

INSPECTION REPORT

**HINTON ST GEORGE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
(VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED) FIRST SCHOOL**

Crewkerne

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123762

Headteacher: Mrs Heather Barraclough

Lead inspector: Mr Brian Gosling

Dates of inspection: 18th – 20th April 2005

Inspection number: 267027

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	74
School address:	West Street Hinton St George Somerset
Postcode:	TA17 8SA
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Derek Esp
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the attractive village of Hinton St George, near Crewkerne, and is smaller than most other primary schools in England. There are 74 pupils: 38 boys and 36 girls, most of whom come from the surrounding area and local villages. The pupils are predominantly from a White British cultural background and no pupil has English as an additional language. A few pupils have special educational needs, which is well below average, and no pupil has a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well below average. Pupil mobility is low. There is a pre-school group that meets in the school building and most children attend this before starting at Hinton St George First School. When they start at the school, their overall attainment is above average. There is a new headteacher, who started at the school this term, and there was an acting headteacher last term.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22453	Brian Gosling	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics; Information and Communication Technology; Art and Design; Design and Technology; Music; Physical Education.
11072	Shirley Elomari	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
20614	Don Kimber	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Science; Geography; History; Religious Education; Foundation Stage; Special Educational Needs.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hinton St George is providing a satisfactory standard of education. Children arrive with good attainment, most of them benefiting from previous attendance at the pre-school group that meets in the school building. Pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school as a result of satisfactory teaching and maintain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. They have very positive attitudes and behaviour, which contribute significantly to the good standards they attain. However, the school has serious weaknesses in the leadership and management and the curriculum. No subject leaders have been identified to monitor and secure improvements to the subjects taught, and there are no established, formal procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's performance. Consequently, the school does not clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, the curriculum, and pupils' learning that should form the basis of school improvement. There is a lack of evidence to show that pupils have sufficient access to the non-core subjects and, also, a lack of curriculum planning to support and guide teachers in teaching these subjects. The new headteacher, who took up her post this term, has quickly recognised these weaknesses and is already planning a lead in this much-needed development. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils maintain good standards in English, mathematics and science throughout the school.
- There are insufficient assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are very positive.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good and they form very good relationships with one another.
- The new headteacher is quickly providing clear-sighted and purposeful leadership.
- There are no formal procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the school's performance.
- Strategic planning is not sufficiently focused on identified areas for improvement.
- There is some teaching of a high quality in the junior class.
- The curriculum is not planned in sufficient detail.
- The school day is not organised well enough.
- No subject leaders have been identified.

The school was last inspected in 1999 and, since then, its improvement has been poor. This is because the two major areas for improvement identified in the last report have not been addressed. These were the implementation of a formal cycle for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance and the use of this information to inform strategic planning; and better information to parents about their children's learning. Both of these remain in the current report as areas requiring improvement. The school has been improved through the addition of a headteacher's room, which is currently used for learning support activities, and French has been added to the curriculum.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	B	A	A	A
writing	A	A	A	B
mathematics	C	A	A	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Almost all children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1, and many will exceed them. The school's results in reading, writing and mathematics in 2004 were well above average, as they were in the previous year. In three of the five annual assessments since the last inspection, the results have been no better than average and, in one year, they were well below average. This is not necessarily surprising because, with small groups of pupils, results can vary a great deal depending on the performance of one pupil. However, it does show the importance for the school to analyse these results carefully and assess pupils' progress regularly and systematically to ensure that they are learning effectively. This the school does not do, as there is little formal assessment of pupils' learning beyond the national tests in Year 2 and Year 4. There are no assessment procedures to track pupils' progress through the school; no targets are set for individual pupils or groups of pupils, apart from those with special educational needs (SEN); and the school has not made predictions of the pupils' attainment in the national tests for 2005. Inspection judgements are that current standards are above average in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 and Year 4. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) generally meet national expectations in Year 2 and Year 4.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils are attentive and very keen to learn, which makes a significant contribution to the standards that they attain. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, although it is currently good in Years 3 and 4. This is due to the capability of the teachers, as there is little support for them from school systems. Pupils' learning is more effective in Years 3 and 4 because assessment is used better to plan lessons and there is some teaching of a high quality. There are insufficient assessment procedures to inform teachers' planning, and this limits teachers' ability to plan work that is carefully matched to the learning needs of individual pupils.

There is a lack of curriculum planning to ensure that pupils' learning is systematic and progressively more challenging as they move through the school. Additionally, the school day is not organised carefully enough to ensure that sufficient time is given to every subject. However, the range of activities provided outside the school day is good. The information provided to parents about their children's attainment and progress has not improved since the last inspection. The partnerships with the community and other schools are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory, overall. The new headteacher has a clear vision for school improvement based upon her early evaluations of the school's performance. Governance is satisfactory. However, there are no subject leaders, which is unsatisfactory, and management is unsatisfactory because there are no established procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's performance. The headteacher, along with the acting headteacher last term, has begun the process of school self-evaluation with a clear commitment to school improvement. Statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally happy with what the school provides for their children, except for the information they receive and the way the school seeks parents' views. The inspection team agrees with parents on these matters.

Pupils like almost all things about the school, but about a third say that they do not often have to work hard and they find lessons are interesting only sometimes.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Establish systematic procedures to monitor pupils' progress.
- Establish secure and formal procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's performance.
- Create strategic planning that is focused clearly on the areas identified for improvement.
- Develop curriculum planning that ensures continuity and progression in pupils' learning.
- Reorganise the school day to ensure that sufficient time is given to all subjects.
- Identify subject leaders and establish clear roles for them so that they can identify strengths and weaknesses and act on this information.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. Standards are above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good in English, mathematics and science.
- There is no analysis of test results.
- There is not enough assessment information of pupils' achievement to track their progress.

Commentary

1. When children start in Reception their attainment is above average, with many children exceeding national expectations for their age. They make sound progress in the Reception Year; by the time they enter Year 1 virtually all children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals¹, and most will exceed them, in all areas of learning.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.2 (17.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.0 (16.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.5 (17.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The school's results² in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2004 were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared to those of similar schools, these results were well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. All pupils attained the nationally expected Level 2³ in reading and writing, and in the teacher assessments for science. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 3 was well above the national average in reading, above average in mathematics and average in writing and science. It is necessary to be cautious when interpreting the results of small groups of pupils, as the performance of a single pupil can dramatically affect the results. For example, the proportion of pupils who attained Level 2 was very high in reading, writing and science. However, it was average in mathematics because one pupil did not attain Level 2. For this reason, it is especially important in small schools to assess pupils' attainment regularly to ensure that they are making suitable progress.

¹ On Early Learning Goals: QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1 in six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development; and personal social and emotional development. The Foundation Stage continues until pupils enter Year 1, when they begin Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

² On the school's results: An average points score provides schools with a single statistic with which to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in other schools. At Key Stage 1, the National Curriculum Levels of attainment are given a score. For example, in mathematics Level 1=9 points and Level 2=15 points, and so on. The average test score achieved by a school is calculated by adding up all the scores achieved by the pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. These comparisons are the ones used in the figures printed in the summary of the report. When the percentage of pupils attaining a particular level is compared to that in other schools, this is stated clearly in the text.

³ On Levels: The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that, by the end of Year 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels. It is a national expectation that all pupils should reach Level 4 by the end of Year 6. Pupils who reach Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected level for their age.

3. The school has no clear, formal procedures to assess pupils' attainment other than the national tests in Year 2 and optional national tests in Year 4. This is a serious weakness as it is insufficient to track pupils' learning across the school or to provide information that might clarify the issues that arise from the test results. These include the significantly lower, comparative results at Level 3, including the fact that no pupil attained Level 3 in speaking and listening in 2004. No rigorous analysis of the test results has been carried out. The school cannot, therefore, be completely confident that all pupils are making the progress that might be expected of them. Neither is the school able to identify potential weaknesses in pupils' learning that would inform teachers' planning. No targets are set for groups or individual pupils, apart from those with SEN, and no predictions are made of the standards that pupils are expected to attain in Year 2 and Year 4.

4. The trend in the school's results at the end of Year 2 is above the national trend, following low results in 2000. In 2000 to 2003, national test results varied between well above average and below average. Indeed, national test results have been generally average in three of the five years since the previous inspection. There has been no analysis to establish why this should be so, although it appears from the judgements in the previous report that these pupils entered the school with lower standards of attainment. Very few pupils have been identified as having SEN and the school does not formally identify those pupils who are gifted or talented. The inspection team accepts that teachers make these judgements informally, but this is an insecure basis on which to ensure that all pupils' learning needs are met fully and the school cannot be completely confident that its educational provision is fully inclusive.

5. Bearing in mind the few pupils with SEN, the variations in the school's results over the last few years, the standards seen at the time of the inspection and the lack of assessment information, the inspection judgements are that standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average in Year 2 and Year 4. Standards in ICT and religious education are satisfactory in Year 2 and Year 4. Given the level of attainment with which pupils appear to be now entering the school, pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with SEN, is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science in all years. However, there is insufficient challenge for more able pupils and very little recorded evidence of pupils' work in any of the non-core subjects. Although all subjects are taught, the school cannot be certain that pupils are attaining the standards of which they are capable.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and their behaviour is consistently very good. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a close community where individuals are valued and relationships are very good.
- Pupils enjoy school and are very keen to learn.
- Pupils behave very well both in the classroom and around the school.
- Pupils are courteous, confident and considerate of others.
- Parents ensure that their children attend regularly and arrive on time.

Commentary

6. The school ethos successfully fosters a strong sense of community. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good. Pupils form very good relationships with one another and look after one another very well. The high level of mutual respect between children and adults means that everyone is valued as an individual. This helps to ensure that bullying is rare and is dealt with effectively and quickly when it does occur. Consequently, pupils are happy and confident, which supports their learning well.

7. Attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and almost all try very hard to achieve their best even when the work lacks challenge. Pupils of all ages listen carefully to one another and concentrate very well. They particularly enjoy practical subjects, such as physical education and art and design, but express the wish to have these lessons more frequently. They enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities and also visits to places of interest.

8. Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons, around the school and at breaks and lunchtimes. All adults in the school set very high expectations for pupils' behaviour and use praise well in order to achieve them. The playground is very small and, because all pupils are outside at the same time, some of the younger children can be intimidated by the vigorous games of the older boys. However, this is unintentional as these boys try to take care to avoid bumping into other pupils. There have been no exclusions. The school has successfully maintained the very good attitudes and behaviour noted in the previous inspection report.

9. Pupils' personal development is good overall and pupils grow into confident and considerate youngsters. The strong moral code and Christian ethos that pervade the school foster pupils' moral development well. Pupils demonstrate their good social development in the way they work and play together sensibly and co-operatively. They are considerate of others. Pupils' spiritual development is also good. Pupils are encouraged to help those less fortunate than themselves and to appreciate the world around them. Cultural development is satisfactory, but opportunities to explore their own and others' cultures are not developed consistently well. Children in the Reception class are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development. Although pupils' personal development is good overall, the lack of a systematic approach to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as to pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE), means that some opportunities to explore relevant themes are lost.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.9	School data :	0.0
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

10. Levels of attendance are higher than those found in primary schools nationally. Parents send their children to school both regularly and on time. They inform the school routinely of the reasons for any absence so that there are no unauthorised absences.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, overall. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Years 3 and 4. There is a good range of activities that enhance the curriculum, but curriculum planning is unsatisfactory. Academic guidance for pupils is restricted by the lack of assessment, and the information provided to parents is unsatisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 3 and 4, and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and Years 3 and 4, but it is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a substantial amount of good teaching and some of a high quality in Years 3 and 4.
- Teachers ensure that most teaching is satisfactory or better despite the lack of sufficient guidance and support for them.
- Assessment is not used well enough to plan lessons.
- There is an over-reliance on commercially-produced worksheets.
- There is insufficient monitoring and evaluation of teaching.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 22 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	2	7	11	2	0	0

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

11. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is some teaching of a high quality, and teaching in Years 3 and 4 is good overall following the arrival of the new headteacher who has responsibility for this class and demonstrates teaching of a high quality. However, there is a wide variation in the quality of teaching, as can be seen in the table above. This is because there is little guidance and support for teachers in planning their lessons. The good quality of much teaching is testament to the capability of the teaching staff.

12. There is a productive climate for learning in all lessons. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and provide much encouragement for the pupils. Consequently, pupils are keen to learn and show a good deal of enthusiasm and concentration in lessons. Teaching assistants worked alongside teachers in the classroom during the inspection and they provided good support for both teachers and pupils. They have a good understanding of the purpose of the lesson, and the support and guidance they provide for the lower ability pupils is well informed, purposeful and very caring. The learning objectives for English and mathematics lessons are displayed on the board in all classes but this is not always shared clearly with the pupils. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactorily informed by the assessment of the Foundation Stage profile. The teachers who share the teaching in Years 3 and 4 have detailed arrangements for assessing pupils' learning in the lessons and use the information suitably when planning further tasks for the pupils. In Years 1 and 2, however, there is insufficient assessment of pupils' learning to influence planning.

13. Pupils with SEN make sound progress towards their targets. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants, who make a good contribution to supporting these and other pupils. During the inspection, pupils were not withdrawn from the rest of the class as usually happens. However,

teaching assistants worked well in the whole class, supporting SEN and other pupils. The pupils also gained by not missing out on half of the lessons by being withdrawn to another room. However, the school has not identified the gifted and talented pupils and there is insufficient challenge for more able pupils to enable them to learn effectively.

14. In the best lessons, which were seen in Years 3 and 4, assessment information is used well to plan tasks with different levels of difficulty that match the varying needs of the pupils in the class. This is important, as the pupils in the class have a wide variation of ability as well as age, and the match of tasks to their ability ensures that they are able to apply themselves fully to the task. Consequently, they all make effective progress in their learning. Very good use is made of resources to engage pupils fully in practical activities. For example, in a science lesson in Years 3 and 4 that also showed very good links to literacy, a study of minibeasts was greatly enhanced by the use of a microscope linked to a computer. This was used well by the teaching assistant to engage pupils and ensure that the lesson was fun and enjoyable. This also encouraged the vocabulary that pupils then used to write about minibeasts.

15. The weaknesses in teaching generally arise from limitations in the planning and organisation of the curriculum and the teaching day. There is little assessment information or curriculum planning specific to the school, beyond a list of topics to be covered, to provide support and guidance for teachers. This means that teachers' individual assessment of pupils' learning is paramount, and this is variable. Consequently, the same task is often given to all pupils in the same year group and so some make better progress than others. There is an over-reliance on the use of commercially-produced worksheets, particularly in mathematics, that provides neither sufficient challenge for some pupils nor the stimulation that more practical activities would offer for pupils of this age. This would appear to be supported by the pupils, of whom almost a third said in their questionnaire that lessons are interesting and fun only sometimes, and that they do not often have to work hard. These worksheets are often not dated and so cannot be easily used to assess pupils' progress over time.

16. The organisation of the school day also does not promote effective teaching on occasions. For example, assemblies often overrun and are followed by a one and a quarter hour teaching session. Although the pace of lessons is often good, the consequence of this is that either teachers have to amend their planning or the lesson becomes truncated and plenary sessions are not used effectively. There are a number of short lessons, generally used for additional literacy activities such as reading and story-time. When planned well, these lessons are effective in promoting pupils' learning, but some lack purpose and pupils are not sufficiently involved. This was the cause of the unsatisfactory lessons seen.

17. The school has a marking policy and a homework policy but these do not provide enough guidance for teachers and are not implemented consistently. There is little guidance for pupils about teachers' marking and some work is not marked. There is planned homework only for pupils in Years 3 and 4. This does not sufficiently support pupils' learning nor does it involve parents in their children's learning at home as fully as it might. The lack of regular and systematic monitoring of teaching is a serious weakness. It means that these weaknesses have not been identified, nor has the best practice been shared across the school by informing school policies and providing the basis for whole-school practice.

The curriculum

The curriculum is unsatisfactory. There are good opportunities for enriching pupils' learning outside of the school day. The quality and quantity of resources and the accommodation are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum planning does not support teaching and learning well enough.
- The school day is not organised well enough to ensure that sufficient time is available for all subjects.
- The monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum and its delivery in the classroom are ineffective.
- Provision for extra-curricular activities is good.

Commentary

18. The school curriculum meets statutory requirements and those of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Sex and relationships education and drugs awareness education are taught and the provision for PSHE is satisfactory. The school has recently introduced the teaching of French to all age groups. The provision for the few pupils with SEN is satisfactory, and more focused attention is now given to developing individual education plans (IEPs) to guide teaching. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

19. Curriculum planning is unsatisfactory and undeveloped for all subjects, but particularly the non-core subjects. In this closely-knit community school, long-standing approaches to curriculum planning have grown up which are over-reliant upon informal methods and result in little detailed written planning, as was noted in the previous inspection report. Teaching colleagues work together well and they share a good knowledge of the pupils. However, they have not developed appropriately structured programmes to guide teaching and learning. National guidelines have been used as a basis for the planned curriculum. However, except for religious education, these guidelines have frequently remained the only basis for planning, with little or no adaptation to meet the particular needs of the school. There are no curriculum plans that identify learning objectives, indicate assessment opportunities or suggest activities and possible resources to be used. Consequently, there is too much dependence on commercially-produced worksheets in some subjects. The newly-arrived headteacher has recognised this omission and has this term introduced a curriculum map for Years 3 and 4 on a two-year cycle to address the learning needs of a mixed-age class.

20. The absence of structured programmes for teaching and learning has a negative effect upon how and what pupils learn. This is because the systematic and progressive development of pupils' skills and understanding is not ensured. There are no formally developed procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress to guide curriculum planning and to ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are fully met. Some parents have raised a concern about the lack of direction and challenge in their children's learning which has arisen with temporary teachers. This would appear to be directly linked to the lack of adequate support and guidance for these teachers in the planning of the curriculum. The lack of whole-school approaches to the planning for some lessons, such as story-time, results in differences in the quality of learning for different classes. There are no subject leaders to investigate the links between the standards that pupils attain and the curriculum provided. This is a serious weakness.

21. The school has given additional time to English and mathematics during the school day to maintain high standards. The morning sessions are dominated by English and mathematics, whilst afternoon sessions typically start with quiet reading and end with a story-time. As a consequence of this, little time is available for the other subjects and pupils do not always cover these subjects in sufficient depth to enable them to attain the standards of which they are capable. This is reflected

in the very limited amount of recorded work by pupils in some non-core subjects, particularly history, geography, art and design, and design and technology. The school has introduced the teaching of French but little consideration has been given to the impact of this on the already restricted time available for the non-core subjects.

22. The organisation of the school day is not sufficiently tightly structured to make full use of the time available for teaching. It does not ensure that adequate time is given to all subjects. Some lessons, typically in the afternoon, are timetabled as a variety of options and others are subject to change at the last minute. Some Year 2 pupils, for example, were disappointed when informed they would miss their anticipated physical education lesson. On other occasions, lessons such as circle time⁴ are listed along with physical education and ICT, with the teacher appearing to decide at the time which subject will be taught. Additionally, during the inspection a planned science or music lesson that followed swimming was changed to physical education owing to the good weather. This is not necessarily problematic in itself, but there is no effective monitoring to ensure that, over the school year, sufficient time is given to each of these subjects. The times planned for lessons are not adhered to and/or the timetable does not reflect actual teaching times. During the inspection, for example, the first morning lesson that follows registration and assembly was due to start at 9.20 am but consistently began ten minutes or so later than that, following the late ending of assembly. Some lessons overrun and squeeze out other planned activities. For example, a timetabled music lesson of 15 minutes was eventually less than half the intended duration.

23. Pupils' learning is enriched by visits to places of interest and extra-curricular activities. This maintains the good standard of provision noted in the previous report. Pupils speak enthusiastically of these activities and clearly enjoy them. In addition to the choir and recorder group, there are after-school sessions for football, hockey and athletics. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 recall their visits to the museums at Yeovilton and Taunton fondly. They also value visitors to school linked to their work on Kenya and in art and design. Other events include pupils' involvement in the Hinton Music Festival, artwork that is displayed in Crewkerne Library, the young Shakespeare Group, and the Story Box Theatre. There is also the biennial residential visit to Kilve Court for Years 3 and 4 pupils.

24. The quality of accommodation and resources is satisfactory. Since the previous report, the school has added a small room, which is used primarily for teaching small groups of pupils, and has expanded the stock of laptop computers that are very accessible for use in class. However, there is no hall, which restricts the space indoors available for physical education, and there is limited space outdoors for a play area assigned to support Reception children. There is a need, recognised by the school, to improve the resources for science and to replenish the school stock of books in the near future.

Care, guidance and support

The school's provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of its pupils is satisfactory. The support, advice and guidance provided for pupils are unsatisfactory. Pupils are consulted and their views are acted upon satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides good care for individual pupils, but its policies and procedures are not sufficiently rigorous and systematic to ensure the consistent care and welfare of all pupils.
- The academic support, guidance and advice for pupils are unsatisfactory because they are insufficiently based on monitoring and assessment of pupils' learning.
- Pupils develop trusting relationships with teachers and other members of staff.
- Pupils are informally consulted but are not actively involved in school decision-making.
- Induction arrangements are good.

Commentary

⁴ On 'Circle time' - this is the provision of a discussion period which provides good opportunities for pupils to talk about issues that face them in everyday life.

25. Teachers and other members of staff know the pupils very well and they use this knowledge to provide a good standard of individual care. The school is a caring community but the policies and procedures that support its pastoral work are unsatisfactory. This is because, although statutory requirements are met, these policies are not reviewed often enough and some are in urgent need of revision as they no longer seem to reflect the school's provision. Planned procedures are insufficiently detailed to inform new or temporary teachers of what they are expected to do in certain circumstances. The information provided for parents reflects the lack of rigorous procedures and does not inform them well enough about, for example, the procedures to be followed when medicines are taken into school. Although health and safety checks are carried out, these are not adequately recorded nor are risk assessments fully in place. However, there are no major health and safety issues and teachers pay good attention to this aspect during practical lessons.

26. The support, advice and guidance offered to pupils are unsatisfactory as they are not sufficiently based on an assessment of their learning. Assessment procedures are not rigorous enough to ensure that every pupil receives appropriate support and guidance to improve his or her work. Assessment is not used well enough to plan the next stages of learning for pupils who do not have individual targets to provide guidance on what they have to do in order to improve.

27. Pupils generally feel safe and happy in school and develop trusting relationships with teachers and other members of staff. Although the pupils' questionnaire indicated that a significant minority of the older pupils did not have an adult to go to in times of need, pupils did not support this view in discussion with inspectors. However, older pupils have recently experienced many different teachers this year and this may explain this discrepancy.

28. The school consults pupils informally to gain their views about school life and the activities provided for them. Pupils are, therefore, involved to some degree in changes that affect them. However, there are no formal systems such as a questionnaire, suggestion boxes or a school council to allow pupils to put forward ideas and suggestions or to involve them actively in the process of planning change.

29. Pupils' induction to the Reception Year is good. Many children attend the pre-school group that uses the school premises and have good opportunities to meet with older children and become familiar with the school before starting in Reception. Children settle quickly into the routines when they start school and become confident, happy learners. Pupils joining the school at other times are well supported. They make friends quickly and are accepted into the school community very readily.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is unsatisfactory. although parents are supportive of the school. Links with other schools and the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does not inform parents well enough about its work and their children's learning.
- Parents support the school well.
- Links with the community and other schools provide the school with additional opportunities.

Commentary

30. The information provided for parents is unsatisfactory. This was a major area of concern in the previous inspection report and the school has not addressed it successfully. The absence of a home/school reading record was a weakness in 1999 and this remains the case. Annual reports of pupils' progress, although good for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, remain insufficiently detailed. In particular, comments focus on the curriculum and the pupils' attitudes rather than on the progress they have made. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is not reported separately, which is a weakness. Consultation meetings are infrequent and targets are not

set for individual pupils. Curriculum information is now sent out on a termly basis, but with the exception of the very recent information for the Year 3 and 4 class it is too brief to enable parents to support their child as well as they might like. A third of parents do not feel well informed about how well their children are getting on and a smaller number of parents state that they had received no feedback, having raised a concern. All of this restricts parents' involvement in their child's learning.

31. Parents are supportive of the school and they value its work. They feel welcome in school. The friends association raises money to support the school in a variety of ways, such as providing some of the laptop computers and covering the cost of transport for the residential visit to Kilve Court. Currently, few parents help in school on a regular basis but support is always available for visits and when pupils go to swimming.

32. The school has satisfactory links with the local community. Links with the local church are well established and special assemblies are held there at the end of term. Pupils' artwork has been displayed in the library at Crewkerne and pupils of all ages go on visits to local places of interest. Fund-raising for charity is a feature of school life and includes providing harvest festival gifts to the residents of the Pilsdon Community. The links with other schools are used well to support pupils as they transfer to middle school. The local secondary school provides technical support for ICT. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) meets regularly with others and there are links with other local small schools. The school works with other schools to provide a wider range of sporting activities than it could organise alone, such as the mini Olympics, area football and hockey tournaments.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory, overall. The leadership of the new headteacher is good and is purposefully focused on school improvement. There are no subject leaders and, consequently, subject leadership is unsatisfactory. Management is unsatisfactory because there are inadequate procedures to monitor the school's performance. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher is quickly providing clear-sighted and purposeful leadership.
- No responsibilities have been assigned for subject leadership.
- Monitoring and evaluation procedures are poor and do not guide strategic planning by identifying areas for improvement.
- The chair of governors has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The need to improve strategic planning has not been addressed sufficiently.

Commentary

33. The headteacher took up her post the week before the inspection. She had liaised closely with the acting headteacher last term to evaluate the school's performance. This has given her a very clear understanding of the systems and procedures that need to be established to monitor and evaluate the school's performance effectively. She has already begun to improve the curriculum planning for Years 3 and 4 and the information that is provided to parents about the curriculum. A proposal for the delegation of subject responsibilities has been presented to the teaching staff. The headteacher is providing a clear lead in creating a commitment to school improvement and she has gained the support of members of the school community, including the teaching staff.

34. The lack of a clear identification of responsibilities for subject leadership limits the school's rigour in identifying strengths and weaknesses that might inform its development. No clear analysis has been made of the national test information and there are no written plans for the development of the subjects of the curriculum. The leadership of SEN has been identified and that provided by the SENCO is satisfactory. She works closely with the part-time SEN teacher and with the SEN governor, who regularly comes into school and works in her classroom. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is also satisfactory.

35. The school reports that monitoring and evaluation systems have been informal up to now. This may have been successful in the past but there are no records to demonstrate this. Although these practices have been successful in establishing a productive climate for learning, the school cannot be certain that it includes all pupils fully in the curriculum it provides. Additionally, informal systems are person-dependent and provide an insecure basis for future development when key personnel change, as has happened with the arrival of a new headteacher. There are insufficient assessments of pupils' learning as they move through the school, and analysis of national test data lacks rigour. There is no evidence of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching beyond the requirements of performance management and there has been no effective monitoring of the curriculum that might have identified weaknesses in the school's planning. It is a positive development that the headteacher is very clear about the urgent need to establish rigorous and effective procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's performance. She has already begun to develop clear plans to implement strategies to improve the assessment of pupils' learning across the school and to track their progress; a review of the curriculum and the length of teaching sessions; and the regular monitoring of teaching. The headteacher has a class responsibility and a large teaching commitment. This restricts the time and opportunity available to her to plan, organise and implement these school procedures.

36. The lack of information gained from a rigorous monitoring of the school's performance restricts the effectiveness of strategic planning that is focused on clearly identified areas for improvement. This was identified as a major area for development in the previous inspection report in 1999 but it has not been addressed. A further requirement to fully involve governors and staff in strategic planning has not been met and they are unfamiliar with the priorities of this year's school development plan.

37. The chair of governors has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and he acknowledges the urgent need to establish effective procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's educational provision fully. He is supported well by the vice-chair of governors and there are positive signs of the recognition of the need to establish these procedures amongst the governors as well as the teaching staff. The governors have organised sub-committees to enable them to carry out their duties and many governors visit the school informally, often to assist in lessons. However, there is no formal arrangement to record these visits and share the information gained with other members of the governing body. Governors are not sufficiently involved with strategic planning, although this is linked to the inadequate information they were given about the school's performance. Perhaps as a consequence of this, the governing body has not been sufficiently rigorous in holding the school to account for its actions in order to ensure that the key issues of the last inspection were addressed. Statutory requirements are met.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	262,291.00	Balance from previous year	43,284.00
Total expenditure	278,421.00	Balance carried forward to the next	27,154.00
Expenditure per pupil	3,762.00		

38. Financial management is satisfactory. The carry forward figure shown in the table is above the recommended five per cent. This has now been spent on the construction of a new room that was originally intended as a headteacher's office and is currently used as an additional teaching area. Further finances have been used to increase the teaching staff at the school and support the introduction of French. This is acceptable, but the school does not evaluate its provision effectively enough to identify clearly the kind of additional teaching support that will provide the most cost-effective benefit to pupils' learning. This is particularly pertinent in the light of the headteacher's large teaching commitment and her responsibility to develop monitoring and evaluation procedures without delay.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults provide a warm and secure learning environment for children.
- Children behave very well and they play well together.
- Adults set good role models and children develop very good attitudes to learning.
- The teaching assistant provides effective support.
- The facilities are limited for children's physical development.

Commentary

39. The provision for children in Reception has been maintained since the last inspection and is satisfactory overall, with some good aspects. Children enter Reception at the start of the academic year in which they are five and there are 17 children currently in Reception. They are in a mixed age class, which also includes eight pupils of Year 1. Before starting school most children benefit from pre-school experience, usually attending the pre-school group on the school site. The class teacher makes effective use of this proximity to provide good induction procedures. There are weekly music lessons involving staff and children from the pre-school, and parents and children also have other visits prior to starting. The attainment of many children when they start school exceeds national expectations, and it is above average overall. These good standards are maintained during the Reception Year and the children achieve satisfactorily. By the time they start in Year 1, most children are in line to achieve beyond the goals expected in all areas of learning, but particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. The school has thus maintained the high standards noted at the last inspection.

40. The teaching in Reception is satisfactory overall, although some good teaching was seen in language and mathematical activities. There is a good liaison between the teacher and the teaching assistant. They provide a happy and secure environment, which helps children settle well, and they have a good understanding of the children and their learning needs. The class teacher maintains sound assessment procedures to record children's progress. These are sometimes extended with additional, brief notes of selected individual children, especially when the teaching assistant is available. Planned activities focus broadly upon the agreed curriculum for the Foundation Stage. However there is not enough use of the role-play area, and of the outdoor area, to enhance the children's learning. Also, although much learning is made fun and enjoyable, too many activities are led by the teacher, which limits the opportunities for children to develop their independence. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

41. Provision for children's **personal, social and emotional development** is good. The good relationships enable children to feel confident and secure and they respond well to the warm and positive classroom environment. The teacher provides enjoyable and interesting activities for children, which motivates them to learn. All members of staff are good role models to children. They respect each child and ensure that all feel valued. Children's behaviour is very good. They take their turns well and share materials readily in lessons. They also show respect and care for each other. During story-time at the end of the day, they were all able to listen quietly to other children who were 'telling their story'. However, there are few opportunities for children to learn independently in self-initiated activities; for example, they have limited access to the role-play area.

42. In **communication, language and literacy**, children are willing to volunteer answers and make suggestions, and can also listen attentively. Leading on from singing about "Incey Wincey

Spider”, the teaching staff used skilful questions to encourage the children to think about materials they might need to make a moving toy. Children speak confidently and offer their suggestions willingly, knowing that other children will be respectful. They read and share books together in class well and they speak enthusiastically about taking their books home. The class teacher uses a satisfactory range of activities to help children develop their reading skills, including story-time. However, a reading lesson at the start of afternoon school lacked appropriate guidance and support for children to gain fully from looking at books. The potential for purposeful play, including role-play, was not fully exploited during the inspection in promoting language skills. Many children write well, with legible print and reasonably consistent formation of letters.

43. In **mathematical development**, the teacher provides various incidental activities during the course of the day which enable children to extend their skills of counting and their understanding of number. Active methods, including the use of fingers for calculating simple number bonds up to ten, and other visual resources, are used well to help children become confident about mathematics. Children have a good understanding of mathematical terms such as ‘over’ and ‘under’, ‘longer’ and ‘shorter’, ‘more’ and ‘less’. The teaching assistant makes a good contribution in supporting children’s mathematical development, and joins in boosting the fun, enjoyment and relevance of these counting activities.

44. Some of these activities, such as those related to “Incey Wincey Spider” also successfully promoted aspects of children’s **knowledge and understanding of the world**. The facilities are restricted in relation to children’s **physical development** activities. Children have limited access and use of outdoor space. The use of a tape recording to provide the basis for a lesson in movement and dance was more relevant to the Year 1 pupils in the class than to the Reception children. Some enjoyable activities are provided for children’s **creative development**.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 and 4.
- The lack of a subject leader with responsibility for the monitoring of teaching and learning inhibits the spread of good practice.
- Assessment and monitoring procedures are unsatisfactory.
- The lack of formally-agreed approaches to 'guided' reading and story-time leads to variations in the quality of learning.
- Opportunities to practise writing skills in other subjects are not developed well enough.

Commentary

45. All pupils, including those with SEN, achieve satisfactorily in English throughout the school. Inspection findings show that standards of attainment in reading and writing are above average in Year 2, and also above expectations in Year 4. Standards in speaking and listening are also good throughout the school. The very positive attitudes that pupils consistently show in lessons make a significant contribution to the good standards they attain.

46. The leadership and management of English are unsatisfactory. In accord with the informal practice developed over a number of years, no member of staff has been identified as subject leader. The school has become over-reliant upon informal assessment procedures that do not provide adequate information about the progress that pupils are making. Assessment data has not been analysed satisfactorily to inform curriculum planning and teaching so as to meet the needs of pupils. For example, teacher assessment in 2004 showed that no Year 2 pupils gained the higher Level 3 in speaking and listening, although half of them attained this standard in reading. There was no reflection upon this to consider how the school might amend its provision to provide greater challenge and opportunity for future pupils. Similarly, the relatively low proportion of pupils in 2004 who attained Level 3 in writing prompted no analysis of potential areas for development. The absence of monitoring and evaluation of teaching restricts the possibility of sharing good practice. For example, strong contrasts in the quality of learning were observed in story-time in two classes. In one, pupils sat listening passively for 15 minutes to the story, until the end of the day arrived. In the other, also at the end of school, pupils joined in enthusiastically as they responded to parts of the story. They listened well to each other as well as to the teacher, and their greater involvement enabled them to sustain their attention well as eight of them went to the front to 'tell their stories'. There is a lack of planning that establishes clearly the learning intentions for 'guided' reading. This contributes to the insufficient guidance and unsatisfactory use of time for pupils in some of these lessons, which are held in all classes at the beginning of afternoon school.

47. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and good in Years 3 and 4. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and pupils usually produce a suitable amount of work in lessons. Teachers typically engage pupils well, and teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. The best teaching is characterised by the clear exposition of learning intentions that are reviewed with pupils at the end of lessons, and by the use of methods and resources which help to keep all pupils actively involved. Less satisfactory features of teaching in some lessons include the poor use of time and some work in the infants that lacks challenge for more capable pupils. The quality of learning is not enhanced by an over-reliance upon commercially-produced worksheets.

48. Over the last term, assessments have been made in reading for pupils in Years 3 and 4. These have been used in planning by the new headteacher so as to focus work more closely to meet their needs. However, there remains the need for further developments in formal planning and assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress. The school recognises the need for other developments that will improve the rate of pupils' learning. These include target-setting, better marking procedures that provide more guidance for pupils about what they need to do to improve, and the systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in lessons. The headteacher has introduced a reading record and homework book for pupils in Years 3 and 4. This represents the first stage in addressing the improvement required by the previous inspection report for the provision of an effective home/school reading record. There is no designated library and the quality of books in classrooms is barely satisfactory, which does not support pupils' interest in reading as well as it might.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Overall, there is a lack of sufficiently well planned opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy skills in other subjects. Nevertheless, good links have been made in Years 3 and 4 with history. Very strong links involving ICT as well as literacy were observed in a science lesson. Discussions that promote speaking and listening skills are not sufficiently promoted in many lessons and opportunities for developing literacy skills in other subjects are missed, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Above average standards are maintained across the school.
- Pupils have a good recall of mathematical facts.
- There is an overuse of commercial worksheets in Years 1 and 2.
- There is no subject leader and no effective monitoring of the subject.

Commentary

50. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and they remain good at the end of Year 4. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school.

51. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a good understanding of the number system. They have a good mental recall of number facts and this enables them to solve number problems quickly and confidently. Pupils interpret block graphs confidently and well. They also accurately recognise and name a variety of shapes, such as pyramids, cones and cylinders. In Years 3 and 4, pupils develop a good mental recall of some multiplication facts that starts with their learning doubles effectively.

52. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 and 4. Teachers establish a productive atmosphere in classrooms and pupils are attentive and keen to learn. The learning intention of the lesson is clearly displayed on the board but this is rarely shared effectively with the pupils. In Years 3 and 4, good use is made of assessment to plan tasks with different levels of difficulty that meet the varying needs of the pupils in the class. Not enough use is made of assessment in Years 1 and 2, however, and the same tasks are often given to all pupils in the same year group. In addition, there is an over-reliance on commercially-produced worksheets in the infants. These are often not dated, which makes an evaluation of pupils' progress difficult. Marking is regular but it does not sufficiently show pupils how they can improve. Some interesting practical tasks are set for pupils but, too often, tasks are limited to the completion of a worksheet. The school has provided individual whiteboards for pupils' use, but these are not always used, with the result that on these occasions not all pupils are fully involved in the opening part of the lesson.

53. There is no subject leader and, consequently, there is insufficient monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress, and of the curriculum and teaching. There has also been inadequate analysis of national test results to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning that could inform curriculum provision. Additionally, there is not enough use of ICT in mathematics lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. There is a lack of curriculum planning that addresses clearly the particular needs of the school and its pupils. Consequently, opportunities to use and develop pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum have not been formally identified. Nevertheless, there is some good use of databases and some good, if incidental, use of pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects, such as science and design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average throughout the school.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for learning helps them to make sound progress.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities for investigative work.
- There is a lack of challenge for more capable pupils, especially in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

55. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2, and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Similarly, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 4 exceeds national expectations and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with SEN also make sound progress.

56. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and good in Years 3 and 4, following the arrival of the headteacher, who is a science specialist. All pupils are able to learn in well-ordered classrooms, and all gain from the good contribution made by teaching assistants. Pupils show their interest and enthusiasm particularly when engaged in practical activities. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy activities on the topic of materials, and many distinguish clearly between natural and man-made materials. However, the overuse of worksheets is a contributory factor to the lack of challenge, especially for more capable pupils. Pupils' enthusiasm was also evident in a lively and very good lesson when pupils in Years 3 and 4 explored animal habitats. They responded readily to different levels of challenge and activity. These involved using a precise science vocabulary, thinking carefully in response to searching questions, and making observations outside the classroom. These absorbing activities led on to creating poems about cobwebs, and also to the use of electronic microscopes linked to a computer to observe insects in greater detail.

57. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. There is a lack of formal approaches to the planning of the subject that clearly note assessment opportunities. The school recognises the need to identify a subject leader to address this and other weaknesses, such as the limited opportunities for investigation and enquiry and the overuse of worksheets.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A set of laptop computers enables ICT to be taught fully despite the limited space.
- There is some good use of ICT in other subjects.
- There are no records of pupils' learning in the subject.

Commentary

58. Standards generally meet national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils' achievement appears satisfactory, but the small amount of work available for scrutiny indicates that pupils do not carry out tasks with sufficient depth for them to achieve the standards they are capable of achieving.

59. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a drawing program to create drawings and they make suitable use of a word processor and a database. A programmable toy is used to introduce them to control technology. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good use of a word processor to support their work in other subjects. They talk about their work with word processors and databases suitably, but they do not appear to have used computers extensively to develop their skills fully. Pupils were excited to use a large microscope linked to a computer in science. This was an effective use of ICT that contributed successfully to pupils' scientific understanding.

60. The standards that pupils attain and the work they have produced indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory in all years. The school's limited space prohibits the creation of a computer suite, and the school therefore has a portable suite of laptop computers that allows ICT to be developed fully in classrooms. However, the use of ICT is not monitored, and pupils' responses indicate that they do not have regular and systematic access to the laptop computers. Any assessment of pupils' attainment is difficult because there are no records of pupils' learning. This is because there is no subject leader and, as a consequence of this, there is no monitoring of pupils' learning, of the effectiveness of the curriculum, or of teaching. This is a considerable obstacle in the way of the development of the subject.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

61. There are good examples of the use of ICT in other subjects in Years 3 and 4, particularly in science, whilst word processing is used effectively in history. However, the lack of planning denies the school the opportunity to identify opportunities for pupils to use ICT fully across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

62. No lessons were seen in **history** or **geography** during the inspection. Pupils' work and planning for the subjects were looked at and discussions were held with pupils. Planning is based upon national guidelines, though there has been little adaptation to meet the particular needs of the school. The time identified for these subjects and the limited amount of pupils' work seen indicates that these subjects are not given enough time for pupils to cover topics in sufficient depth. The lack of a subject leader for either history or geography has resulted in these matters not being addressed. There are no procedures to assess pupils' progress and no clear plan for developing pupils' skills and knowledge systematically. This means that pupils are not achieving as well as they might. Pupils are enthusiastic about the topics they cover, including studies of the local area, map work, Romans and the Second World War.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have positive attitudes and this supports their progress in lessons.
- There is no subject leader to oversee the assessment and monitoring of standards.

Commentary

63. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 meets the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus and they achieve satisfactorily. Standards have thus been maintained since the time of the last report. Pupils develop their knowledge of major faiths such as Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 gain a good understanding of the story of the prodigal son. In discussion with the inspector, they accurately recalled the story sequence. Most of them also showed a good understanding of its meaning, expressing ideas of forgiveness and of selfishness well. For example, "God is our father who forgives us," and "If you do bad or selfish things, we can be forgiven if we are sorry". Pupils respond well to learning activities that involve handling artefacts and to simple drama opportunities. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were very interested in learning how and why babies are christened, as part of considering what it means to be a Christian.

64. The lack of a subject leader has an adverse effect upon the quality of teaching and learning. There are several areas for development, some of which have already been recognised by the school. These include:

- * The development and provision of more detailed medium-term plan, with assessment opportunities identified.
- * Widening the range of activities and resources used in lessons and reducing the use of worksheets.
- * Increasing the number of visits and visitors to support religious education.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65. One lesson was seen in each of art and design, music and physical education, but no lessons were seen in design and technology. Pupils' work was looked at and teachers' planning was considered. Pupils were talked to about their work and teachers were consulted. There was very little work available for scrutiny in these subjects. Art and design and design and technology are often listed together on timetables, and there is no indication in planning to show that sufficient time is ensured for each subject.

66. In **art and design**, pupils draw portraits of themselves and others in their class, with a good level of drawing skill. They make a number of drawings in other lessons, often as a method for recording their work. In the lesson seen, a good collection of different materials was provided for groups of pupils to create a collage of a scene they had designed in the previous lesson. They worked well and skilfully stuck different materials on to their designs. In **design and technology**, there was a little evidence of designing, because pupils do not have designing books. However, work on display showed that the younger pupils have worked on weaving with coloured strips of paper.

67. In **music**, pupils enjoy keeping a beat with a variety of percussion instruments. They recognise that symbols can represent sound and they use them well to create percussive sequences of long and short beats. Instrumental music lessons are popular in the school and are well attended. In assembly, pupils sing well with good control. Facilities are restricted for **physical education**, although there is a playing field a short distance from the school and regular visits are

made to the local swimming pool in Years 3 and 4. However, the playground is rather cramped for physical education activities, and indoor space is available only when it is created in one of the classrooms. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy physical education and work well to express themselves with a clear regard to the spatial needs of the other pupils around them.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

68. No lessons were observed in this curriculum area, but planning was considered and discussions held with staff. From the information available, the school appears to provide satisfactorily for pupils' PSHE. The school has a policy for PSHE, and circle time appears on the timetable, though it is there only as one of a number of options and it does not always take place. Appropriate attention is given to sex and relationships education and to drugs awareness. Pupils are supported well informally in this area of personal development.

69. The school recognises the need to promote this area of the curriculum more strongly. Essentially, this involves developing medium-term plans to guide teaching and learning, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum to share the strengths and address the weaknesses identified.

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

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