

INSPECTION REPORT

Lovington CE Primary School

Castle Cary

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123766

Headteacher: Miss Judith Barrett

Lead inspector: Michael Best

Dates of inspection: 13th to 15th September 2004

Inspection number: 267246

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 controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 54

School address: Lovington
Castle Cary
Somerset
Postcode: BA7 7PX

Telephone number: 01963 240305
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Angie Hutchings

Date of previous inspection: 12th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lovington CE Primary School draws most of its pupils from mainly owner-occupier and some rented homes in and around the village. No pupil has free school meals, which is below the national average. The school was awarded the Charter Mark in 2004 earlier in the year.

There are 54 pupils (34 boys, 20 girls) on roll, five of whom attend part time, the remainder attending full time. The school is smaller than other primary schools in England. Overall, an average number of pupils join and leave the school other than at the usual times. When they enter the reception group, simple assessments show that many children's skills and experiences are above average.

All pupils speak English as their first language. About 20 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is similar to the national average. No pupil has a Statement outlining their specific needs, which is below average, and there are no pupils on the higher level of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Pupils' special educational needs are mostly moderate learning difficulties. The local authority looks after one pupil.

The school has experienced a number of changes in staffing since the last inspection. At the time of the inspection, one full-time, permanent member of staff was long-term absent. The

school's establishment is currently the full-time headteacher plus five part-time teachers and there are three mixed-age classes.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10413	Michael Best	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
10965	Patricia Edwards	Lay inspector	-
3752	Trudy Cotton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Geography History Religious education Personal, social and health education and Citizenship Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Lovington CE Primary is an improving school as the result of the headteacher's very clear vision, sense of purpose and commitment to raising standards.

By the end of Year 6, pupils are achieving high standards in National Curriculum tests because of consistently good teaching. The school cares well for its pupils and makes good provision for their personal development. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Links with parents, the community and other schools are very good. Overall, the governance and management are satisfactory. Although, overall, it provides an acceptable quality of education for its pupils, this school has serious weaknesses. The achievement of pupils in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is too low due to a legacy of an unsatisfactory curriculum and unsatisfactory teaching and learning over time. As a result, the school does not provide satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Parents give tremendous support to the school, staff work hard and pupils want to do well.
- The provision for the Foundation Stage¹ is unsatisfactory.
- Recent National Curriculum results at the end of Year 6 are in the top 5 per cent of schools but well below national averages in reading and writing at the end of Year 2.
- Consistently good teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 successfully promote high achievement.
- Unsatisfactory teaching and learning in reception and Years 1 and 2 have adversely affected pupils' achievement.
- The school has a clear and realistic agenda for improvement.
- Governors are not sufficiently well informed by performance data.

Improvement since the last inspection. Standards declined following the last inspection and not enough specific action was taken to address the issues facing the school. Since the appointment of the present headteacher in January 2003, there is good, and some very good, progress in key areas such as the standards reached by Year 6 pupils. The school has now successfully addressed the key issues identified in the previous report relating to the amount of teaching time and improvements to the school development plan. The impact of recent efforts to improve the Foundation Stage provision and raise standards in teaching, learning and achievement in Years 1 and 2 has yet to be felt. Judging the whole period since the last inspection, the school has not moved on sufficiently from where it was.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004 ²	2004
English	D	E	A*	A*
Mathematics	E	C	A*	A
Science	E	D	A*	A*

¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is based on six areas of learning. The early learning goals are the standards children are expected to reach by the end of the reception class in each of these areas.

² The grades in this table for 2004 have been calculated from the school's results and the national information published in September 2004 (the Autumn Package). At the present time, these grades are unvalidated.

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

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

Achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 but unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.

Work seen during the inspection indicates that:

- When they enter Year 1 from the reception year, most children meet the national standards (the early learning goals) in their personal, social and emotional education and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, many do not meet these standards in their communication, literary and language development, mathematical development, creative and physical development.
- In English, mathematics and science standards are at least similar to national averages in Year 6 and rising. In reading, writing, mathematics and science standards are below national averages in Year 2.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 who have the capacity for higher achievement are effectively challenged but those in Years 1 and 2 are not doing as well as they should.

Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are good. In Years 5 and 6 behaviour is very good. In Years 1, 2 and 3 some pupils take a while to settle down to their work. Pupils are keen to do well and get on well with each other and adults. **Pupils' personal development is good.** Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and their cultural development is very good. Attendance for the last reporting period was better than the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Although there are clear strengths, there are also some important weaknesses. Teaching and learning are consistently good in Years 5 and 6 and this underpins high achievement. The majority of teaching observed during the inspection in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but unsatisfactory teaching over time has resulted in unsatisfactory learning. Pupils have not acquired and developed the necessary working habits and sufficient knowledge to work independently and productively. In Years 3 and 4 teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment is **unsatisfactory**. Procedures and the use of information gathered are developing well in Years 3 to 6 but not in Years 1 and 2. Assessment procedures are weak in the Foundation Stage.

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall. The curriculum in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. However, the recommended curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is not in place and the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 does not successfully meet pupils' needs. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, and their development of citizenship, is good. There is good provision for activities outside the school day. The accommodation and provision of learning resources are good in Years 3 to 6, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage. The good quality care and welfare of pupils contribute successfully to the school's welcoming and friendly ethos. The school's very good links and partnerships with parents, other schools and the community make valuable contributions to the drive to raise standards.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governance, leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall.

The headteacher provides good leadership in a challenging situation. Through her work in the classroom and in her leadership, she gives a very clear steer to the school's strong commitment to raise standards. This is reflected particularly in the results of the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 6. Daily routines are well established and the school runs smoothly. At present, the headteacher is responsible for managing too many subjects. The governors are supportive of the school and know the challenges it faces. They are developing their role as the school's *critical friend* but are not sufficiently well informed by performance data. The school meets all relevant statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are pleased that their children are happy in school and many comment positively about the rise in standards in the Year 5 and 6 class and the improvement in pupils' behaviour during the past year. A number are concerned about standards by the end of Year 2 and the recent instability in staffing. Pupils like coming to school and appreciate the opportunities they have to be consulted and influence improvements.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise the achievement of pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2;
- improve the provision for children in the Foundation Stage;
- improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in reception and Years 1 and 2;
- develop the roles and responsibilities of subject managers;
- strengthen the role of the governing body in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **good** in Years 5 and 6, **satisfactory** in Years 3 and 4 but **unsatisfactory** in the Foundation Stage, and Years 1 and 2. Progress as pupils move through the school is not steady enough.

Standards of work seen in the current Year 6 are above average in mathematics and science, and average in English. In each of these core subjects they are below average in Year 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a marked difference in achievement within the school.
- Since the last inspection, standards of work and achievement have declined significantly in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
- Year 6 pupils made very good progress to reach high standards in their 2004 National Curriculum tests.

Commentary

- 1 When they start school in the September following their fourth birthday, most children have the skills and experiences expected for this age, and many exceed these. Children do not achieve well enough. Although most meet the national standards (the early learning goals) by the end of the reception year in their personal, social and emotional development and their knowledge and understanding of the world, many do not meet these goals in the other areas of learning.
- 2 In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below the national averages. Pupils do not have a firm enough grasp of the key skills they need to achieve the standards of which they are capable. The following table shows that, compared with all schools, standards in the 2004 statutory tests in reading and writing were well below the national averages and similar to the national average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards were well below average in mathematics and very low (that is, in the bottom 5 per cent of schools) in reading and writing.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004³

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.8 (15.7)	16.0 (15.7)
Writing	12.2 (13.7)	14.8 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.1 (16.7)	16.4 (16.3)

There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- 3 In recent years, pupils at the end of Year 2 have not done as well as those in similar schools and the trend in results is below that found nationally. Although teacher

³ The tables in this section of the report have been completed using the school's results and the data published in the 2004 Autumn Package. The data is, at present, unvalidated.

assessment in science placed Year 2 pupils in the top 5 per cent nationally in both 2003 and 2004, inspection evidence does not bear this out. External moderation by the local education authority of the Year 2 tests and assessments in May 2004 reports that teacher assessment was not accurate enough.

- 4 Pupils achieve well in lessons in Years 5 and 6. They are quickly settling down into lesson routines and teachers are effectively making clear their expectations. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Those pupils who have recently moved from Year 2 do not have the expected levels of learning skills and competencies and this is presenting challenges to their teachers. By adapting their teaching methods and setting out clear expectations teachers are helping pupils to achieve more and improvement is underway.
- 5 The following table shows that in the 2004 statutory tests, last year's Year 6 pupils achieved results in English, mathematics and science that were very high, that is in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. Compared with similar schools, pupils' results were well above average in mathematics and very high (in the top 5 per cent of schools) in English and science.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004⁴

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.8 (25.3)	27.0 (26.8)
Mathematics	30.3 (25.5)	27.2 (26.8)
Science	31.9 (27.9)	28.9 (28.6)

There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- 6 The 2004 results show a significant improvement over those from previous years, where the trend in standards was downwards. They reflect the dedication and high expectations of staff and the hard work of pupils. The school's current target setting process is rigorous and challenging. There are no significant differences in the results of boys and girls. Comparison of the results of last year's Year 6 pupils with their results at the end of Year 2 indicates that their progress is very high. This confirms that pupils were not achieving their true potential in earlier years.
- 7 This is a small school with very small numbers in each year group. Pupils' strengths and needs vary from year to year. As in other schools, pupils join and leave the school at other than at the usual times. Although average overall, the level of mobility in some year groups is higher than in others, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- 8 In ICT, pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in Year 6. Standards are broadly average in Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. In geography and history, achievement is good in Years 5 and 6 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4, but unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In art and design, design and technology, music, physical education and personal, health and social education, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 to 4 and good in Years 5 and 6. In religious education, achievement is satisfactory and standards are similar to those expected in the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and Year 6.

⁴ See previous footnote.

- 9 Pupils identified as having special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. When working on a one-to-one basis in small groups outside the classroom they make good progress. The expertise of the learning support staff and clearly planned targets enable pupils to improve their basic skills in literacy and numeracy and to work more confidently in class. The underachievement of pupils in the present Years 1 to 3 is not linked to a larger than average number having special educational needs. It is because numeracy and literacy skills have not been built upon in a progressive way.
- 10 The school recognises that some pupils have particular academic, creative or sporting skills. It maintains a register of its gifted and talented pupils and recognises that these pupils may require specific help and support. Recent test results at the end of Year 6 and the sporting links forged with the receiving high school indicate that the school's provision is enabling these pupils to achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities, their attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Their spiritual, moral and social development is **good** and their cultural development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school and the activities the school provides for them.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are good.
- Pupils know right from wrong and respect each other.
- Pupils' cultural development is a very strong feature.
- A significant number of pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 do not listen carefully enough to instructions and lack concentration.

Commentary

- 11 Pupils like being part of the school community and they enjoy the activities provided. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and when pupils are suitably challenged in lessons their behaviour is often very good. However, some pupils find it hard to listen and concentrate because teachers' expectations are not always challenging enough. Relationships between adults and pupils in the school are good. The school acknowledges there was a problem with bullying in the school, but parents and pupils agree this has now been effectively addressed. Pupils enjoy acting as helpers and playground friends, which encourages their independence. There were no exclusions in the last reporting year.
- 12 Pupils feel safe and secure in and around the school and are positive and confident about themselves. Teachers value pupils' contributions and plans for collective worship encourage pupils to reflect on what they see and hear and develop a sense of self-awareness. Music is well used in assemblies to support pupils' spiritual development. Staff provide good role models in their dealings with pupils and each other. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong; they know the school's *golden rules* and respond well to the *no contact* rule. The pupils have a very good understanding of different cultures through their links with a school in Zambia and visits to the school by Zambian musicians, theatre groups and an artist in residence.
- 13 Attendance for the last reporting year was better than with the national average for primary schools and pupils' punctuality is good. Staff monitor attendance carefully and registers are marked accurately at the beginning of every session.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	3.2
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0
National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are **satisfactory** overall. The school has a **very good** partnership with parents, other schools and the community. The school provides **good** standards of care and welfare and **satisfactory** support and guidance for its pupils.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. Although there is much good practice evident, assessment is **unsatisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are consistently good in Years 5 and 6.
- Unsatisfactory teaching and learning over time in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 have an adverse effect on standards achieved by pupils.
- Support staff make a valuable contribution to learning for pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessment is developing well in Years 3 to 6, but is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and weak in the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	2	8	14	3	0	0

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

- 14 Teaching and learning in the school is a mixed picture. The quality of teaching is not as good as that reported at the time of the last inspection.
- 15 There is consistently good teaching in Years 5 and 6 because the focus of experienced staff and high expectations are driving up standards. Teachers are successfully tapping into pupils' good potential to learn. Teachers manage pupils well, effectively promoting a good working atmosphere that is both encouraging and supportive. Lessons are lively and interesting and successfully capture pupils' interest, application and productivity. Although challenging, work is well matched to pupils' needs and all pupils are actively involved in class activities. Teachers introduce new ideas and skills systematically, sharing targets for learning and reminding pupils of the focus of their learning. By these means, teachers effectively maintain pupils' confidence and help them to develop well as successful learners. Time is well used, learning resources are readily available and support staff on hand to help and support pupils with questions or problems. Pupils, particularly those in Year 6 who are accustomed to the routines in the class, engage readily in discussions, work collaboratively and productively. This good quality teaching and learning underpins pupils' high achievement.

- 16 In Years 3 and 4, teaching is satisfactory and learning is satisfactory overall. A significant number of Year 3 pupils find it difficult to work effectively without the specific guidance of adults to help them with each step in learning and to reassure them. Although quite able, many of these pupils find it hard to organise, develop and apply their thinking because their capacity as effective, independent learners has not been developed in earlier years. These are important shortcomings that affect their achievement. Unchecked, many lose their concentration and do not achieve what they have been set. Year 4 pupils know what is expected of them and try hard, although some are easily distracted by younger pupils. Teachers are clear about the learning objectives for their lessons and use a range of different methods to capture and develop pupils' interest.
- 17 Although much of the teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 are unsatisfactory. Formal monitoring by the headteacher and local authority officers during the last school year identified unsatisfactory and poor teaching over a period of time. This has a continuing, adverse effect on pupils' learning and achievement. Expectations of what pupils achieve have not been high enough and pupils are too easily satisfied with low standards of work. Pupils' capacity to work independently has not been developed and they find difficulty in making decisions and choices.
- 18 At present, two part-time teachers are taking the reception and Years 1 and 2 class. Both are new to this age range and they lack experience of the Foundation Stage areas of learning and the curriculum for Years 1 and 2. They and the learning support staff are working successfully to establish good relationships with their pupils. However, these new teachers do not have a suitable structure or the learning resources to underpin their work with children in the Foundation Stage. In the absence of suitable assessment information, they are not always successful in tailoring work to the particular needs of pupils in Years 1 and 2. Learning objectives are not specific enough and teachers sometimes introduce too many ideas for pupils to cope with. The local education authority has promised support and the headteacher is providing exemplars of good practice.
- 19 Teaching in small withdrawal groups of pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils work from clear targets set to improve their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Work is well managed and progress is monitored and shared with pupils. Pupils can see the progress they have made.
- 20 The headteacher has introduced effective procedures for collecting information about pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science, using statutory and non-statutory test results and half-termly assessment tasks to help teachers track pupils' progress. There are similarly good procedures in art and design and in information and communication technology. In other subjects, assessment procedures are being developed along similar lines.
- 21 The gathering and use of assessment information is good in Years 5 and 6. However, information from Years 1 and 2 is incomplete and this affects teachers' planning for different levels of work to meet individual needs, particularly for those pupils in the present Year 2 where gaps in prior learning are slowing progress. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is weak because there is no effective record of children's progress towards the early learning goals.

- 22 Statutory assessments take place at the end of Years 2 and 6. External moderation has identified concerns about the accuracy of teacher assessment in the 2004 statutory tests at the end of Year 2.
- 23 Across the school, pupils' work is regularly marked but teachers do not consistently provide comments that point the way forward for pupils. Homework is set regularly, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Through homework diaries pupils, parents and staff keep each other informed of the work done. As a result, homework makes a useful contribution to pupils' learning.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** in Years 3 to 6 but **unsatisfactory** in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Enrichment activities are **good**. Accommodation and learning resources are **good** in Years 3 to 6, **satisfactory** in Years 1 and 2 but **unsatisfactory** in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for enrichment activities, sport and arts is good.
- Planning in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 does not meet pupils' learning needs.
- The accommodation and resources in the Foundation Stage are inadequate for the effective delivery of the curriculum.
- The outdoor swimming pool is an asset.

Commentary

- 24 There are schemes of work in place for all National Curriculum subjects and religious education, and statutory requirements are met. The school's recently adopted formats for yearly and termly planning provide a good basis for effective lesson planning. However, the curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory. The recommended curriculum for the Foundation Stage has not been effectively established and the school acknowledges that, over time, the implementation of the numeracy and literacy strategies in this class has been unsatisfactory.
- 25 In the Foundation Stage, there is a lack of established working plans, schemes and learning resources. Teachers are unclear about planning a relevant and appropriate content for young children. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have sufficiently developed learning skills to cope with the demands expected for this age group. Working in a mixed-age class, with inadequate indoor and outdoor accommodation for the reception children, is adding to teachers' difficulties. Pupils are not adequately prepared for the next stage of their education.
- 26 The curriculum for the Years 3 to 6 classes is secure and offers both breadth and balance. The school has improved the imbalance of time between the core and non-core subjects, such as art and history, since the last inspection. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are in place in these year groups but Year 3 pupils have limited understanding of the structure of these lessons. Staff are still at the stage of assessing how they can adapt the strategies to help improve pupils' underachievement, particularly in the basic skills. In Years 5 and 6, the curriculum is well focused and addresses pupils' needs effectively, particularly in the development of their investigative, experimental and

enquiry skills. Pupils' curricular experiences, especially in Years 5 and 6, prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

- 27 The provision for curriculum enrichment is good. Pupils benefit from a range of visits and visitors who support and enrich their learning. Recent visitors include a Shakespeare drama group and musicians who enhanced pupils' creative development. Links with the local Sports College offer good sporting opportunities, including skills development across Years 5, 6 and 7. Parents provide invaluable support for football, cricket and chess clubs.
- 28 All groups are included in the life and work of the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Work in small groups outside the classroom is well targeted to the specific needs of these pupils. They make good progress with their basic skills in literacy and numeracy because the work is well matched to their needs and they gain in confidence. Groups for literacy match the timing for literacy lessons in class but there are occasions when pupils miss parts of their class numeracy lessons.
- 29 There are sufficient qualified teachers to deliver the curriculum. Due to the long-term absence of the only full-time permanent teacher (other than the headteacher), the school is employing some teachers on temporary contracts. Many are at the start of their careers and do not necessarily have experience of the age groups they are currently working with. The school employs a suitable number of experienced classroom support staff who provide a good level of support to pupils. All staff work well together and share a strong commitment to helping pupils achieve well.
- 30 The school grounds are spacious and well used. The caretaker cares well for the school. The arrangements made for the maintenance of the swimming pool and its use, both during the school day and by families at other times, are a model of good practice. The accommodation and learning resources for Years 5 and 6 are good. However, the accommodation and learning resources for children in the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory and this affects teaching, learning and achievement. The ICT provision has recently been updated to link all computers in the school.

Care, guidance and support

The quality of care and welfare is **good** and pupils' guidance and support are **satisfactory**. Pupils are closely involved in all aspects of the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Arrangements for first aid and child protection are good.
- Teachers support pupils' personal development effectively.
- Assessment arrangements are good in Years 5 and 6 but unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
- Parents are happy with the school's induction programme.

Commentary

- 31 The school provides a caring Christian environment where pupils are valued as individuals. Child protection procedures are well understood by staff and a programme of further training is established.
- 32 The first aid arrangements are very good and all staff have up-to-date first aid qualifications. First aid boxes are appropriately stocked and sited and the procedures for

informing parents of any accidents and the treatment given are effective. The school has a suitable and comprehensive health and safety policy. Regular risk assessments are carried out and all necessary safety checks on equipment are up to date. Most parents, in reply to the questionnaire, say they are happy with the school's induction programme for new pupils. They say that this enables children to settle quickly and feel secure in their new environment.

- 33 The personal development of pupils is effectively monitored through discussion and carefully planned circle time. Pupils' views are formally obtained through consultation with the school council and informally as staff and pupils talk in lessons and daily in the playground. Pupils are pleased that their views are valued and taken on board. There are effective assessment procedures in English, mathematics, science and ICT and these are in the process of being extended to other subjects. The implementation of these procedures is good in Years 5 and 6 but has been unsatisfactory Years 1 and 2 and in the Foundation Stage where assessment does not track children's progress in the areas of learning leading to the early learning goals.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good** links with parents and works **very effectively** with the local community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are provided with an informative monthly newsletter.
- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- Parents' views are obtained effectively through a monthly forum.
- The school has very constructive links with the local high school and federation of schools.
- The school is much valued by the local community.

Commentary

- 34 As found at the time of the previous inspection, the information provided by the school for parents is very good. They receive an informative monthly newsletter and the school prospectus is detailed. Pupils' annual progress reports are clear about what they can do, with clear targets set for improvement and information provided about the ways in which their parents might help them at home.
- 35 Most parents think very well of the school and are comfortable about approaching staff with any questions or concerns. They feel their opinions are listened to and valued at the monthly parent forum. The school maintains strong links with parents of pupils with special educational needs, who share their children's learning targets and are kept well aware of their progress.
- 36 Parents appreciate that they are welcome in school at any time. They assist in school with swimming and clubs. This help is much valued by staff. Overall, parents and pupils are happy with the amount of homework set. Good use is made of homework diaries to keep parents informed and allow them to support their children's learning at home. The home/school agreement supports the school policies on attendance, behaviour and homework. The parent/teacher association organises fundraising events to support the school, including a twice-monthly hot lunch for pupils. In excess of £6,500 was raised by

the parent/teacher association with some of this money going towards the cost of improving the school's ICT provision, reflecting a tremendous effort by 33 families and the community.

- 37 The school has very good links within the local community. Parishioners are invited to school services in the parish church and from time to time pupils take part in Sunday celebrations such as those on Mothering Sunday. School news and events are regularly included in the parish magazine. The school has developed productive links with the local dairy and pupils have designed ice cream packaging as part of their design and technology studies.
- 38 The school has very good links with other nearby schools through the local federation of schools. Pupils are able to use the facilities of Ansford High School for sport and science. Transfer arrangements at the end of Year 6 are well developed, with close liaison between staff and visits by pupils. The high school also effectively supports ICT lessons by the provision of a technician to work in the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. Governance, the leadership of other staff and the effectiveness of management are **satisfactory overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's very clear vision and commitment provides a strong foundation for moving the school forward.
- Through effective self-evaluation, the school has identified its shortcomings and set itself challenging targets to improve.
- The governing body is developing its role as the school's *critical friend* but is not sufficiently well informed by performance data.
- Day-to-day routines are clearly established and the school runs smoothly.

Commentary

- 39 The headteacher has been in the school for five terms. She has a very firm grasp of what needs to be done to raise standards and how to achieve this. Pupils' success in the 2004 Year 6 national tests reflects the high quality of her classroom practice. Her commitment to pupils achieving the best possible standards provides an effective model for staff, many of whom are at the beginning of their teaching careers. The headteacher manages the school effectively; she successfully promotes a calm and friendly working atmosphere and staff, pupils and parents alike find her approachable. Staff speak well of the professional support and guidance they receive from the headteacher. The recently completed staff handbook is of high quality and provides clear guidance for new staff.
- 40 Since the appointment of the present headteacher in January 2003, there has been good, and some very good, progress in key areas such as the standards reached by Year 6 pupils in the 2004 National Curriculum tests. The quality of care provided by the school is once again good and links with parents, the community and other schools strengthened. The school has now successfully addressed the key issues identified in the previous report relating to the amount of teaching time and improvements to the school development plan. The impact of the efforts made in the last five terms to develop the Foundation Stage provision and raise standards in teaching, learning and achievement in Years 1 and 2 have yet to be reflected in standards at the end of Year 2. Many recent

improvements have been directed at 'catching up' to where the school was at the time of the last inspection.

- 41 Administrative staff undertake their duties well, enabling the headteacher and other teaching staff to focus on their classroom duties. Arrangements for the performance management of teachers are effective in identifying their professional needs and development. There has been a significant turnover of staff lately, mainly due to the reduction in the number of support staff and the absence of a teacher, which has necessitated the engagement of temporary teachers at short notice. The school has tried its best in difficult circumstances to minimise the disruption to pupils' education.
- 42 The school's self-evaluation document effectively identifies its strengths and weaknesses, particularly those in teaching, learning and standards in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. The headteacher has taken proper action to try to address these shortcomings. She has worked effectively with the local authority to support staff involved and to seek a resolution. The school improvement plan successfully outlines how priorities for development will be addressed. The plan's format clearly identifies priorities, objectives and includes information about timescales, responsibilities and costings. The current priorities suitably reflect the school's needs. The school has addressed the shortcomings identified in the last inspection report in its developmental planning.
- 43 The leadership and management of subject leaders are satisfactory overall. The headteacher maintains an effective overview of subject development and has put in place effective arrangements to develop portfolios of work to guide the development of pupils' skills as they move through the school. New subject leaders are keen to develop their responsibilities and recently qualified staff are being carefully eased into their new roles. Although at an early stage, subject portfolios are being successfully developed. Improved standards of work and rising levels of achievement bear witness to the success of the strategies adopted to develop teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6. Inspection evidence indicates that the headteacher and governors are taking the necessary and effective action to deal with the ineffectual leadership and management of the Foundation Stage which have proved a barrier to improvement.
- 44 The headteacher capably co-ordinates the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs and is ably supported by a learning support assistant who has expertise and commitment. The school fulfils statutory requirements and has good support from the special needs governor. At present, specific support for special needs pupils is less effective in class than in small groups because teachers' planning does not consistently and clearly identify specific work for pupils who are underachieving.
- 45 Members of the governing body are supportive of the school and they understand the challenges it faces. In previous years, they have relied too much on others to inform them about the work of the school. That is now changing and, under the guidance of the headteacher, they are forging useful links with classes and subject leaders. However, their use of performance data in monitoring the work of the school is underdeveloped. A rolling programme for the review and adoption of policies is now in place and, as a result, all statutory requirements are met.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	231,759	Balance from previous year	2,040
Total expenditure	218,752	Balance carried forward to the next	15,047
Expenditure per pupil	3,906		

- 46 The school has effective financial procedures systems in place and actively seeks *best value* in its purchases. The school's reserves are broadly in line with recommended levels and there are effective plans for their use in the current financial period. The school's income and expenditure per pupil are significantly higher than the national average. Although standards at the end of Year 6 have improved, standards of work and pupils' achievement are not high enough in the Foundation Stage or at the end of Year 2. Consequently, the school does not provide satisfactory value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are good, children are well cared for and are happy to come to school.
- Standards of teaching, learning and achievement are not high enough.
- Planning for the Foundation Stage curriculum is not in place.
- Teachers' questioning is good and they value and encourage the children's contributions.
- Assessment procedures are weak and work is not well matched to children's needs.
- The indoor and outdoor accommodation and learning resources are inadequate for an effective Foundation Stage curriculum.
- There are insufficient opportunities for children to develop learning through incidental work and structured play.

Commentary

- 47 The school's provision for children in the Foundation Stage is within a mixed-age class of reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. At present, five children attend the reception class on a part-time basis. Most children enter school with above average skills and experiences. The present staffing includes two part-time teachers and a learning support assistant. Although committed and enthusiastic, the new teaching staff lack experience and expertise in the Foundation Stage. Teachers work hard but are not yet building effectively upon children's good skills learned at home. Their understanding and planning for the areas of learning are not yet clear enough to provide structure and guidance to help them guide children's next steps in learning, particularly through incidental work and structured play.
- 48 Overall, teaching, learning and the curriculum are unsatisfactory. Monitoring by the headteacher and local education authority officers in the last academic year highlighted unsatisfactory and sometimes poor teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and its adverse effect on children's achievement. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory and the provision has declined since the last inspection. Children's achievement is unsatisfactory and many do not meet the national standards expected in four of the six areas of learning by the end of the reception year.
- 49 The provision for **personal, social, and emotional development** is satisfactory. Achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of the reception year, children reach the early learning goals in this area of learning. There is a good family feel about the school and links between home and the school are strong. Children are happy to come to school and, in the small sized classes, quickly form friendships. All children take a full part in activities and their behaviour is good. Relationships are good and the children have someone to turn to for help. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers make sure less confident children join in activities and they provide good models of fair play so that a sense of right and wrong is developing well. However, in whole-class lessons, teachers tend to direct learning and so reduce the opportunity for children to work independently and to make choices and decisions.

- 50 The provision for **communication, language, literacy** is unsatisfactory overall. The children do not achieve as well as they should in all aspects of this area of learning and, therefore, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. The development of children's speaking and listening skills is good but there are shortcomings in the provision for developing reading and writing. By the end of the reception year, children exceed the early learning goals in their language and communication development, but do not meet them in their literary (reading and writing) development. Teachers use questioning well, value the children's contributions and encourage them to join in discussions. Children communicate confidently and readily ask and answer questions. In this respect, they achieve well. Children develop sound pencil control, but opportunities to experiment with early, independent writing skills, such as making lists when shopping in role play experiences or labelling the contents of the Teddy Bears' Picnic, are too limited. Children are beginning to link letters with their sounds and to write their names independently. They enjoy sharing books and can recall the main points of a story, but experiences lack challenge for more capable readers.
- 51 The provision for children's **mathematical development** is unsatisfactory. Overall, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. By the end of the reception year, children are still working towards the early learning goals in this area of learning. They are not achieving high enough standards. Where teaching and learning are effective, teachers build firmly on what children already know and can do. The children count numbers to five and above, begin to understand *more* and *less*, and that adding on increases the total number. They sort and match by colour and size and recognise basic shapes. However, work is not always well matched to meet the children's needs and this means that they do not achieve as well as they could. For instance, children are introduced to money, but still need to explore the key skills of working with numbers and finding patterns through guided work and structured play. In a *buried treasure* search, work was too easy as children quickly sorted, matched and counted the animals they found. There are suitable experiences with water and sand available for children to test out concepts of *full* and *empty* and *heavy* and *light*. However, tight classroom accommodation and a lack of free-flow to outdoor experiences limit regular access to these activities.
- 52 Provision for **knowledge and understanding of the world** is satisfactory. Supported by a wide range of experiences at home, children achieve satisfactorily and reach the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children are very interested in finding out more about living things and teachers harness this enthusiasm effectively. Hatching chicks cause great excitement in the class and teachers focus successfully on talking about what is happening. The children note changes and successfully record their observations. They know that the Harvest Festival is a celebration where people give thanks for the safely gathered crops. Children find out about the uses of everyday technology and use the mouse effectively to help them to *dress teddies* on a computer program.
- 53 There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the provision for **physical development**. Children move confidently with others in the large playground. They use small apparatus and push, pull and guide large toys. Children are confident when handling small apparatus and gain in dexterity with their cutting and gluing skills in lessons. However, shortcomings in the accommodation and learning resources stop the free-flow of learning across different experiences and there is inadequate planning for the systematic development of skills. Children do not achieve well enough and, by the end of

the reception year, they are still working towards the early learning goals in this area of learning.

- 54 Provision for **creative development** is unsatisfactory. Resources for creative and imaginative play and for art are limited and impede children's achievement. The role-play area is restricted to a foldaway unit and a range of art materials, and tools are not readily accessible to develop skills. Children enjoy music. They work positively with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils and recognise high and low sounds. They can sing loudly and quietly and recall simple songs. They are keen to produce large-scale drawings of themselves and draw facial features and clothing with care. Although in these aspects of this area of learning, teaching and achievement are satisfactory, overall they are unsatisfactory because by the end of the reception year children do not achieve the early learning goals in all aspects of this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision is **satisfactory** in Years 3 to 6. It is **unsatisfactory** in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In both Year 2 and Year 6, standards in speaking and listening are above average.
- Standards in reading and writing are below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6.
- Pupils are not achieving as well as they should by Year 2.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make less progress than expected in developing basic skills.
- Effective teaching is raising standards in Year 5 and Year 6.
- There is a lack of challenge and expectation in some lessons.

Commentary

- 55 In the 2004 National Curriculum tests, results for pupils at the end of Year 6 were in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally and very high compared with similar schools. This was an able year group who achieved high results. Results for pupils at the end of Year 2 in reading and writing were well below the national averages and, compared with similar schools, very low (that is, in the bottom 5 per cent of schools) in reading and writing. Standards in Year 6 are higher than at the time of the last inspection and pupils are achieving well. However, achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and standards have declined since the last inspection.
- 56 Inspection findings indicate that pupils start school with at least average attainment in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress with their speaking and listening skills and achieve well throughout the school. By Year 2, pupils take turns in speaking, ask questions and make interesting observations about what they see and do. They understand instructions and answer questions clearly.
- 57 Achievement with reading and writing varies. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are not achieving satisfactorily because:
- previous work does not build upon the pupils' good potential;
 - pupils do not have a good grasp of the basic skills;
 - there is inconsistent clarity and expectation in planning work for mixed-age classes.
- 58 By Year 2, standards in reading are below average. Pupils enjoy exploring stories and are keen to learn. In general, pupils understand what they are reading, but lack fluency and use a limited range of skills to find out unknown words. Few use the whole sentence to make good guesses and some use letter names to sound out words.
- 59 Although standards in writing are below average in Year 2, recent work in books shows some improvement. Pupils move on from writing single words to simple statements describing their teddies. However, their lack of basic skills holds them back. Few pupils can spell basic words or use letter sounds effectively to help spell words. Handwriting skills are below average and pupils' presentation of work indicates that good habits were not established from the start of their school careers.

- 60 Achievement in reading and writing is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and good in Years 5 and 6. By Year 6, progress in reading is good and pupils capable of doing so attain the higher levels. Pupils speak confidently and competently and their good use of vocabulary benefits work in reading and writing. At all levels of ability, pupils are eager to ask and answer questions and talk to adults in a mature way. They collaborate well in groups in their mixed-age classes. Pupils explain their point of view clearly and add to discussions.
- 61 In Year 6, standards in reading are average. Pupils enjoy reading and many choose to read books voluntarily. The majority of Year 6 pupils read between the lines with deeper understanding and can skim and scan for information. Readers capable of reaching the higher levels do so. Pupils who find reading difficult have low self-image and their reading lacks fluency.
- 62 In the present Year 6, overall standards in writing are average. Capable and average pupils are writing well and shaping their ideas and thoughts imaginatively. More capable writers have the potential to reach the highest levels in writing, similar to those attained by pupils in the National Curriculum tests in 2004. Teachers and pupils are working hard to achieve these goals. Work is spelled correctly, clearly punctuated and presented neatly. There is limited evidence in the work available for scrutiny of pupils editing, drafting ideas and writing at length as they move through the school.
- 63 Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. In Years 5 and 6 they are good because teachers' expertise and good subject knowledge help to develop and improve pupils' independent learning. This is why pupils achieve well in reading and writing. In Years 3 and 4 teaching is satisfactory. Many Year 3 pupils find it hard to concentrate and apply themselves to the work they are set. However, teachers' strategies for managing pupils' learning are improving and this is helping them to work more productively. Scrutiny of last year's work indicates unsatisfactory teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory. Relationships were good and pupils praised and encouraged to do their best. As yet in this new school year, teachers' assessment of what pupils know and can do is not fully guiding their future learning.
- 64 The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The co-ordinator has worked hard to raise standards, particularly in Years 5 and 6. She has led a programme of professional training for staff to develop teaching and learning. The national literacy guidelines are now followed, but not yet sufficiently developed to ensure that:
- pupils' basic skills are built upon on more progressively from year to year;
 - assessment is used to guide planning for different levels of work in mixed-age classes.

Spanish

Inspectors sampled the school's provision. No overall judgements are made about this provision or the standards achieved by pupils as only one lesson in was observed and no long-term planning was seen.

- 65 Year 1 and Year 2 pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to learn. The lesson seen was pitched at the right level for younger pupils and held their interest. Teaching was good and linked to expertise in the subject. *Pedro the puppet* asked the pupils their names and they learned to respond confidently. All took turns in answering *yes* and *no* and to praise

each *other with very good*. Pupils achieved well because they listened and respond well to simple statements and questions in Spanish. Their attainment was above average.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66 Pupils' competence in language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 but unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Opportunities for pupils to develop reading and writing skills in other subjects are good in Years 5 and 6. By Year 6, good standards in speaking and listening are effectively supporting learning in English and in other subjects. In history, pupils compare and discuss changes in school life and skim and scan for information from old school log books. In other year groups, pupils have less chance to make choices about the types of writing (such as reports, poems or play scripts) used to communicate their ideas in English and in other subjects. In Years 1 and 2, scrutiny of work indicates missed opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory** in Years 3 to 6 and **unsatisfactory** in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 are driving up standards and enabling pupils to achieve well across the mathematics curriculum.
- Although pupils at the end of Year 2 have a broadly satisfactory knowledge of number, their knowledge of shape, space and measure and their skills in using and applying what they know are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils in Year 3 lack confidence in mental mathematics.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 require more opportunities to make decisions and work with practical equipment.

Commentary

67 The 2004 National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Year 6 were in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally and very high compared with similar schools. Scrutiny of pupils' work in the five terms leading up to the tests indicates significant progress in the quality and quantity of pupils' work and effective coverage of the curriculum. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, results were broadly similar to the national average, but well below the average for similar schools.

68 Inspection findings indicate that standards are above average in Year 6 but below average in Year 2. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 but unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In Years 5 and 6 teaching and learning are good, with some very good teaching evident. Lessons are very carefully structured and delivered at a good pace. Mental mathematics sessions are brisk and pupils' thinking agile. Teachers use questioning well to help pupils recall their earlier learning and focus their thinking on current learning intentions. This helps pupils to sort out their ideas effectively and take their thinking forward. Similarly, teachers make particularly good use of the closing part of lessons to check pupils' learning and lay down markers for future learning. Pupils say that they try to get the right answer the first time, but are not worried about making mistakes. Good support for pupils with special educational needs helps them to achieve their targets. This is why pupils are achieving well in this class.

- 69 In Years 3 and 4 the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and achievement satisfactory overall. Although they have a satisfactory understanding of number, many Year 3 pupils in particular lack confidence in applying this in different situations. Their knowledge and skills in dealing with shape, space and measure are patchy and many have limited skills in using and applying what they know in different situations.
- 70 Scrutiny of last year's work in Years 1 and 2 indicates a heavy emphasis on computation in number. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Their skills in making decisions or choosing from the available learning resources do not sufficiently support their practical understanding of mathematical concepts. This became evident in the one lesson seen during the inspection where the teacher had assumed that pupils' learning was further forward.
- 71 There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Some pupils with special educational needs have targets which include aspects of numeracy and they make steady progress towards these. The co-ordinator leads the subject effectively. She has correctly recognised the shortcomings in the school's provision for mathematics and is taking action to address these. The success of her efforts are evident in the results achieved by last year's Year 6 pupils. However, the impact has yet to work through by the end of Year 2. The school's resources are satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

- 72 Pupils' competence in mathematics across the curriculum is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 but unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Inspection evidence indicates that, over time, there has not been sufficient use of mathematics across the curriculum in Years 1 and 2. Teachers are now responding to this by, for example, asking pupils to sort, group and count different foods in science. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make satisfactory use of graphs to record information about muscle movement and tables to record temperatures. In Years 5 and 6 there is effective use of numeracy skills in geography, music, history and science as pupils measure distances, keep time, calculate the passage of time and record their findings in tables and on graphs and charts.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory** in Years 3 to 6 but **unsatisfactory** in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in Years 5 and 6.
- Investigative and experimental skills have not been sufficiently developed in Years 1 and 2 and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Recently introduced methods to support pupils' recording of investigative work are raising standards in Years 3 and 4.
- Pupils are inquisitive and keen to learn.

Commentary

- 73 Teacher assessments in science at the end of Year 2 in 2004 placed pupils in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. This is not borne out by inspection evidence gathered from scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils now in Year 3. Inspection findings are that standards are unsatisfactory by Year 2. Pupils have a sound general knowledge but their

skills in investigative and experimental work have not been systematically developed. Achievement is not high enough and standards have declined since the last inspection.

- 74 At the end of Year 6 standards were very high compared with all schools and with similar schools in the 2004 national tests. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates a concerted drive to raise standards by improving their skills in recording and reporting on the findings of their investigations. Inspection findings indicate that standards are above average by Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 3 and 4 and well in Years 5 and 6. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, there has been increased focus on investigative and experimental work. Pupils feel better equipped to read and interpret tables and graphs and more confident to use pictures to illustrate and interpret their findings. This is a significant factor in the improving standards since the last inspection and how well pupils have achieved.
- 75 Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory overall, with good teaching driving up standards in Years 5 and 6. In Years 3 and 4 teachers recognise that pupils' recording skills are too low and that they are not always confident to make predictions about the outcome of their investigations. Although there is evidence of much improvement in recent months in Year 4 books, diagrams and tables are still untidy, their planning is brief and their accounts of experiments short. More work is required to help pupils reach their conclusions and, on occasions, the timing of lessons is not sharp enough to ensure that there is sufficient opportunity for the outcomes of practical work to be identified and discussed.
- 76 The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory because pupils have not systematically developed their skills and understanding. The one lesson seen in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection was satisfactory overall. Staff and pupils worked well together but learning objectives were not sharp enough to channel pupils' ideas and ways of recording their findings.
- 77 Leadership and management are sound. The co-ordinator has successfully identified what needs to be done to raise standards throughout the school and this is reflected in the improvements achieved so far.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Inspectors sampled pupils' work. Only one lesson was observed so it was not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching and learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in all aspects of the subject in Years 5 and 6.
- Standards of work are broadly average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6.
- Recent improvements to the school's computer system have strengthened opportunities for pupils, particularly those in Years 1 to 4, to use and apply their skills across the curriculum.

Commentary

- 78 Standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and broadly average by Year 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily. They identify everyday equipment that uses micro-technology such as televisions, video players and music centres. Many, but by no means all, have access to computers at home and are familiar with various skills and

applications. In school, pupils demonstrate that they are familiar with the computer keyboard and independently select the required program. They use the mouse correctly to select and *drop and drag* items.

- 79 In Years 5 and 6 teaching is very good. Teachers' very clear instructions and good subject knowledge successfully guide and develop pupils' learning, enabling them to achieve well. Staff plan activities that not only appeal to pupils but also help them to combine two or more specific skills. This was evident as pupils imported a graphic from the Internet and showed a good level of imagination and they modelled and refined it. Pupils work well together and are keen to solve any problems they meet. Where necessary, staff intervene effectively to help pupils overcome hurdles
- 80 Leadership and management are effective. The school has successfully identified the school's needs and put in place an effective programme to raise standards. The coordinator and the visiting ICT technician provide good help and support for colleagues. A programme of work during the summer has significantly improved the school's learning resources in this curriculum area.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

- 81 Standards in the use of ICT across the curriculum are average overall in Years 3 to 6 but below average in Years 1 and 2. The school has recognised that shortcomings in its learning resources have led to many missed opportunities for pupils to collect and present data, particularly in science, geography and history, and for word-processing for drafting and editing writing in English and across the curriculum. Now that these shortcomings have been addressed, teachers are better placed to raise standards.

HUMANITIES

Insufficient evidence was available to make judgements about provision in history and geography. Inspectors observed a small number of lessons, looked at pupils' work and discussed aspects of both subjects with them. In religious education, inspectors sampled pupils' work, attended the school's Harvest Festival celebration, talked to pupils and observed one lesson in Years 1 and 2.

History and geography

- 82 In **history**, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils successfully use primary sources to find out about life in a Victorian school and make comparisons with their own life experiences. They begin to look at cause and effect, for instance how epidemics such as diphtheria affected attendance. In discussions, pupils show a sound knowledge of specific dates and events in Victorian times. The quality of teaching observed was good. An interesting, well planned and resourced lesson motivated pupils to learn well. Teachers build successfully on the pupils' interest in the history of their own school, which is communicated clearly in pupils' writing. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a sound understanding of the passage of time. However, a scrutiny of last year's work indicates that their historical knowledge and skills have not been systematically developed and this is holding back standards.
- 83 In **geography**, pupils in Years 3 and 4 study a settlement in Africa. They identify reasons for its development and begin to make geographical judgements about what sort of place it is. Pupils use atlases to identify specific locations on a map of Africa and Year 4 pupils

show a growing understanding of geographical terms such as *settlement*, *country* and *continent*. The teaching observed was satisfactory. Teachers had sound subject knowledge and successfully used African greetings and music to enhance learning. However, a necessary focus on a small minority of boys who behaved unsatisfactorily checked the flow of learning for other pupils and hindered progress. In discussion, pupils in Years 5 and 6 demonstrate their skills in mapping routes by train and road from the school. Using the correct vocabulary, they accurately recall and name physical features from their recent train journey to Weymouth. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 provide accurate directions around the school, but a scrutiny of last year's work shows that their geographical skills have not been systematically developed and this is holding back standards.

- 84 Leadership and management are satisfactory in both subjects. History and geography follow a cycle of provision using nationally agreed schemes of work. Although both subject leaders have only just taken up their responsibilities, they are enthusiastically developing portfolios of work to guide and inform teaching and learning.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' learning through religion is developed effectively through celebrations in collective worship.
- Tackling too many points confuses younger pupils in lessons.

Commentary

- 85 Standards throughout the school reflect the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils write prayers and share them in assembly. They learn about celebrations such as Harvest Festival and make links between the goodwill shared at harvest and the plight of less fortunate children and their families in Russia.
- 86 Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, preparing for the Harvest Festival, made sound progress as they acted out the parable of the Sower. However, pupils found difficulty in linking ideas together when the teacher widened their experiences to include other celebrations such as Christmas. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 respond well to questions, demonstrating a good knowledge of current affairs and applying this effectively to what they already know about thanksgiving.
- 87 The Christian basis to study in religious education is evident in discussions with pupils. Younger pupils understand that Jesus was very important and that he was crucified. Many recall their favourite stories from the Bible, such as *Jonah and the Whale*.
- 88 The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The school has close links with the local church and ties with Africa which provide opportunities to find out about other faiths, values and lifestyles.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology, art and design and music

These subjects were sampled during the inspection. Inspectors observed a small number of lessons, looked at teachers' planning and pupils' work and held discussions with staff and pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of work seen in these subjects are above average at the end of Year 6 and average at the end of Year 2.
- Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 to 4 and good in Years 5 and 6.

Commentary

- 89 In **art and design**, pupils develop a good eye for pattern and sketching work shows that they systematically develop observational and drawing skills by Year 6. Pupils are familiar with the work of modern and older European artists and in Years 3 and 4 show a keen interest in samples of African and Islamic art. In Years 1 and 2 pupils satisfactorily identify and mix colours but there is insufficient emphasis on helping pupils to develop skills systematically and to make their own choices about tools and equipment.
- 90 Work in **design and technology** follows a national programme and provides pupils with suitable experience of designing and making in a range of different situations. Pupils' ideas show developing imagination and they work hard to address problems they have with their choice of materials or joining techniques. In the Years 5 and 6 lesson observed, pupils made good use of ICT to research and develop their ideas for wrapping paper. Previous work with the local dairy to design packaging for a new ice cream product successfully captured pupils' imagination and motivated them well to produce high quality designs. In addition, they played an important part in tasting the pilot products. Discussion with pupils indicates that they evaluated their findings well and made good use of skills from other curriculum areas in their work.
- 91 In **music**, classroom lessons are augmented by individual instrumental lessons. The school has a strong musical tradition and pupils enjoy singing. They sing tunefully, maintain a steady rhythm and follow an accompaniment well. Year 6 pupils successfully recognise different styles of contemporary music such as rock and love songs. They demonstrate a good ear for different and increasingly complex rhythm patterns. In writing their own lyrics, pupils show a developing appreciation of the impact of melancholy.
- 92 In each of these subjects, teaching and learning were consistently good in the lessons observed in Years 5 and 6. All pupils enthusiastically joined in lessons. Good subject knowledge and an emphasis on practical skills are successfully raising standards and enabling these pupils to achieve well.
- 93 Leadership and management in these subjects are satisfactory, with the headteacher maintaining an effective overview during the long-term absence of a member of staff. The school is developing useful portfolios illustrating pupils' achievements and experiences in these subjects.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 to 4 and good in Years 5 and 6, with good achievement in swimming throughout the school.
- Extra-curricular activities effectively enrich the curriculum for older pupils.

Commentary

- 94 Inspectors observed three lessons, one in dance and two in games. Standards are average in Year 2 and good in Year 6. The school reports that, by the time they transfer to secondary school, nearly all pupils can swim 25 metres unaided.
- 95 In dance, pupils in Years 1 and 2 clap, skip, jump and shake their hands in time with the music. They make sound efforts to link known movements, but find difficulty in working collaboratively to identify and develop their own ideas. In their excitement, they find difficulty in responding promptly to instructions.
- 96 In games, pupils in Years 3 and 4 benefit from their teacher's step-by-step instructions to help them improve their passing skills. Although many dribble the ball successfully, their footwork is weak and they kick rather than pass the ball. Year 3 pupils find it hard to work together, but those in Year 4 demonstrate that they are more disciplined and accustomed to routines. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have a good understanding of the effect of exercise and the importance of warm up and cool down. They persevere well to master and improve the key basketball skills of dribbling, passing and catching.
- 97 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 to 4 and good in Years 5 and 6. All pupils are involved in activities and lesson objectives are shared with them so that they know what is expected of them during lessons. Where teaching is good, it successfully reflects the teacher's secure subject knowledge and confidence. This leads to good demonstrations of skills and more opportunities for pupils to practise and improve them.
- 98 Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new subject leader is keen to raise the profile of physical education in the school through staff development. Provision is enriched well through extra-curricular activities in association with the receiving high school and through a residential experience for pupils from Years 5 and 6. Effective use of outdoor facilities and learning resources, particularly the outdoor swimming pool in the summer months, makes a positive contribution to the school's provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and in citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a good range of opportunities through the curriculum and the school council.
- Achievement is good in Years 5 and 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 to 4.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Visits, visitors and links with other schools enhance the provision.

Commentary

- 99 The school's programme for personal, social and health education is delivered in specific lessons, such as science, and across the curriculum. In addition, regular class discussion sessions provide pupils with opportunities for discussion and development. The school

council provides an important forum for pupils' elected representatives to play an active part in the running of the school.

- 100 In lessons, pupils discuss and reflect on important issues at both a personal and a wider level. The school's provision for sex, drugs and substance abuse education is effective. Pupils' social skills are developed effectively through their participation in the school council. Strong links with the community help develop a sense of citizenship and responsibility.
- 101 The school organises a number of visits and visitors from the community and further afield successfully enhance pupils' understanding of good citizenship. Specialist input supports the school's work on drugs education effectively and a programme of sex education is followed in Years 5 and 6.
- 102 Older pupils take part in a joint residential visit with pupils from neighbouring primary schools. Regular participation in sporting and other activities with pupils from other schools and the receiving Ansford High School makes a good contribution to pupils' development.
- 103 There were no specific lessons in personal, social and health education observed during the inspection. However, inspectors observed many instances, during lessons and around the school, where teachers effectively promoted and developed pupils' understanding and learning in this area of the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
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).