

INSPECTION REPORT

**HEYTESBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VA) PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Heytesbury

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126403

Headteacher: Ms Helen Townend

Lead inspector: Mrs Patricia Davies

Dates of inspection: 10th – 11th May 2005

Inspection number: 267006

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	84
School address:	Greenlands Heytesbury Warminster Wiltshire
Postcode:	BA12 0EA
Telephone number:	01985 840429
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elizabeth Pottow
Date of previous inspection:	26 January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- Heytesbury is a very small voluntary aided primary school, with a Church of England foundation, situated in a rural and farming area. Over 40 per cent of pupils come from Heytesbury, but pupils come from other local villages too, some as far away as 12 miles. Nearby is Warminster, which is a garrison town, and children also come from service families based at the local army camp. The regiments change frequently, with some tours of duty being no longer than 12 months; consequently, the school experiences a high degree of change among its pupils. For example, over the course of time a significant proportion of pupils (50 per cent) have left and joined the present Year 6 group. Some pupils also leave to be educated privately.
- There are currently 84 pupils attending. Year groups are small, so three of the four classes have a mix of age groups. Some groups are particularly small, with fewer than ten pupils, and there are also imbalances in the proportions of boys and girls in some year groups.
- There has been a significant level of disruption to the school since it was last inspected, including a substantial period without a substantive headteacher. The present headteacher is a permanent appointment. This difficult period also saw the departure of some pupils, although one or two have returned now that the school has stabilised.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average but does not fully reflect the overall socio-economic context of the school, which is broadly average. While many pupils come from backgrounds of some social advantage, a significant proportion do not. There are no children in care.
- The present proportion of pupils with special educational needs is much lower than the national average, at seven per cent, and is broadly similar to the national average for pupils with a statement of educational need. The range of needs includes moderate learning difficulties and dyspraxia.
- Most pupils are from White United Kingdom backgrounds, and there is a small proportion from other White backgrounds (11 per cent).
- When children join the Reception class their attainment is broadly similar to that of children of a similar age.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22460	Patricia Davies	<i>Lead inspector</i>	English; Art and design; Special educational needs.
9053	Viv Phillips	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
13307	Ian Hancock	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Geography; History; Physical education; Foundation Stage.
22197	Martin Mayhew	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Information and communication technology; Design and technology; Music.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Heytesbury is a **satisfactory** school, and is gradually improving its effectiveness following a period of some disruption. The school plays an important part within the community and its ethos is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, and there are areas of good teaching. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils in the present Year 6 are reaching standards that are broadly in line with national expectations in mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT); the standards in English are above national expectations. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with good leadership from the headteacher. The school is managing its deficit budget well and gives sound value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Effective leadership from the headteacher, who is keen to raise standards and increase achievement.
- Good teaching of English and science in Years 3 to 6.
- Unsatisfactory levels of attendance.
- Inconsistencies in the quality of provision for children in the Reception group.
- Very good relationships across the school because pupils are well known individually.
- Good enrichment of the curriculum, with very good links with other schools and opportunities for sport.

Following the school's last inspection, in January 1999, the school went through a difficult period and was without a substantive headteacher for a significant period of time. The influence of the uncertainties of that time had an impact on pupil numbers (and therefore the school's finances), on its overall development and on pupils' academic performance. Nevertheless, the school has maintained a good ethos in which pupils feel happy and secure. The academic side of its work is now beginning to improve as the result of greater stability and new initiatives. Confidence in the school's effectiveness has been nurtured, and issues from the last inspection related to the curriculum and time have largely been resolved. Those to do with the performance of more able pupils and with monitoring and evaluation are in the process of being tackled. Pupils' attendance, however, has fallen. When these factors are taken into account, the overall level of improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	C	E	E*
Mathematics	D	C	E	E*
Science	C	D	C	E

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.

There are a number of factors in the school's context which make it difficult to draw comparisons between year-on-year results. For example, year groups are small, which tends to distort results, and there is a high level of movement of pupils in and out of the school. Results have also been affected by the period of disruption, to the degree that, by 2004, trends in test results had fallen below the national trend. Indeed, the above comparison with similar schools suggests that these

pupils did not achieve as well as they should have done, most particularly in English and mathematics, where results fell into the lowest five per cent. There are also other clear patterns in test results over time, relating to limited attainment at the higher Levels 3 and 5 and to differences in the performance of boys and girls.

When children first enter the Reception group their attainment is broadly as expected for children of a similar age. These children currently achieve satisfactorily and standards are likely to meet the goals expected of Reception-aged children by the end of the school year. **Achievement right across the school is also satisfactory**, including that of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Much attention has been given to identifying areas where pupils need to improve, particularly in English and mathematics, to raising expectations, and to increasing the achievement of more able pupils. This has been done with increasing success; pupils in Years 3 to 6, for example, are achieving well in English, and targets for 2005 contain predictions for Year 6 pupils to reach Level 5. Pupils now in Year 6 are reaching standards above national expectations in English. Standards in mathematics, science and ICT are broadly in line with national expectations for pupils in Years 2 and 6, and the same is true in respect of reading and writing at Year 2. Not enough evidence was collected for judgements to be made about achievement and standards in other subjects.

Pupils' personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision, are **good**. The promoting of spiritual, social and moral development is very strong, and relationships and behaviour are very good as a result. Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. Punctuality is satisfactory, but attendance in 2004 fell to well below the national average and is unsatisfactory. Some authorised absence reflects the particular circumstances of families with farming and army service backgrounds, but parents are not helped to make informed choices when they seek authorised absence, because the school has not made its expectations about attendance clear.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory, with a good range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, including extensive opportunities for sports. **Teaching and learning are satisfactory as a whole**, while English and science are well taught in Years 3 to 6. Occasionally, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory for the Reception children. Assessment systems are satisfactory. They are now more sharply focused, but are not yet used fully to match work closely to pupils' needs.

There is a sound curriculum which has been strengthened to meet the needs of mixed-age classes. Provision for pupils with SEN is satisfactory. Arrangements for pupils' care and welfare are good, and staff know pupils very well. Links with the community and with parents are good, and those with other schools are very good. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory, although there are some deficiencies in resources for physical education in the Reception class.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is successfully taking the school forward with a strong sense of purpose and direction. Staff work closely together, and with considerable commitment to improvement. Monitoring and evaluation are gaining pace, and are satisfactory, but senior and key staff need time to visit lessons in order to spread and establish good teaching strategies. Governance is satisfactory, and statutory requirements are met. Governors have supported the school well during its difficulties. They play a strong role in financial matters but are not yet fully challenging the school about its performance. Arrangements have been put in place to resolve the financial deficit, and have been appropriately agreed with the local education authority (LEA).

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents express good levels of satisfaction with the school. Pupils think very well of their school and particularly like its friendliness.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Increase levels of attendance, making clear to parents the school's expectations regarding authorised and unauthorised absence and the link between good attendance and good achievement.
- Further develop the provision for children in the Reception group so that activities are always well matched to children's needs to ensure that they consistently learn well.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' **achievement overall is satisfactory**, including those with SEN, with good achievement in English in Years 3 to 6. Standards in the present Year 6 are above national expectations in English, and broadly meet them in mathematics, science and ICT. Too little evidence was collected during the inspection to enable judgements to be made about achievement and standards in other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good achievement in English in Years 3 to 6 and good progress in the development of speaking and listening skills throughout the school.

Commentary

1. There is a broad spread of ability among children when they enter the Reception group, but attainment as a whole at this point is similar to that normally found for children of a similar age. The children are presently making satisfactory progress, and their attainment is likely to meet the Early Learning Goals for children of this age in language and literacy skills and for mathematical development by the time they join Year 1.

2. In the case of this school there are a number of factors which make it difficult to draw meaningful comparisons from one year's national test results to the next:

- individual year groups are small, in some cases fewer than ten pupils. Last year's Year 6 group, for instance, contained just seven pupils.
- there is a high level of movement of pupils in and out of the school over the course of time.
- the school has experienced a period of significant disruption and uncertainty since its last inspection.

3. Nevertheless, there are some clear patterns in the school's test performance over time, some of these reflecting to a large extent the impact of the last of the above factors:

- The most conspicuous has been a falling away in national test results at Years 2 and 6, such that, by 2004, the trend in results had fallen below the national trend. In that year, attainment was very low when compared with that of schools with similar test results when these Year 6 pupils were in Year 2. It was in the bottom five per cent, and the value added to these pupils' results since that time was well below the national average.
- A dearth of pupils reaching the higher Levels 3 and 5 is another issue emerging from test results, which the school has recognised and is working to improve. Targets for the Year 6 tests this year include Level 5, but this was not the case for the 2004 tests. A lack of higher attainment in Year 3 to 6 was a key issue at the time of the last inspection.
- Some distinct patterns in the performance of boys and girls, with girls doing better than boys in the Year 2 tests, and boys outperforming girls in the tests at Year 6. These trends had not been detected by the school.

4. Following the appointment of a substantive headteacher, about 18 months ago, the school has gained greater stability. Improvements to assessment and the analysis of data mean that staff are now judging pupils' attainment in much greater detail, and are identifying and strengthening areas of weaknesses in attainment. Some indication of the very early efforts to improve standards was evident in the rise in the 2004 test results in Year 2, and in those for the Year 6 science tests in the same year. Inspection evidence indicates that the school's improvements continue to be effective, to the extent that the present **satisfactory level of achievement** reflects the sound progress found at the time of the school's last inspection.

5. The impact of new strategies to improve writing means that pupils throughout the school have increased the volume of their work, and they make good progress in the development of formal skills, such as punctuation, spelling and handwriting. Combining literacy activities with work in other subjects has also given language and literacy an interesting and relevant context, and all these factors have served to raise the profile of writing for boys and girls. Indeed, no evidence of differences in the academic work of boys and girls was seen during this inspection. Pupils are achieving well in English in Years 3 to 6 because in these classes teachers are also paying close attention to improving the quality of the content, an approach which is proving particularly effective for improving the performance of more able pupils. As a result, the current Year 6 group are reaching standards above national expectations in English. Those in Year 2 are achieving satisfactorily in reading and writing, and standards in these two subjects meet national expectations. All pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. Pupils are confident, and often articulate, speakers and standards throughout the school exceed national expectations.

6. Pupils in the present Years 2 and Year 6 are achieving satisfactorily in mathematics, science and ICT, where standards are in line with national expectations. Improvements to mathematics are not as far ahead as those in English, particularly in extending proficiency in mental calculation and using mathematical knowledge and understanding within investigational activities. Pupils' scientific achievement now benefits from a sustained focus on practical investigations, but there are still some shortcomings in the recording of activities and results. More and better resources are having a beneficial effect on pupils' progress in ICT, and there is sophisticated equipment for increasing competence in the use of the computer to control models and monitor changes. This is not yet influencing pupils' knowledge and understanding, because it is very new and staff have not yet been trained to use it. Not enough evidence was gathered to enable overall judgements to be made about standards and achievement in other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities are **good**, and they develop very well as a result of **very good** provision, overall, for spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Pupils enjoy school and show good attitudes to learning. Behaviour is very good, as is the quality of relationships. Punctuality is satisfactory, but attendance has fallen to levels well below those of other primary schools and is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Unsatisfactory attendance.
- Very good behaviour as a result of the school's high expectations and pupils' very good understanding of right and wrong.
- Pupils' considerable enjoyment of school life and the opportunities it gives to them, including good attitudes to learning.
- Very good relationships, with the result that pupils feel the school to be a very friendly place.
- The school's sense of community, which pupils appreciate because it makes them feel special.
- The understanding and respect for different cultures and traditions which, though satisfactory, are less well developed than pupils' other personal qualities.

Commentary

7. Much of the strength identified in the last inspection report has been sustained. The exception, however, is attendance, which is now much lower than was the case at the time of the school's last inspection, when attendance was well above the national average. Responses to the parent and pupil questionnaires showed that some parents and pupils had concerns about behaviour, but no evidence of poor behaviour was seen during this inspection either in lessons or at playtimes.

8. The good provision made for personal, social and emotional development in the Reception group gives children a good start, to the extent that children's attainment in this area is likely to exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Within everyday life and routines throughout the school, such as playtime, assemblies and registration, adults set a very clear example of what they expect. The children learn to listen to each other, do as they are asked, and follow school rules. As a result, by Year 6 their self-discipline is very good and serious misbehaviour is rare. High standards of conduct ensure that pupils are ready and willing to learn without unnecessary interruptions or examples of poor self-control. In fact, even when the pace drops in less successful parts of lessons, pupils persist with their work in spite of a little restlessness, and do not misbehave. The two brief exclusions last year were unusual for the school and were made for appropriate reasons.

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	67	2	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0

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

9. Pupils are keen to be fully involved in such interesting activities as 'mind-boggling' mental mathematics activities, and 'racy, pacy writing'. In the very best lessons, where their learning is rapid and activities stimulate new ideas readily, their enthusiasm is infectious. This was evident in a history lesson with pupils in Years 5 and 6, where pupils were fascinated by the idea of being 'archaeologists' engaged in scrutinising artefacts. Where teaching is satisfactory, rather than good or very good, the pupils are willing, rather than avid, learners because teaching does not kindle the sparks of delight and curiosity consistently enough to create a buzz of enthusiasm.

10. Provision for moral, social and spiritual development is very effective. Very good relationships set the tone for the everyday life of the school, reflecting very clearly the example set by the headteacher, and the school's high expectations and Christian values. As a result, pupils are very positive about school life, as summed up in the comment: 'There's nothing much I'd change. I love it here!' They particularly like the school's friendliness and enjoy the very lively playtimes where children of all ages and backgrounds relish the chance to try out new games together. Their enthusiasm is especially illustrated at the 'Huff and Puff' club, where they learn to co-operate, compete and respect everyone's effort. Where the school has seen the need to instil greater sensitivity, thoughtful strategies have been put in place to help pupils get along better with each other, form new friendships, or help others who are without a playmate. The School Council has also played a part in making these decisions.

11. Pupils are very much aware of the school's beautiful setting and gain much from its influence. They particularly like being outdoors, where they can let off steam safely in the large playing field or take some quiet time in the sensory garden. Local visits and visitors help children gain a better understanding of issues such as conservation and care of the environment, healthy lifestyles and personal well being, and what it means to have faith within a Christian tradition. Local sports coaches extend the range of team games very well so pupils have far wider opportunities than are usually to be seen in small schools. Children thrive, with space to play and the chance to become fascinated by nature at first hand. All this underpins very successful personal, spiritual and social development.

12. Opportunities for developing cultural awareness and understanding are satisfactory, and have some effective features. The pupils gain a valuable knowledge and understanding of their own culture from the good range of enrichment and extra-curricular experiences, the trips and visits, the close links with the community, and whole-school events, such as the annual productions. There are occasional very lively and productive opportunities, during French and history lessons, for example, which trigger pupils' awareness of cultural values and respect for other traditions. The school recognises the need to develop more routine opportunities for pupils to explore in greater

depth cultures other than their own. Growing links with a school in Swaziland are proving to be a significant means of gaining a glimpse of other heritages and cultures, and are helping pupils to have a sense of the range of rich and diverse heritages in the world.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.6	School data	0.0
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.

13. Because children are keen to come to school, they mostly arrive on time. Attendance, on the other hand, has fallen over the past three years to a level that was well below the national average in 2004, and with little sign of recovery in the early part of 2005. This comparison placed the school in the bottom ten per cent of schools across the country, and was due to authorised absence. As pupil numbers are so small, the absence of one or two sick pupils can account for a dip in attendance. Moreover, in the case of this school there are also particular local circumstances which explain, in part, the reason for these high rates of absence. For example, the school has a significant proportion of pupils from farming and army families who cannot take holidays in summer or other school holiday periods, and the school is sensitive to these factors. However, the school lacks a policy where expectations of attendance, and the link between good attendance and good achievement, are made crystal clear. Consequently, parents do not have enough information to guide them when seeking authorised absence for their children, particularly with regard to the possible impact on achievement of missing key lessons, especially in English and mathematics.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**, including teaching and learning and the overall quality of the curriculum. Activities for enriching pupils' experience are good, with a particular strength in the very wide range of sports activities. Pupils' care and welfare are well provided for, and links with parents and the community are good. Links with other schools and colleges are very good.

Teaching and learning

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching of English and science in Years 3 to 6.
- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning of the Reception group.

Commentary

14. Teaching and learning are satisfactory as a whole, with some differences in quality between subjects and across the school. This mixed picture is not as positive as the findings of the last report for Years 1 and 2 and for the Reception year, but it reflects a more effective picture in Years 3 to 6. Nevertheless, the impact of improvements to assessment is increasingly influencing teaching strategies throughout the school, and the development of links across subjects is creating a stimulating context for pupils' learning. English and science are well taught in Years 3 to 6; pupils' good achievement in science lessons points to increasing rates of progress in this subject. These subjects are taught satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2, while mathematics and ICT are soundly taught in all year groups. Because Year 6 pupils were taking national tests during the inspection, and Year 5 pupils were taking other tests, it was possible to see only one lesson taught with this class, and this was very good. Additional evidence of the quality of teaching and learning for these pupils was taken from their work completed over the year. The one unsatisfactory lesson seen during the inspection relates to an unevenness in the provision for children in the Reception group.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 13 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	1	6	5	1	0	0

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

15. The Reception group is satisfactorily taught. These children learn best when they have practical activities that extend their ability to learn independently and when greater knowledge and understanding is encouraged through discussion. It also helps if there is additional adult support. Occasionally, when activities are too structured or challenging, or not challenging enough, these children fail to make enough progress.

16. Teaching at its most adept and stimulating focuses closely on building pupils' learning skills and developing intellectual curiosity. The one very good lesson with pupils in Years 5 and 6 did just that. Well directed discussion as a group, combined with challenging questions and the chance for pupils to share ideas with each other, produced thoughtful responses and drew well on pupils' general knowledge about archaeology. Good quality debate is also a feature of other effective lessons, sometimes supported by stimulating artefacts to engage interest and prompt ideas and understanding. Discussion of this calibre ensures that all pupils, including those who do not raise their hands to speak, are called upon to take part. Such debate also prepares and motivates pupils well in readiness for follow-up activities, and levels of co-operation, concentration and productivity are therefore good. Lower attaining pupils, and those with SEN, are frequently given good support from teaching assistants in class, or individually in the library area, which helps them to progress as well as others in their class.

17. Weaker features of otherwise satisfactory lessons often result in pupils becoming restless, and sometimes inattentive. This restlessness happens when, for example, not all pupils are drawn into discussion. Sometimes sessions as a whole class are too greatly dominated by the teacher, or pupils have to sit for too long, and in this situation the pace of the lesson slows. Nevertheless, pupils consistently behave well, because all staff expect them to do so as a matter of course. In other lessons, work is not always well matched to the needs of particular ability groups, which particularly affects the progress of more able and lower attaining pupils. Neither do teachers always use their time as efficiently as they could by targeting specific groups of pupils for focused teaching during grouped activities. Without really close attention during these occasions, pupils occasionally linger too long over the more undemanding elements of their task.

18. Assessment practices are satisfactory, and improving. This judgement is similar to the finding of the last inspection, but the school has moved on in terms of translating policy into action. Considerable attention has been given to refining the match of assessments to National Curriculum levels of attainment in order for the school to have accurate detailed data for tracking pupils' progress over time. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of this process has been valuably supported by, for example, regular assessments of pupils' writing (a current priority for improvement), which staff do together. Assessment sheets for subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT have been drawn up and will shortly be in use. On a wider front, subject leaders are looking at test results and using the information to concentrate teaching on areas where pupils do not perform so well. Having built these initial foundations, the school is keen to use its greater skill and knowledge to look more closely at trends in the performance of different 'groups' of pupils, and to use information from assessment to make sure that work in lessons is consistently well matched to pupils' academic capacity and needs. Profiles of assessment

information for children in the Reception group are satisfactorily maintained, but they are not yet used as much as they could be to guide planning so that work is always well targeted to these children's needs.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall. It is enriched well by a good range of enrichment activities and learning experiences resulting from visits out and visitors to the school. The school's accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good provision of additional sporting activities.
- Good organisation and management to ensure development of learning across subjects.
- Limitations in resources for physical development in the Reception group.
- Some waste of time in short sessions before morning break.

Commentary

19. The quality of the curriculum is broadly similar to that which was found to be during the last inspection, and is satisfactory overall. It meets statutory requirements and is supported and extended by a wide and rich range of extra activities. Suitable arrangements are made for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and for pupils with SEN. Provision for children in the Reception group is satisfactory, but there are some weaknesses in resources.

20. The school has dealt satisfactorily with the issues raised at the previous inspection concerning the allocation of time to the range of subjects taught. There is now an appropriate balance of time spent on teaching each subject, and teachers make good use of pupils' skills and knowledge learnt in one subject to build and reinforce learning in others. For example, expectations are high for pupils to produce writing of good quality in subjects other than English. The amount of time now given to teaching in Years 3 to 6 has been extended, and meets national guidelines. Nevertheless, the school is aware that time is sometimes lost from learning during short sessions for PSHE which take place before pupils go out to play, and it is making alterations to its planning to ensure that this time is used valuably.

21. The curriculum has been enhanced with a new approach to curriculum organisation that aims to use time more effectively and create links across subjects. In order to do this, the school runs a slightly longer morning session than is usually found. The intention is to give as much time as possible to the teaching of the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT in smaller groups, but also to integrate the teaching of these subjects with others. There is effective use of topics to support further the links between subjects, and this helps to make teaching and learning more interesting and relevant to pupils. For example, a topic on the local environment around Heytesbury leads to improvements in pupils' skills and knowledge in history, geography, science, design and technology, and ICT. Mixed-age classes present the school with the difficulties of managing challenge in the curriculum and ensuring that work is neither repeated unnecessarily nor at a level of difficulty that is too easy or too hard for individuals. The curriculum is therefore planned carefully on a two-year cycle in order to cater for the majority of pupils who spend two years in each of the classes. This system is well designed but at a relatively early stage, having been running since the beginning of the current school year. Good management of the system ensures that the curriculum, including topics and teaching within discrete subjects, develops in pupils the various skills and understanding demanded by the attainment targets listed in the National Curriculum. However, the school is also seeking ways of more effectively balancing the curriculum for children in the Reception group with National Curriculum requirements for the Year 1 pupils in the same class.

22. Monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and its effectiveness are also new, but all teachers are keen to follow the school's agreed long-term planning for subjects and topics. The school focuses on improving standards and achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, and on increasing the performance of more able pupils. In this, the national strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are largely used well to ensure that pupils follow a programme of development in these subjects which is both progressive and increasingly demanding. Innovative strategies are improving pupils' performance in English, but those for mathematics are only at an early stage and being trialled in Year 2. In response to another key issue from the last inspection, much more investigative work has been introduced in science, but this aspect still needs further development in mathematics.

23. Activities given to pupils to engage in outside the school day are good, and include very good provision for sport. These activities, which are well attended, include seasonal sports such as football, hockey and rugby, and training in squash, tennis and trampolines. Most parents are pleased with the wide range of opportunities for further learning activities, and all pupils have equal access to these activities. The school's good programme of visitors to the school, and visits out, enriches and enlivens the curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 speak enthusiastically of their river and lake studies, and of how they compared the living things and the geographical layout of the two sites. They look forward to a residential visit to Beaulieu. The history topic on the Victorians was enhanced by pupils' visit to the 'Milestone' facility in Basingstoke, and a visiting historian added to pupils' learning about Heytesbury's past.

24. Curriculum provision for pupils with SEN is satisfactory, including that for those with a statement of educational need. The headteacher acts as co-ordinator for SEN and has begun to review the provision, also using LEA expertise, in order to gauge its effectiveness and make any necessary improvements. A list of pupils is suitably maintained, and because individual education plans (IEPs) are readily accessible they can easily be used by staff when planning work. Most targets are closely focused and specific, and an appropriate range of needs is represented within them, with most related to language and literacy. A list of pupils with particular gifts or talents has yet to be established.

25. The school is staffed with sufficient teachers for the numbers of pupils, and is inventive in its use of their expertise to teach the full range of subjects across the school. For instance, from Year 2 onwards, the same teachers teach art and design, music and French, and specialist teachers teach most of the physical education programme. These lessons take place in the afternoons, an arrangement that is well managed on a rolling programme each week. The extended morning session also allows pupils to benefit from being taught as four classes for a long period of the day and still give the headteacher time away from the classroom in the afternoon to fulfil her other duties. Experienced teaching assistants are effective. They give good support alongside teaching staff and contribute much to the school's good levels of care and overall ethos. All staff are committed to the school in their determination to raise standards to a consistently high level.

26. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory, with some good features. For example, the school grounds are extensive, and provide well for both sports and environmental work. The classrooms are of suitable size, and there has been much enlivening of the environment through internal refurbishment and decoration. New areas of accommodation have also been added, but the recently completed outside facilities for Reception children are not yet in use. This, together with some limitations in resources, means that these children are not able to experience a full range of physical activities. Resources in most subjects meet the requirements for teaching the National Curriculum, although there are some shortages in science and the number and range of books is no more than adequate. The school has had to restrict its spending in order to manage its financial deficit and, as a result, staff sometimes purchase resources from their own money.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **good** care of children's welfare, health and safety. Pupils' views are sought and acted on **well**. Pupils receive satisfactory guidance, although assessment is not used to best effect, with the result that academic support is less effective than help with personal problems or behaviour.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's caring atmosphere in which all pupils are valued and encouraged to feel confident and happy.
- Adults' very good knowledge of pupils, and their ability to quickly identify changes in attitude and behaviour and to offer a friendly word to anyone in need of encouragement.
- The help and guidance given to pupils about their work, which does not always focus sharply enough on how to take the next steps in learning.
- Good attention given to pupils' views.
- Good arrangements for welcoming new pupils and ensuring that they settle into school quickly.

Commentary

27. The overall quality of care offered by the school is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection, with strengths maintained in pastoral support. Many parents appreciate the opportunity to send their children to a small school where they feel their children are well known by the staff. The school makes very good use of its network of high quality relationships among staff, pupils and the village community to support pupils' everyday well being. A quick word with someone who is sad or angry is usually enough to help individuals to feel better. The space to 'chill out', or the 'buddy stop' to help find a friend, make this easier, so pupils feel relaxed about seeking help. As a result, they feel safe, confident and happy. In their view, all the adults in the school are kindly and friendly. This creates a happy, easygoing atmosphere in which the pupils enjoy active, lively play and interesting work. The school's vigilance over all matters of health and safety is good. Child protection procedures are satisfactory, with strengths in the shared expertise of two fully trained teachers that outweigh occasional gaps in formal training for all staff.

28. In lessons, the teachers, teaching assistants and helpers are usually alert to anyone who struggles with the work, and they do their best to make helpful suggestions and encourage pupils to keep trying. As assessment systems are not yet fully developed or used systematically to match work to individual abilities, the help received by pupils tends more towards general encouragement and comment than specific targeted advice on how to improve. Activities are not consistently fine-tuned to take into account exactly what individuals need to practise and when they might need additional, skilled help. In particular instances, this limits what is achieved. However, there is now a much greater awareness among pupils of where their attainment lies within National Curriculum levels.

29. Arrangements for the monitoring of pupils with SEN are satisfactory. They, too, benefit from the caring and sensitive support of staff and their very good knowledge of pupils. Their IEPs are reviewed frequently by all the staff working with each pupil, although in some cases the intervals between reviews are too short to judge the extent of pupils' progress in meeting their targets. The school reports that pupils' placing on the list is changed as they make progress, or when they are identified as needing more support. When necessary, outside agencies are used to help with assessments and support.

30. Pupils are consulted about what they enjoy and how school life could be made better, which has resulted in positive changes to improve the quality of play and reduce the likelihood of bullying. Children are clear that bullying is now rare and parents felt that, should it occur, the school would

deal with it well. Pupils have the chance to express views and concerns through the School Council, which was started just under a year ago and has already initiated a better range of playground games and a new gardening club.

31. Induction is good and new children settle in quickly because of the warm welcome they receive. The school is used to pupils coming and going at times which are different from the usual start and end of term, and so has systems in place, such as 'buddies', to help with the effects of this.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with parents and the community are **good**. Links with other schools are **very good**. All links contribute well to pupils' personal development and offer a secure foundation for academic achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good working relationships with parents, which ensure that they feel involved well with the school and their children's experiences.
- Information given to parents, which does not always explain clearly enough how well pupils have progressed, what factors affect this, and how parents can help their children to do even better.
- Very good links with local schools which extend the opportunities available to pupils and contribute very well to their enjoyment of sport and other activities outside lessons.
- The school's sense of community and use of the local area, which benefit pupils' personal development well.

Commentary

32. The school's positive links with parents, and with its local community and neighbouring schools, reflect the findings of the last inspection, despite the difficulties experienced since that time. Parents think the school does a good job for their children, are keen to support it, and are happy to work with staff to improve what it offers, for instance through the school's Parents' Association and attendance at meetings and events. The friendly way in which all members of the school community work for the good of the children helps parents from all backgrounds to feel welcome and involved, even if they have only been with the school for a short time. Parents are pleased with the range of extra-curricular activities on offer and they add to these with family visits to places that extend children's general knowledge. Older pupils seized the chance to use what they knew to add valuable points to stimulating lessons in French and history.

33. The school makes great efforts to keep in touch with all families through its colourful website and bright weekly newsletters, which give a quick overview of key events. It keeps parents well informed about what is happening, with clear detail of plans for visits and events. Some parents feel less sure about just how well their children are doing because the school does not always spell out clearly whether the child's achievement is better, worse, or as good as might be expected. Reports tell parents the levels at which children are working in English, mathematics and science, usually with one or two points about the strengths and weaknesses in the child's grasp of these subjects. However, it is less clear on what precise action the child and parents should take for progress to be faster or better.

34. Pupils benefit greatly from strong links with the pre-school group which is based on the school's site, with six schools that were originally part of a rural schools project, and with the specialist secondary sports college to which pupils transfer. This is because events, visits and sporting activities are shared, significantly extending pupils' opportunities to take part in music, art, drama and sport. Year 6 pupils have the chance to enjoy team-building and orienteering activities with secondary school staff. Pre-school children from the 'Hedgehogs' group visit weekly to play, listen to stories and sing songs with children in the Reception class. They thoroughly enjoyed

'pond-dipping' with the Reception children and Year 1 pupils. Those in Year 6 enjoy their visits to read with the pre-school children. Such familiarity with other schools and groups helps pupils to move happily and confidently to and from this school.

35. The school is at the heart of its community, which is a key factor in nurturing pupils' personal development and maturity. The school productions, for example, bring the school and community together. The rewards are great because parents volunteer to help, pupils learn and sing songs together, and the community comes to school to be entertained. Pupils' experiences are also enriched by visits to the local hospice, by visitors (including church members) and through special events such as the 'kitten visits'. Stimulating lessons in French and a promising contact with children in Swaziland, which is developing well, are giving pupils a wider experience of communities beyond their own.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory**, as is governance.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good leadership of the headteacher.
- No time given to key staff for monitoring lessons.
- The good support from governors, particularly the support given during past uncertainties and to financial matters, although the governors are less effective in challenging the school about its performance.

Commentary

36. Following a period of much uncertainty, the appointment of a permanent headteacher about 18 months ago has brought stability to the school's leadership and management and to its strategic development. These improvements are recognised by parents who, at their meeting before the inspection, spoke warmly of the school's newly found sense of direction. They also praised the part played by staff who, they felt, had maintained daily life in school as smoothly as they could for their children during the past uncertainties.

37. The headteacher is quick to acknowledge the contribution of those who temporarily led the school before her, and is successfully building on improvements which were put in place before she came. She has successfully concentrated on building relationships, and on re-establishing trust and confidence in the school's effectiveness among parents, while at the same time tackling improvement in a wide range of areas. The skills and contribution of senior staff have been nurtured, and teachers' approach to assessment, monitoring and planning is gradually being changed so that activities are more closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Staff work together as a closely knit team, committed to improving the school's academic performance. Evidence of increasing effectiveness was found during this inspection in examples of good teaching and learning, and of pupils achieving well, especially in Years 3 to 6. All these factors point to there being much capacity for future improvement. However, the school is aware that much innovation and improvement is at an early stage and in need of more time and development to make a full impact.

38. Other areas of good leadership are in the development of English, mathematics, ICT and physical education. Science, too, is well managed by its part-time subject leader. In response to the key issue of the last inspection, the school development plan has been improved with ways to monitor and measure standards and achievement. Subject leaders are finding means to look at how well pupils are doing. However, financial constraints mean that they do not have the time given to them during the school day to monitor teaching and learning while it is taking place, so that they might spread effective teaching strategies. The headteacher experiences the same difficulty because she is currently teaching throughout the morning session of each day. A newly fledged

senior management team has been created, with each stage of education represented, but its role has yet to be fully defined. However, good support has been given by the senior teacher to newly qualified teachers, and to graduate teachers in training.

39. One particular outcome of the school's past difficulties has been the necessity to operate on a deficit budget. The governing body has played a substantial role in monitoring expenditure and the situation is being managed well by governors and staff. An increase to the deficit in the last financial year arose because of the need to cover some unavoidable staffing costs. A five-year plan has been agreed with the LEA to clear the deficit, which governors hope to do within two years. This plan is reviewed and re-adjusted annually to ensure that it is on track, and all the staff have pulled together to make savings. Governors have sought to maintain current staffing levels and are starting to discuss key decisions about the school's future. Nevertheless, the need to make savings has placed a strain on the purchase of new resources, and in some cases, such as physical development in the Reception class, this is reducing the effectiveness of provision.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	254,006.00
Total expenditure	258,113.00
Expenditure per pupil	3,072.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-1,943.00
Balance carried forward to the next	-6,050.00

40. Governance as a whole is satisfactory, and statutory requirements are met. The governing body is very supportive, and its work with the school is much enhanced by governors' knowledge of the local community. This help and commitment were of great value during the school's difficult period. Individual governors gave much of their time, and the governing body actively sought the help of the LEA. Governors visit the school on a regular basis, in a formal capacity through schemes such as 'governor of the month', or to help out by hearing pupils read. The school's performance is discussed by governors, but their contribution to financial and accommodation planning is better developed than their role as a 'critical friend' in challenging the school, for example, about its academic success, or attendance. This is because detailed data is not widely shared across the governing body. The expenditure for each pupil is broadly average, despite the school's financial restraints. When account is taken of the satisfactory quality of provision and extent of pupils' achievement, and the typically higher costs of a very small school, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Reception group is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong support for encouraging personal, social and emotional development and speaking and listening skills.
- Inconsistencies in the extent to which activities are planned to meet the needs of individual children.
- Limited opportunities and resources for fully promoting physical education.
- Good links with the playgroup.

Commentary

41. Children join the Reception group at the start of the school year in which they reach their fifth birthday. Currently, there are 11 children in this group. They are taught in a mixed-age class with pupils in Year 1, and by two teachers who share the teaching over the course of the week. When they enter the class, the attainment of each group covers a wide range of attainment, but is largely representative of children of a similar age. Because most children attend the playgroup, which is situated in the school's grounds, there is a smooth transition into school life; the good liaison between the school and playgroup has been sustained since the school's last inspection, with children benefiting from many shared activities.

42. Once in the Reception group, children achieve satisfactorily. Their progress is such that the majority of the current group will meet the expected goals for children of this age by the end of the Reception year in language and literacy, and in mathematical development. The school has maintained its good provision for nurturing personal and social skills, so that children continue to make good progress and are likely to exceed expectations in these areas. Not enough evidence was gathered in other areas of learning to enable judgements to be made about provision, achievement or standards. The findings of this inspection are not as positive overall, however, as those of the previous report, when provision was found to be good. This is largely because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, which are occasionally unsatisfactory. There is also a lack of resources in some areas, most particularly for promoting children's physical development.

43. Work is planned to cover all the areas of learning for these children. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and at their best when activities involve practical opportunities and where adults use conversations and questions to draw out children's ideas and develop their confidence and independence. Nevertheless, these approaches are not used consistently, and teaching is occasionally unsatisfactory. For example, activities and tasks are sometimes too prescriptive, or too challenging, or do not allow the more able children to practise and develop their skills. When this happens, children lose interest and become inattentive and, occasionally, they make too little progress. Learning is also greater when the teacher has the teaching assistant in the classroom to support activities, but not all lessons are supported in this way. The school has already sought improvement through specialist advice and is carefully considering how it can more successfully provide for these very young children while also maintaining an appropriate curriculum for pupils in Year 1. More practical experiences have been introduced to the classroom, and children will also benefit from new outdoor facilities when the class moves to another room in September.

44. Children's **personal, social and emotional** development is well taught. Their confidence grows through constant encouragement. The very good relationships within the school, and the sensitive support the children receive should they experience any difficulties, give them a powerful example on which to build their social skills. They work well with each other and with their companions in Year 1 when completing joint tasks. In outside activities, too, children happily take turns with others.

45. The area of **communication, language and literacy** is satisfactorily taught. Many children are articulate and exceed expectations in their speaking skills. Most write recognisable letters and are aware that print is read from left to right and carries meaning. All children enjoy sharing books and taking them home regularly. They are introduced to new words and letter sounds to help them read new words. As a result, many build simple words, using their knowledge of letter sounds, and more able children confidently read books from the reading scheme. However, there are few exciting resources, such as 'big books', to stimulate children's interest and more able children sometimes miss out on opportunities to practise their writing skills.

46. The teaching of **mathematical development** is also satisfactory. There are well-planned sessions where children can communicate and extend their understanding of number, shape and measure. In these activities children quickly learn the names of basic shapes, and their knowledge and understanding of number is successfully promoted so that many have a good grasp of numbers between 1 and 20. However, there are too few occasions for children to take part in simple counting activities and games, or to sing or say number rhymes; the potential of registration time is not used to count, for example, how many children are having lunch. There is a suitable range of play situations, such as the 'Dinosaur shop', that could incorporate opportunities for counting and using mathematical language. However, children sometimes spend too much time during these activities without an adult to direct their learning and to ensure they get the maximum benefit from these valuable experiences.

47. A wide range of visits ensures that children are interested and gain first-hand experiences in the areas of **knowledge and understanding of the world**. The current topic about dinosaurs is popular with the children. They remember the names of the most common dinosaurs, and enjoy stories about them. Models of dinosaurs and books about them are prominently displayed in the classroom for children to handle and use. They quickly set to work on this topic when imaginative strategies, like the 'surprise' egg, focus their interest and attention, though levels of attention wander on those occasions when too few children are drawn into class discussion.

48. There are inconsistencies in the provision for **physical development**. On the one hand, the 'huff and puff' activities in the hall at lunchtime are thoroughly enjoyed by the children and they take part keenly. There are also timetabled physical education sessions in the hall. A suitable range of activities and tasks ensures that children handle scissors, glue and pencils carefully and includes opportunities to develop children's manipulative skills. However, there are some shortcomings. For instance, little use is being made of the recently completed outdoor learning area, or of the school grounds as a whole, to promote this area of learning. No suitable large climbing apparatus is available and there are too few wheeled toys.

49. Appropriate resources are available for children to select for painting and drawing as part of **creative development**. Sometimes, though, these activities are tailored more to the needs of Year 1 pupils and are too prescriptive, or challenging. When this happens, the children's interest is lost and they make too little progress. Playing with the models of dinosaurs or using the role-play area allows children to use their imagination. The lack of good quality resources for musical activities, however, restricts opportunities for them to use percussion instruments to play simple tunes.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Close attention given to promoting pupils' written work, most particularly in Years 3 to 6, where teaching and learning are good.
- Valuable links made with other subjects to give a meaningful context to the use and development of language and literacy skills.
- Good leadership, but too few opportunities for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning during lessons.

Commentary

50. Pupils, including those with SEN, are achieving satisfactorily as a whole in this subject, and there are indications of good progress in a number of key areas. This overall satisfactory level of progress reflects the findings of the last inspection, as do standards for pupils in the current Year 2, which are broadly in line with national expectations for reading and writing. The present group of Year 6 pupils is achieving well, and standards in these aspects of English are above national expectations, and higher than at the time of the previous inspection. Speaking and listening skills, throughout the school, exceed national expectations.

51. There were very early signs of improvement in the 2004 national tests for Year 2 pupils. The results for reading, however, were better than those for writing as they were enhanced by the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3, which was well above the national average. No results at Level 3 were gained in writing, and this lack of higher attainment was also evident in the Year 6 test results for English of the same year, where no pupil reached the higher Level 5. The school has been well aware of the need to encourage the performance of more able pupils, particularly in writing, and has taken a number of steps to tackle this shortcoming. The most successful has focused on increasing the volume of written work through a strategy called '*racy, pacy writing*'. These quick-fire sessions have proved to be popular with pupils and have additionally served to increase the speed with which pupils write. Year 2 pupils, for example, spoke with pride of how much more they were writing in a short space of time. Although the school has been less aware of the differing trends in the performance of boys and girls, discussion with pupils revealed that this technique has raised the profile of writing both for boys and for girls.

52. The subject leader is a skilled and imaginative teacher with high expectations of what can be achieved by pupils and staff. Her vision and approach have been extremely influential in bringing about improvement. She has looked closely at test papers and pupils' work to identify areas needing greater focus, and has given much valuable feedback and support to individual members of staff. With no time allocated to her away from the classroom, however, she has not been able to spend time with other teachers during lessons. As a result, some key improvements have not been as successful right across the school as the one described above.

53. Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory, but with some inconsistencies. Because pupils in Years 5 and 6 were taking optional and national tests, respectively, during the inspection, it was not possible to see English being taught in this class. Nevertheless, discussion with pupils in Year 6, and evidence gained from the extensive range of work completed over the course of the year by pupils in Years 3 to 6, show teaching and learning in these year groups to be good; they are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

54. Because the school values and nurtures its pupils and what they have to say, it creates a fertile environment for encouraging pupils' speaking and listening skills. Frequent opportunities occur in lessons for stimulating discussion, as a whole group or between pupils. Consequently, pupils speak with confidence and listen well to each other and to staff. Indeed, many pupils are articulate and fluent speakers. Pupils' wide vocabulary and confident expression also form a valuable foundation for their work in other aspects of English. So, too, do their enjoyment of books and their accurate reading skills, promoted well by the attention given to building a firm knowledge of letter sounds. This support includes that given to lower attaining pupils and those with SEN by learning support staff. Sometimes, however, higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are not challenged enough by the scribed material they are given to read at home. Formal writing skills, such as spelling, punctuation and handwriting, are well taught in all classes and in these aspects all pupils achieve well. In most year groups pupils' progress is also increased because they have the chance to write in a wide range of styles and for a variety of audiences, and especially so in Years 5 and 6. However, what really marks out the better quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is the focus placed on improving the quality of pupils' written work. As a result, more able pupils in Year 6 write with a natural and routine fluency and a wide range of expressive vocabulary. This approach is not as well founded in Years 1 and 2, where there is less evidence of attainment at the higher level.

55. The school's library area is centrally placed and an attractive place to be. It is well used during the school day for giving some focused teaching to individual pupils and small groups. Pupils also use the library to select reading books to share at home, with an adult at hand to offer guidance to younger readers, and they are taught library skills while they are there. Reading resources are adequate. Some new books have been recently bought, but the extent to which the school can buy further resources for this subject is constrained by its present financial position. Consequently, the school reports that some staff are buying books with their own money.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. The use of language and literacy skills across the curriculum is good, and largely so because the school explicitly links English with other subjects such as history, geography, science and design and technology. Thus, for example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 practise the techniques of skimming and scanning text for information in the context of their studies of Ancient Greece, and Year 2 pupils write menus and cooking instructions for healthy meals that might have improved the diet of soldiers during the Crimean War. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used for word-processing and to present written work attractively. There are also good opportunities for pupils to hone their research skills by using books and computers to look for information in school, and through investigations they are encouraged to do at home.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Insufficient emphasis placed on mental arithmetic and investigations to support learning.
- Strong leadership.
- The planning of work to support the needs of individual pupils in mixed-age classes, which does not always address the needs of pupils of different abilities, including the more able.
- Good quality help and guidance from learning support staff.

Commentary

57. Throughout the school, pupils are achieving satisfactorily and standards are broadly in line with national expectations. These findings now match those of the last inspection, but the national test results of the last few years indicate that standards in mathematics fell during that time.

58. The new headteacher, who acts as the subject leader for mathematics, has begun to improve provision, increase staff confidence and raise standards. Early signs of improvement were reflected in the improved national test results in this subject for Year 2 pupils in 2004. Her leadership of the subject is good, as she leads by example and has taken the initiative to introduce new strategies and demonstrate their effectiveness. She is aware of the need for further monitoring of teaching and learning to support colleagues and improve provision. In order to support improvement, she has gained the school's participation in the national Primary Leadership Programme, with a particular emphasis on mathematics. The LEA is keen to get this support in place, but has been delayed so far in introducing it to the school.

59. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, including the analysis of test information for highlighting areas in need of improvement. The school has noted, for example, the lack of pupils reaching the higher Levels 3 and 5 in national tests, and targets for this year's Year 6 reflect the school's higher expectations of the more able pupils. Higher attaining pupils in this year group measure and draw angles, for example, and plot negative numbers. The school has also identified the need for more problem-solving and investigation work, particularly for more able pupils. An innovative strategy is being successfully trialled with pupils in Year 2 to increase the speed and accuracy of mental calculation. Discussion with Year 2 pupils showed that these activities were modified well for pupils of different abilities, and that pupils could correctly calculate the answer to sums involving two-digit numbers and also explain how they worked them out. However, this approach has yet to be adopted right across the school and, indeed, improvement as a whole in mathematics is at a very early stage. It has yet to have a full impact on:

- improving mental computation and the retention of mathematical facts in all year groups;
- ensuring that lesson activities are consistently exciting and relevant to the needs and abilities of individual pupils.

60. Evidence taken from pupils' work and from lessons shows that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some good teaching was also seen during inspection. Learning is most effective in those lessons where the pace is brisk and all pupils are well challenged by the tasks. Where these features exist, pupils' achievement is accelerated because they are well motivated to succeed and enjoy their work. This positive response is illustrated in the confidence and pride with which they talk about their work. Where teaching and learning are satisfactory, rather than good, work is not routinely well matched to the needs of different abilities, or tasks are too prescriptive for pupils to think for themselves. Where these factors occur, they have a negative impact on developing pupils' independent learning skills. Teaching assistants often offer good support to ensure that less confident pupils, or those with SEN, make equal gains in their knowledge and understanding alongside others in the class. Although pupils' work is marked regularly, the quality of marking is variable and does not, as a matter of course, offer pupils targets to help them improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. The school is making satisfactory use of pupils' mathematical skills in many subjects. Calculations and measuring skills are used appropriately in science to measure the speed and flow of the local river, for instance. Line and block graphs, using ICT, are effectively used to record data on people living in Heytesbury, as part of a history project and, in geography, to show the length of major rivers throughout the world. However, there are also missed opportunities to use mathematical skills, such as the use of coordinates when working with plans and maps in geography.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Focused teaching of scientific knowledge and the understanding of scientific facts.
- Good quality, extensive writing in Years 3 to 6, although the reporting of scientific investigations is not organised well enough.
- Limited opportunities to write about science in Years 1 and 2.
- Good management of the subject.

Commentary

62. Standards of work in Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations, and indicate that achievement across the school is satisfactory for most pupils. This rate of progress is about the same as at the previous inspection, although achievement in lessons during this inspection was good, which suggests increasing effectiveness in provision and academic outcomes. A lack of investigative opportunities was raised as an issue at the time of the previous inspection; this shortcoming has largely been resolved, as pupils now complete experiments as a normal part of their work.

63. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and information is good because of focused teaching. Their skills in speaking and listening are predominantly above those nationally expected. This helps them to develop scientific knowledge quite easily, and to understand the concepts of different aspects of the subject. For example, in a good lesson seen in Year 2, pupils competently discussed the changes that babies make as they grow. They used their knowledge of a healthy diet to clearly explain the development of babies' physical growth and strength, and of how babies cry because they need food. Indeed, some pupils showed remarkable vocabulary for their age, and application to the discussion, for example, when they commented that a baby's cry is 'loud and raucous'. Most of these pupils can explain the principles and construction of a working electrical circuit because they have been taught well about them in lessons in the recent past and have built circuits for themselves. However, the extent to which these pupils record information about such activities, and other aspects of the subject, are too limited. Workbooks show that pupils in Years 1 and 2 spend too much time on drawing pictures, at the expense of opportunities to write about science. Nevertheless, when they do have an opportunity, their written work is usually of good quality because teachers have high expectations of them to produce work to this standard.

64. On the other hand, although pupils in Years 3 to 6 write an increasing amount about what they have learned, the writing up of investigations is not always well organised and pupils do not consistently draw conclusions from what they observe. However, work is well presented and detailed, and most pupils work responsibly and independently to produce high quality writing and thoughtful drawings. Work on food chains, in Year 6, is a case in point. Here, most pupils' narrative writing demonstrates their good understanding of the fine relationships between 'producers' and 'consumers', such as that between trees, insects and birds. Their drawings clearly depict examples of these producer/consumer relationships. There is also much evidence of these older pupils taking their learning further by researching specific topics, for example, about the Earth and the other planets.

65. Pupils enjoy their science lessons, both when they enter into whole-class discussion, as seen in Year 2, and when they do investigations, as seen in Years 3 and 4. The good teaching and learning of the latter lesson, about sound, typified that seen in the inspection as a whole. The teacher's skilful questioning involved all pupils equally, giving them the confidence to offer their opinions and ideas. In trying to test whether the size of a musical shaker affected the loudness of the sound it made, pupils showed that they know how to carry out a fair test.

66. The subject leader leads the subject satisfactorily, and her management of it is good. Considerable and effective work undertaken over the past 18 months has resulted in an interesting curriculum and long-term planning which ensure that all the requirements of the National Curriculum are taught over time. The new programme, which allows for pupils to revisit science topics every two years, is at an early stage, but it is already well managed by the school and shows promise of

being successful in offering pupils greater challenge as their learning develops. The use of a recently acquired work scheme is also beginning to have the desired impact on standards, because teachers interpret the ideas well in their teaching. The school's use of a topic approach to learning across subjects, such as through 'rivers and waterways', helps in the development of pupils' scientific observational skills and knowledge, as well as skills in subjects such as ICT and geography. All these strategies are helpful in increasing pupils' achievement and raising their levels of attainment.

67. The subject leader has begun the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, both through observing lessons and through scrutinising pupils' work from across the school. This means that effective teaching strategies are shared amongst colleagues, and that each pupil's level of attainment is determined and recorded. The use of this information and the results of regular assessments are proving valuable in offering suitable challenge to pupils and in matching work to their individual levels of prior attainment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good improvements to equipment, which are helping to raise standards.
- Limited knowledge among staff of how to use control and monitoring equipment.
- Good, early leadership of the subject.

Commentary

68. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in ICT and broadly reach standards normally expected of pupils of their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. Only one lesson was seen in ICT, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. Judgements about provision, achievement and standards are based on this lesson, on talking to pupils and looking at their work, and on teachers' planning.

69. The subject leader is relatively new to her post but has made a good start in improving provision. She is very knowledgeable in the subject and is determined that, through her leadership of staff training and careful planning, standards will rise across all aspects of the subject. Her vision and example give good leadership. The improvements to hardware and software since the previous inspection, including the addition of interactive whiteboards in three classrooms, are having a beneficial effect on pupils' access to computers, and are therefore increasing rates of progress and the standards they reach. By the end of Year 6, pupils write at length on computers, using keyboards to good effect, and in this aspect of ICT most of these pupils attain more highly than is normally expected. They attractively present and arrange the writing they do for English, in a variety of fonts, for example. This skill was particularly impressively used when they were presenting some moving and expressive poetry. Similarly, pupils throughout the school use computers to create some attractive pieces of art and design work.

70. However, more advanced equipment, intended for pupils to learn about the use of the computer to control events and monitor changes, has only recently been acquired, and teachers are not yet fully trained in its use. As a result, although achievement in this aspect is satisfactory, progress is not as rapid as in other areas of the subject. Though there are not enough computers in the suite to allow for all pupils in most year groups to use them at the same time, they are timetabled efficiently. Consequently, pupils from across the school have equal access, using the computers in the suite on a regular basis, which helps them to achieve well in some aspects of the subject.

71. Pupils are keen and eager to use computers, and work very well in pairs or small groups. They willingly help each other to solve problems, and sensibly share ideas. Many of the pupils have computers at home, and say that they use these to practise what they have learnt at school, especially in word-processing. Pupils by Year 2 confidently work together on using a program for designing a 'sandwich', as part of a design and technology project. In working this way, pupils of all levels of capability are suitably challenged by the work and helped to achieve well, because they get focused and knowledgeable support from their teacher, as well as learning from their classmates. Pupils from Year 3 to 6 access the internet to research information for class topics, and enter data into a program to produce graphs and histograms for a variety of data handling activities. For example, they compare rainfall at different times of the year. Because the interactive whiteboards are so new to the school, their use by pupils is at an early stage. However, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are already using them to display multimedia and desktop publishing projects which they have worked on. Pupils are assessed regularly in ICT so that teachers know where they need specific attention or further opportunities to practise their skills.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. In order to enhance pupils' learning, the staff's use of ICT in other subjects is good overall. In science, for example, older pupils use a microscope attached to a computer to study and then photograph small creatures they have found when sampling river life. Additionally, pupils used the internet to research detailed information about the functions of the human skeleton, heart and other organs, and how to keep healthy. The use of ICT in mathematics is satisfactory, and the subject leader has plans for increasing the number of such opportunities.

HUMANITIES

During the inspection it was possible to see only a small amount of teaching of history, and no geography lessons were seen. Therefore, no overall judgements can be made about standards, achievement, teaching or learning in these subjects.

Commentary

73. Teaching and learning were judged to be very good in the one **history** lesson seen, because teaching promoted pupils' intellectual curiosity and encouraged independent learning skills. A skilful exploration of pupils' ideas and understanding took place within the context of archaeology. By the end of the lesson, pupils' understanding about historical investigation, and the use of evidence to glean information and make logical assumptions, was considerably extended. Work already completed by pupils indicates that teachers plan effectively through the use of 'topics' and take pupils on visits to stimulate and challenge them further. Cross-curricular links are particularly valuable for ensuring that the subject is covered at sufficient depth; so too is the extension of the morning period running up to lunch, which allows enough time for subjects to be integrated in this way. For example, an English lesson was used well for extending the knowledge of Year 2 pupils about the conditions in field hospitals for soldiers during the Crimean War, and it also drew on their scientific knowledge about healthy food.

74. Some good cross-curricular links have also been established in **geography**, particularly at the upper end of the school with literacy and ICT. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce good quality fact files on a river study, and use their ICT skills to research information and produce detailed graphs. They have also considered in some detail the potential impact of a new housing estate on the village and its amenities, and readily talk about their findings.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Not enough evidence was collected to enable judgements to be made about the quality of provision, standards or achievement in each of the subjects of art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

Commentary

75. Pupils' **art and design** work is much in evidence around the school and contributes significantly to creating an interesting and attractive environment. Activities across year groups and mixed-age classes are planned in detail and with a close emphasis on developing skills. No lessons in this subject were seen during the inspection, but the quality of work on display suggests that pupils benefit from lively and stimulating teaching. They respond with imagination and individuality, and with evidence of attainment that is above national expectations. They study the work of other artists, for example when pupils in Years 5 and 6 thoughtfully interpreted a painting by David Hockney, using a wide range of materials. The same group also produced little wooden figurines, carefully made and full of character – qualities also found in printed faces completed by pupils in Years 2 and 3. Pupils undertake large scale and three-dimensional projects, such as the impressive wooden mural of the village completed by pupils in Years 3 and 4, which is hung in the library. Information and communication technology (ICT) is another useful medium used by the school to extend pupils' work in this subject. The most striking example is the enlarged digital pictures taken of all pupils in the school, which have been embellished with collage and, in some cases, other computer-generated effects.

76. Only one lesson was observed in **design and technology**, with pupils from Years 2 and 3, and other evidence was gathered from samples of pupils' previous work. From this evidence, together with teachers' planning, it is clear that the school provides a curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Examples of work include a visit by pupils in Years 1 and 2 to a local supermarket, where they worked with fresh ingredients to design and make a fruit salad. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 make healthy sandwiches, which they evaluate by taste and discuss which is the most attractive. Evidence in their books shows that pupils in Years 5 and 6 know how to design and make strong structures, such as a bridge, in which they arrange materials in joined triangular shapes. Teachers usefully take every opportunity to include the teaching and learning of design and technology skills in other subjects, such as when making a working 'mobile' to illustrate food chains in a science lesson.

77. In **music**, pupils in all classes sing with vigour and clarity and enjoy performing together in assembly. The school does not have a choir and does not perform ensemble work, but some pupils are learning to play keyboards. In the one lesson seen, pupils in Years 5 and 6 confidently followed the teacher in clapping in unison to a wide range of rhythms. In groups of three and four they skilfully composed short pieces which they performed by clapping to the rhythm of the syllables in insect names, such as 'butterfly' and 'fly', and then their own names. Performing their pieces led to some valuable evaluations by classmates to bring about improvement. This well taught lesson successfully balanced some valuable guidance from the teacher and her assistant with independent and group learning, resulting in a good level of achievement.

78. During this inspection it was possible to see only a small amount of teaching of **physical education**. This was part of a games session, led by a specialist coach. Discussion with the headteacher, who is the co-ordinator, indicates that all aspects of physical education are well covered, and the subject is given a very high profile. All pupils throughout the school have good opportunities to learn to swim at the local sports secondary school. As a result, most are confident swimmers by Year 6. The school provides a very extensive range of extra-curricular clubs for pupils throughout the school, and these are well attended. They effectively support pupils' learning and the development of skills in a wide variety of sports, from ball games to martial arts. Specialist

coaches and teachers are regularly invited to offer their expertise, and very good use is made of the facilities at the local sports college and at local sports clubs to enrich the curriculum. The extensive grounds and school hall are used well and also make a significant contribution in the support of pupils' learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the school's work was not inspected in detail, so evidence is too limited for a judgement to be made about the overall quality of provision. Evidence for the commentary below is taken from a very small sample of teaching, and from documentation and talking with staff.

Commentary

79. The school values its work in PSHE and citizenship. Imaginative and interesting strategies and experiences are used to motivate pupils and deepen their understanding of a healthy life style and of how to operate effectively within a community. Increasingly, pupils are also encouraged to evaluate their contributions and achievements. At a school level, the School Council helps pupils to play a part in shaping the school's community, and strategies such as playground buddies and 'Big Brother' support pupils in how to work and play effectively with others. Environmental projects, the teaching of French, and links with Swaziland give pupils a wider understanding of their place and responsibilities within the global community. Visitors contribute to the exploration and understanding of personal safety, and visits to supermarkets, for example, help to emphasise the school's focus on healthy eating. Specific sessions are set aside for discussion, known as 'circle time'. However, time given for PSHE is sometimes used more as an unstructured social occasion than as an opportunity for focused specific teaching.

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	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
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).