups of pupils or to assist in improving pupils’ understanding of the task set. Teachers’ lesson plans indicate subject coverage but they are not an effective teaching tool because they do not indicate how teachers cater for pupils’ differing learning needs. They do not sufficiently take account of the previous learning of different age groups in mixed age classes and pupils’ weak literacy skills. The information gathered from on-going and the end of unit assessments does not measure progress or feed directly into future planning.
73. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory. Pupils’ learning opportunities have benefited from the improved resources for investigations. The subject leader has monitored class teaching but this is still at an early stage.
74. Since the last inspection improvement is satisfactory. Standards in science in younger classes have fallen since the last inspection but pupils enter the school with fewer skills than were identified then. There have been improvements in the quality of teaching in older classes, curriculum coverage and the provision of resources to support learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because they are taught well and they are very keen to learn
- The well-equipped ICT suite is a valuable resource that is being used effectively to teach skills
- ICT is not yet sufficiently used to help pupils learn in other subjects

Commentary

75. Standards in ICT are below those expected nationally and pupils’ work shows very high levels of interest and motivation in the subject and consequently their achievement is good. The new ICT suite makes an effective contribution to pupils’ learning.
76. Three lessons were observed during the inspection, and examples of pupils’ work sampled. Teaching is good and steadily improving. In a good Year 2 lesson, the teacher used demonstration effectively to explain to pupils how to use the Paint program, especially the ‘paintbrush’ and ‘flood fill’ facilities. She helped pupils understand, despite the language difficulties of some. The teacher maintained the pace of the lesson, and therefore the pupils’ interest, by breaking the work into small sections, so that pupils remembered what they needed to do. The teacher’s suitably high expectations meant that by the end of the lesson, all pupils painted and filled their pictures accurately and those who were higher attaining progressed to using special effects. Lessons are taught in the well-equipped computer suite which is used well by all classes.
77. The curriculum follows national guidance and consequently pupils learn a full range of skills and are particularly developing their use of spreadsheets involving formulae, programming events for example through the use of ‘turtles’ and using sensors to measure and monitor changes in light. Older pupils are beginning to develop their skills in using the internet and email.
78. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There are good procedures to plan the progressive teaching of skills in ICT lessons and pupils are assessed regularly and carefully. However, pupils are not clear about the level they are working at, nor do they understand what they need to do to improve.

79. Since the last inspection, improvement has been satisfactory. Standards have been maintained at below those expected, despite the decline in the attainment levels when children enter the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. ICT is used insufficiently to support learning in other subjects and the use and development of skills in other subjects are generally unsatisfactory. Pupils work shows that they have used PowerPoint presentations in science and history and simple word processing has been used in English. In history they have used the internet to research information about World War II and have created spreadsheet to show population changes from 1801 to 1901. In geography, block graphs have been created using ICT to compare two localities. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their developing ICT skills in other subjects and those opportunities that are presented lack progression and therefore make a limited contribution to the development of pupils' skills.

HUMANITIES

81. In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography, with only 1 part lesson, being seen in history and none in geography. It is therefore not possible to form overall judgements about provision in these subjects.
82. Pupils' work in **history** shows that they cover a basic range of topics that includes a study of different periods of history such as the 'toys and homes then and now', the Victorians, the Tudors and World War II. In the part lesson seen, when a Year 2 class were visited by an adult enacting the role of Samuel Pepys, the pupils were very interested and mostly listened well. They knew about the Great Fire of London and had some knowledge of Samuel Pepys, which they used well in thinking of questions to ask. The teacher used key words, such as "eye-witness" and "quill" effectively to help pupils learn. Pupils' work shows that they have had a few limited opportunities to use ICT and research historical information, but more generally, their skills of research were less developed than their knowledge and understanding. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from visits to the local area and beyond, including a visit for older pupils to Chatham Dockyard.
83. Pupils work in **geography** shows that they learn a basic range of topics such as how to use and draw simple maps, the importance of place names, physical geography including the water cycle and mountain environments. Pupils have learned to use and interpret rainfall graphs. Generally there is too little use of ICT, not enough opportunities for fieldwork and insufficient development of pupil skills to research and investigate.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject because usually teachers make lessons interesting
- Although work is marked regularly there are too few comments to help pupils improve
- In some classes there is insufficient variety in the work to cater for pupils differing levels of attainment

Commentary

84. Standards in religious education are well below those expected nationally in both Years 2 and 6. Children enter the school with standards that are well below expected nationally and their achievement is satisfactory. Younger pupils recognise belonging to a group. They identify people who help them and what they do, whilst older pupils have a sound knowledge of Christian beliefs and the Bible, and Jewish beliefs, festivals and artefacts.
85. Teaching is satisfactory overall and some is good. Teachers manage their pupils well and generally have suitably high expectations to which they respond. Teaching assistants work effectively with groups helping pupils learn more difficult ideas and ensuring that their concentration is maintained. Teachers use questions well to help pupils think and this helps to generate their interest and enthusiasm. In one Year 5 lesson about the story of David and Goliath, a quiet reflective atmosphere was created by playing quiet and calm music. The very detailed planning ensured that all pupils, including those with SEN were able to contribute and reflect, while the careful use of

questions directed at individuals and tailored to their level of understanding provided suitable challenge for all pupils. As a result, pupils were developing their understanding of faith and belief well and identified David's personal qualities. Where teaching was less successful, the activities did not sufficiently engage the pupils because the teacher had not sufficiently taken pupils' lack of language skills into account, so their attention began to wander and their behaviour deteriorated a little.

86. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Teachers' planning, pupils' work and lessons are monitored but assessment procedures are used inconsistently. For example, although teachers write encouraging comments, there is sometimes too little guidance to help pupils understand how they can improve their work.
87. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory because the quality of teaching has improved.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

88. No **art and design** lessons were observed during the inspection so there is no judgement about the overall provision. From conversations with pupils and plans it is clear that art is taught on a regular basis and a range of techniques is covered. In younger classes, the standard of the work displayed is satisfactory in terms of colour blending and exploration of texture and space. Much of the art work has focussed upon self portraits, shades of colour and the use of colour in nature. There is evidence of observational drawing, collage, weaving, appliqué, paper sculpture and painting but it is not possible to determine the extent to which pupils have been able to express their own creativity through this work. In older classes pupils take part in the art days where mixed age groups produce a collaborative piece of work which involves the visual and tactile quality of materials. The large pictures which have resulted are of a satisfactory standard. Pupils enjoy the art days and talk about them with enthusiasm. Pupils talk about expressing ideas through a variety of media such as clay, paint, pencil, chalk and charcoal. Good links are made with learning in other subjects such as science, local studies, personal and social education and history.
89. Only one **design and technology** lesson was observed during the inspection so there is no judgement about the overall provision. During the lesson seen, Year 5 pupils satisfactorily evaluated some of their designs for shelters. They made several prototypes from paper and discussed the merits and drawbacks of each. Their constructions were carefully made and of good quality. Pupils in a Year 5 and 6 classes had worked with designers from 'Lego' and had constructed moving models and vehicles, which they had tested for speed and accuracy. Recently the school had carried out an audit of resources and a basic tools box had been provided for each Year group. This has made lessons easier to manage. The school has recently organised successful design/technology days to raise the profile of the subject and to further develop skills.
90. No **music** lessons were observed during the inspection so there is no judgement about the overall provision. From discussions with pupils it is clear that all aspects of music are taught and pupils are particularly interested in performing their own compositions. Older pupils have used a graphic score to record their compositions and have listened to music which creates mood. Younger pupils sing songs from memory and enjoy using a variety of instruments such as the tambourine, triangle and drum to accompany class and group singing. They all enjoy singing in school productions which include every member of the school. Many pupils take part in music festivals where they join with other schools to sing to an audience or just for fun.
91. Percussion instruments are used across the school and a number of pupils learn a musical instrument either through the school or the music service which visits the school regularly. The school has several age groups where pupils learn the recorder. The cost of lessons is a barrier to more pupils joining the currently rather small orchestra. The school has an active choir.
92. No **physical education** lessons were seen so there is no judgement about the overall provision, standards and teaching. A new co-ordinator has recently been appointed and has begun to extend links with other schools. The school now shares accommodation with the local secondary school, providing good resources for the subject. Most pupils can swim 25 metres by the time they leave and swimming lessons have recently been provided for Year 3 pupils, representing standards that would be expected nationally. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to take part in a range of sport during the year both in lessons and after school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHEC)

93. Only one lesson was seen in this subject and there was little past work completed by the pupils that could be used to evaluate the standards achieved. As a result, it was not possible to make an overall judgement. In the lesson seen, teaching and learning were satisfactory. Pupils in the Year 3 class were interested and listened carefully because the activities were well planned. PSHEC is well planned and made meaningful to pupils by being included as part of their learning in several subjects. The school successfully achieved the Healthy Schools Award in 2002, reflecting the successful contribution these aspects of learning make to pupils' personal development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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