

INSPECTION REPORT

COTTON END LOWER SCHOOL

Bedford

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109446

Acting Headteacher: Mrs M Sharpe

Reporting inspector: Georgina Beasley
27899

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th February 2003

Inspection number: 246908

Full 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 category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	37 High Road Cotton End Bedford Bedfordshire
Postcode:	MK45 3AA
Telephone number:	01234 740100
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Walton
Date of previous inspection:	6 th – 8 th October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
27899	G Beasley	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Design technology Music Religious education Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equal opportunities.	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's standards and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning What the school should do to improve further.
19557	E Halls	Lay inspector		Pupils' welfare Health and safety Partnership with parents and carers.
4099	R Braithwaite	Team inspector	English Mathematics Geography History Information and communication technology Physical education.	Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development Quality and range of curricular opportunities including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Leadership and management.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cotton End Lower is a small village school situated just outside the town of Bedford. About 40 per cent of pupils come from the village, the remaining pupils coming from nearby Shortstown and Bedford. There are 61 boys and girls, aged 4 – 9 years old, organised into three classes. The reception class has eight children who attend full time and eight in the afternoon, five of whom have just had their fourth birthday. Overall pupils' attainment when they start school is average. Eleven pupils, a below average proportion, are identified as having special educational needs for a variety of behavioural and learning difficulties. None has a statement. Nearly all pupils are from white UK heritage. Ten are from other white or of dual heritage. All pupils speak English as their mother tongue. Eleven pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is about average. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds, which are broadly average. The school is part of an Education Action Zone (EAZ) set up to improve standards in a group of local schools. There has been significant turnover of staff and considerable disruption in the school's leadership and management since the previous inspection. The governing body has been unsuccessful in finding a permanent replacement for the previous headteacher who left in July 2002.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is currently giving its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Under the very good leadership of the seconded headteacher and senior teacher, both of whom are part-time, the school is now building effectively on the changes introduced by the previous headteacher who was in post for one term. Standards and achievement are satisfactory overall. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are improving in Years 1, 2 and 3. There are weaknesses in the standards of basic skills, information and communication technology (ICT), and geography. Teaching is satisfactory overall but teachers do not expect enough from pupils in their work and behaviour. The use of assessment to match tasks to individual needs is unsatisfactory across the school. Monitoring of teaching and learning is now in place, but there has not been time for the recent planned improvements to result in improved teaching and learning in some subjects and classes. Governors give satisfactory support to the school and are beginning to be more involved in the school's strategic development. The school is giving satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The acting headteacher and senior teacher, both recently appointed, give very strong leadership.
- Provision for pupils' social development is good and this means that relationships are good, and most pupils are developing good levels of respect for the feelings and values of others.
- The new governing body knows the school well and is getting to grips with the issues. It has a strong commitment to make the school 'parents first choice'.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics and writing in Year 4, and in ICT and geography across the school are below average.
- Standards in speaking, handwriting and spelling are not high enough.
- The school does not evaluate effectively how well it is doing.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the previous inspection in 1997 is unsatisfactory because the school has not tackled the key issues or many of the weaknesses identified in the previous report. Over the last two years, although standards in reading, writing and mathematics have risen by the age of nine, they have not been sustained this year in writing and mathematics in Year 4. Standards in ICT and geography are worse. No judgement was made about standards in PE, but pupils' attitudes in the one lesson seen were unsatisfactory, as was the case in the previous inspection, and resources for the subject remain unsatisfactory. The weaknesses in leadership and management have started to be addressed but this is a very recent development, and although there is a detailed management plan there has been little time for

the acting headteacher and senior teacher to implement this. Co-ordinators provide poor leadership and management in their subjects because they have been given no opportunity to fulfil their role. The governing body is now much stronger and shows a determination to improve the quality of education for pupils.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	C	E	C	A
Writing	E	E	C	A
Mathematics	E	D	E	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Children start school with average levels in most areas of learning. Their personal, social and emotional development, and speaking and listening skills are better than average. Their knowledge of letter sounds and mathematical language is not as good as some children. They make satisfactory progress in the reception class and, by the time they start Year 1, most are attaining the early learning goals, the expected levels, in all areas of learning. Their social development is better than these.

Because of the school's size, it has smaller than average year groups. Therefore analysis of the school's National Curriculum test results is not always reliable. There were 15 Year 2 pupils who took the tests in 2002 and this number is just about big enough for a secure analysis to give a guide on the school's performance. Results indicate that standards in reading and writing were average when compared to all schools nationally, and well above average when compared to schools with similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. Standards in mathematics were well below the national average and below average for similar schools. This is because higher attaining pupils did not do as well as they should. Standards seen during the inspection support these results in reading and writing, although there are weaknesses in handwriting and spelling skills. Steps have been taken to improve standards in mathematics, and changes to the curriculum, teaching and learning are ensuring that this year results are likely to be average. Standards in speaking and listening are average. Standards in science are average, and although they are slightly lower than the above average results noted in teacher assessments in 2002, achievement is satisfactory. Overall, achievement is satisfactory in reading, writing, mathematics and science, but unsatisfactory in speaking skills.

By the end of Year 4, standards are average in reading and speaking and listening. They are below average in mathematics and writing. This is because teaching in the mixed Year 3/4 class is not expecting enough of the oldest pupils and work is not sufficiently challenging. Year 3 pupils are doing much better and are attaining average standards. However, poor handwriting and careless spelling and punctuation are evident in much of the work. Standards in science are average. Pupils with special educational needs are supported suitably in most lessons so that they make similar satisfactory progress overall. Achievement is satisfactory in reading and science but although satisfactory for Year 3 pupils, is unsatisfactory in mathematics and writing in Year 4. Achievement in speaking skills is unsatisfactory in both year groups.

Standards in ICT and geography are below average. This is because of weaknesses in curriculum planning, and in teachers' subject knowledge and expertise. A lack of emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy skills in many lessons means that there are weaknesses in pupils' use of these skills in other subjects. No judgement was made about standards in PE and music, as too little teaching was seen and there was no other evidence available during the inspection. Standards and achievement in other subjects are satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Children in the reception class have good attitudes and come to school ready to learn. Most pupils like coming to school and are interested in many lessons. Work is not presented carefully enough.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall with some poor behaviour in some lessons by a few older pupils with behavioural difficulties associated with their special educational needs. On occasion, this has a negative impact on the behaviour of other pupils in the class with the potential to misbehave.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility when they are given the chance. They work well together on group collaborative tasks. Relationships are good and pupils have a good respect for the feelings and values of others.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils attend regularly and arrive at school on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Good teaching was seen in all classes and most teaching seen was satisfactory. However, examination of pupils' work indicates that it is only this term that all teachers have expected enough of their pupils. Assessment information is not used effectively, so pupils often do the same work, whatever their ability, and the needs of higher attaining pupils have not been catered for. Targets have recently been introduced but are not being used consistently to give pupils a clear knowledge of their own learning and what they need to do next to improve. Marking is conscientiously completed, but rarely gives guidance or challenges thinking. The quality of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs is inconsistent. Clearly detailed targets and support in Years 1 and 2 give suitable guidance to learning support assistants, so that they can ensure that pupils' specific learning needs are met in lessons. However, these are not yet precise enough for some pupils in Years 3 and 4. Consequently, there is still inconsistent use of behaviour management strategies, which is giving mixed messages to pupils with behavioural difficulties.

Literacy and numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily overall, although there are weaknesses in the development of speaking and writing in other subjects. Not enough emphasis is placed on developing presentation skills and expecting appropriate levels of spelling. Pupils in Year 4 are not being challenged enough in mathematics so have not made satisfactory progress this year. Teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory. Because teachers lack the subject knowledge and expertise, they do not develop pupils' skills or use ICT to support learning in other subjects. Teaching and learning in geography are unsatisfactory because there is too little emphasis on developing skills. No judgement was made about the quality of teaching and learning in music and PE.

Teaching is improving in other subjects and pupils enjoy the variety these provide. There is clear planning to develop pupils' subject knowledge but specific skills are not yet planned sufficiently well in all subjects. As a result of recent monitoring, learning objectives are clearly identified in planning and these are matched closely to schemes of work. This is leading to interesting lessons when pupils are motivated, and

they concentrate well as a result. Homework is unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4 as it often focuses on pupils finishing off work not completed in lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Some lessons are too long and aspects of some subjects are not taught regularly enough. Due to weaknesses in provision for ICT, the curriculum does not meet statutory requirements. Visits and visitors make a suitable contribution.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils receive suitable support in lessons with their reading skills. One or two pupils are not always included in activities because behaviour management strategies are not consistently used. Parents are not yet involved fully enough in the review of their child's individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development is satisfactory. Provision for social development is good, and this is leading to good relationships and good levels of respect for others' feelings, particularly at playtimes.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is good care for the pupils' welfare and safety. Assessment procedures and their use are unsatisfactory. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are unsatisfactory due to inconsistent behaviour management by staff.

Parents have positive views of the school and support their child's learning fairly well. The school has satisfactory links with parents and provides a satisfactory amount and quality of information.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The acting headteacher and senior teacher give very good leadership. The new management plan is detailed and outlines clearly appropriate priorities for improvement. They have not had enough time to implement this fully so it is not yet as effective as it could be. Subject co-ordinators give poor leadership and management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body gives good support to the school. Under the new headteacher, there is renewed commitment to improve and the new chair is creating an effective team of governors.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Poor. The school has only recently begun to evaluate its performance in a structured and rigorous way. Performance management procedures are not in place and do not support the development of teaching enough.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory, because the acting headteacher has taken urgent action to establish secure financial procedures. Best value principles are not applied.

Staffing levels are satisfactory overall, although the above average number of support staff are not used effectively. Resources remain unsatisfactory, as there are deficiencies in many areas, particularly ICT and PE. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. The reception classroom is too small and does not allow immediate access to the outdoor area, so this is not used effectively as a learning resource. The hall is small and cluttered and this affects provision for PE.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most parents agree that their child likes school and are making good progress.• Many parents feel behaviour in school is good and it is helping their child to become mature and responsible.• Most parents think teaching is good and they all think the school expects their child to do their best.• Most parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions and concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many feel that there is not an interesting range of activities outside lessons.• Some parents feel the school is not well led and managed.• Many parents think their child does not get the right amount of work to do at home.• Many parents feel they are not informed well enough about how their child is getting on and that the school does not work closely with them.

The inspection team does not fully support parents' positive views of the school. Behaviour in school is satisfactory. Pupils like coming to school and most make satisfactory progress. Teaching is satisfactory and expectations are not high enough. The inspection team agrees that there are not enough activities outside lessons. Leadership and management until recently have been unsatisfactory. Homework in Years 3 and 4 does not always support learning in lessons as well as it should. However, parents receive satisfactory information about the school and how well their children are getting on.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children start school with average attainment overall. Their attainment in personal and social skills are higher than usual and, as a result, most children are ready to learn as soon as they start in the reception class. They have above average speaking and listening skills and this helps them settle quickly into school routines and to follow instructions conscientiously. Their knowledge of letter sounds and wider mathematical vocabulary is below average. They make satisfactory progress overall and by the end of the reception year, the great majority are attaining the early learning goals, the expected levels, in all areas of learning. They exceed these in their speaking skills and in their personal, social and emotional development.
2. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 give a mixed picture of improvement over the last few years. Since the previous inspection, some aspects have improved satisfactorily and some have not. Standards in reading have gone up and down over the last few years, and in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 2 were satisfactory. This erratic trend is partly due to the small size of the year groups. Standards in writing rose significantly from their previous well below level, because the school paid particular attention to raising pupils' attainment in writing last year, and these are currently average. Standards in mathematics have remained well below the national average for a number of years, because higher attaining pupils have not been challenged enough to attain the higher level 3 required to bring standards up to national levels. Teacher assessments in science indicated that standards were above average because more pupils attained higher than average levels. This is the opposite picture to mathematics.
3. Inspection evidence confirms the results in reading and writing which are average. Although they rely on memory rather than using sounds to help them work out new words, most pupils enjoy their reading and can talk about what happens in a story. Although writing standards are average, there are weaknesses in handwriting, punctuation and spelling. Year 1 and 2 pupils this year are attaining average standards in mathematics. Analysis of last year's results identified a weakness in problem solving and use of mathematical vocabulary, and these have been successfully addressed. Strengths in scientific enquiry skills identified in the previous inspection report have been maintained and this ensures standards remain average in science. Standards are lower this year because not so many pupils are attaining above average standards. These standards represent satisfactory achievement in reading, writing, mathematics and science this year.
4. Standards in Years 3 and 4 give a mixed picture. The tracking of individual pupils' progress by the school and EAZ during the previous two years shows that pupils made good progress in English and mathematics in Years 3 and 4 because of good teaching. Currently standards and progress in Year 4 are average in reading and pupils are developing these skills appropriately. They are below average in writing and mathematics. Assessment information is not used as effectively as it could be, and pupils' actual levels of attainment have not been used as a basis to match work to their needs. Therefore much of the work is identical and pupils in Year 4 are not being challenged enough. Year 3 pupils in the mixed Year 3/4 class are doing the same work and have risen to the challenges, so are attaining broadly average standards. There are still weaknesses in the quality of writing in both year groups. The work is untidy in its presentation, handwriting skills are poor and although pupils know how to spell, words are often spelt incorrectly. The teacher does not maintain high enough expectations of pupils to always do their best, and because targets are relatively new and not always referred to, pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of what is expected and what they need to do to improve. Standards in science are average. Pupils continue to develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and processes due to the way learning is presented in interesting and practical ways. Therefore, achievement for all pupils, including those from dual heritage, is satisfactory in

reading and science, and unsatisfactory in writing and mathematics. Achievement in pupils' speaking skills across the school is unsatisfactory, as pupils do not maintain the above average levels they have when they start school.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. Most receive suitable support from learning support assistants to help them focus on particular skills, and this helps them attain appropriate levels of attainment in most subjects. This is particularly evident in Years 1 and 2 where more focused targets have been identified on pupils' individual education plans. However, a few pupils in Years 3 and 4 with behavioural difficulties associated with their special educational needs are not achieving as well as they should. Individual targets in their education plans are still too broad and do not give sufficient guidance on how to manage their behaviour. Therefore they are often given too much freedom to decide for themselves whether to take part in lessons, and effectively exclude themselves from learning. While alternative activities are suitable, these do not always focus on the subject being taught and therefore these pupils miss valuable learning in some subjects. One gifted pupil who is taught alongside older pupils is making satisfactory gains compared to assessments when he started school.
6. Standards of literacy and numeracy are as expected with weaknesses in specific skills. There has been recent improvement in recording work in science and design and technology. However, worksheets, which expect pupils to complete sentences with one-word answers, are used too much for recording in history and RE, especially in Years 3 and 4. Although some examples were seen, pupils have too few planned opportunities to use their speaking skills to explain their thinking and talk about their work in many lessons. The above average standards they had when they started school have not been maintained and are average overall at the end of Year 4. Pupils use their numeracy skills in science to record measurements and to record their results in graphs and tables. There is little evidence that literacy and numeracy is being used to support learning in geography.
7. Standards in ICT have not improved enough and are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is due to teachers' weak subject knowledge and expertise, and too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and use computers and other equipment to support their learning in other subjects. Standards in geography have also fallen and are now below expected levels because there is too little emphasis on pupils' development of subject specific skills, including fieldwork and mapping skills. Standards in other subjects remain average. Due to the organisation of the timetable, little or no teaching and learning was observed in PE and music. Too little recorded work was available in these practical subjects so no judgement was made about standards. Although this picture reflects satisfactory achievement overall, there is underachievement in geography and ICT.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Children in the reception class come to school happily and join in with all activities. They respond very positively to the opportunities they have for work and play and get along well together in lessons. This was particularly evident in a movement lesson in the hall. Due to the range of practical activities organised, pupils are learning to co-operate, to take turns and share toys amicably. They play well together outside, inviting each other to play and join in with their games. These positive attitudes mean that younger children, who come in the afternoons, are welcomed into activities with enthusiasm. These attitudes are similar to those reported in the previous inspection and reflect good focus on developing the children's social skills.
9. As at the time of the previous inspection, in other classes, the great majority of the pupils respond positively when lessons capture and retain their interest, and challenge them. Most pupils are keen to answer questions and enjoy the opportunity to celebrate their good work through a 'golden award' in assemblies. Collecting minutes for 'Golden Time' is a particular favourite. Many pupils listen carefully in most lessons when the teacher is talking, and take turns to join in with

discussions. This good level of concentration is not always carried over into small group work. On occasions, work is not finished in the time given and is often presented in an untidy way, reflecting little pride in their efforts. Pupils with academic special educational needs receive suitable support from learning support assistants to make sure they are fully involved in lessons.

10. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. When pupils are playing outside at playtimes, they get along well and join in with each other's games amicably. Described by pupils as 'cool' and 'wicked' they enjoy taking turns to play on the new playground. In lessons, most pupils are well behaved. A small number of older boys act in a selfish and undisciplined manner, and are disrespectful to teachers and other adults. In some lessons, particularly those taken by temporary teachers new to them, pupils in the mixed Year 3/4 class tend to follow examples of bad behaviour, talking over each other, shouting out and sometimes not responding to what the teacher says. Lack of precision in targets, in individual education plans for those pupils with behavioural difficulties associated with their special educational needs, means there is too little guidance on how to manage their behaviour consistently.
11. Relationships are good. Pupils generally treat each other fairly. Although some pupils report some bullying, they were equally confident that teachers and other staff always dealt with their complaints quickly and effectively. There is no evidence of harassment. One boy was excluded from the school last year, and this was an appropriate measure to take.
12. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils are not yet in the habit of always doing their best, or taking responsibility for their own work and behaviour. These difficulties have been created since the previous inspection by the lack of a stable teaching staff, and the inconsistent leadership and management of the school. Pupils do however show good respect for values and beliefs of other people through their topic on world festivals, and in RE and assemblies, when they consider the faiths and beliefs of others. The celebration of Eid with pupils from a neighbouring school in assembly one morning was a good example of this.
13. Pupils have suitable opportunities to take responsibility for a number of jobs around the school. Representatives on the School Council enjoy taking responsibilities for decisions about how any money raised will be spent. They talked animatedly about the new books that had been purchased and the 'Hippo' bin on the playground. They work co-operatively on some projects, such as science experiments and art and design, and have produced some good work as a result. However there are insufficient opportunities to develop their own independence and initiative, especially in their learning.
14. Attendance is very good and well above the national average. Most pupils attend school regularly and arrive at school on time. There is very little unauthorised absence, and most that is authorised, is due to sickness or holidays taken during term time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching remains satisfactory overall. There are still significant weaknesses in teachers' expectations, and the use of assessment to match tasks precisely to individual learning levels. Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough in Year 4. Although most pupils with special educational needs have their needs met through additional adult support in the classroom, those pupils with behavioural difficulties associated with their special educational needs do not always get the guidance they need to help them take part in all lessons. There are inconsistencies between the quality of teaching observed and pupils' work. Inspection evidence shows that the good teaching observed in some lessons is not always sustained at other times, and expectations of what pupils can do are not always high enough. This is reflected in the poor presentation of work, the careless spellings and the very small amount of recorded work covered in some topics and subjects last term. The recently appointed acting headteacher and senior

teacher have identified these weaknesses. This has led to more precise learning objectives and, as a result, teachers are more aware of what they want pupils to learn.

16. The teaching of children in the reception year is satisfactory overall. Expectations are good, both of behaviour and their developing work habits. Therefore children behave well at all times and are developing positive attitudes to learning. Afternoon sessions are practically based and this helps younger children who join the class in the afternoons to join in happily with the activities on offer. This organisation helps all children to develop their independent learning skills, take responsibility and use their initiative. Each activity has a particular focus to make sure the children are learning what teachers have planned, and they are given freedom to choose for themselves those things they want to do. Consequently they are developing good levels of co-operation, and are learning to take turns. They negotiate with each other well, and share toys and equipment amicably as a result. Morning sessions are much more structured and this is helping the children develop suitable literacy and numeracy skills. However, when whole class lessons are organised, time is wasted while adults address individual needs. This is helpful to those children who need extra support, but others waste time unnecessarily on things they can already do. Adults work well as a team to make sure that the children are fully involved in smaller group work. Careful note is made of what the children can do, although this assessment information is not always used to match group tasks to ability, especially higher attaining pupils.
17. Teaching in Years 1 to 4 is satisfactory overall. Assessment information is not used effectively enough to match tasks to pupils' different abilities. There has been some improvement in Years 1 and 2 recently, with pupils working on different tasks in groups according to their ability. However, older pupils often do the same work and although this is appropriate for Year 3 pupils in the mixed Year 3/4 class, higher attaining pupils in Year 4 are not being challenged enough. Teachers across the school do not always expect enough of pupils. This is in the level and amount of work produced, and its presentation. Therefore some pupils are not achieving as well as they could. Homework for older pupils does not support learning in lessons well enough and often requires pupils to finish work that they could well finish in lessons. This is because time is not always used productively and pupils are not expected to work hard enough. Parents are right that it is rarely marked or commented upon in lessons.
18. Teaching of science is satisfactory. Continued focus on developing pupils' scientific enquiry through practical investigations, means that pupils are developing a better understanding of what and how things happen. They are interested in these lessons and this helps them to concentrate on their work. No judgement was made about the quality of teaching and learning in PE and music, as only one lesson was seen in PE and none in music. The teaching of geography is unsatisfactory, because skills are neglected and assessments are not made to match work appropriately to all levels of ability. ICT is not taught, nor identified how it will be taught, in lessons or in other subjects. Teaching and learning in other subjects where there was enough evidence to make a judgement was satisfactory.
19. The teaching of basic skills is unsatisfactory. Teachers' planning focuses too much on the content pupils will learn rather than on the skills they need to develop. Therefore, although basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily in designated lessons, the development of these in other subjects, especially speaking and writing, are weak. Planning does not include reference to how ICT skills are to be developed and therefore are not taught sufficiently well. There are also weaknesses in pupils' ability to use mapping and fieldwork skills in geography.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There have been recent improvements in identifying more precise targets in individual education plans in Years 1 and 2, and this is helping to guide support. Therefore some learning support assistants have a better understanding of what pupils are expected to learn in focused group work and, as a result, now give good support to their academic needs in lessons. Targets are still not precise enough for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Consequently, learning support assistants still need a lot of direction from

the teachers and when support is not detailed in planning, strategies sometimes break down with older pupils who have behavioural difficulties. This inconsistent management of behaviour, especially in Years 3 and 4 means a few pupils are allowed to disrupt learning in some lessons. The rest of the class show good attitudes at these times and on the whole, except for the PE lesson observed, ignore this and get on with their own work.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

21. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils of statutory school age are satisfactory. However, although the curriculum includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, it does not meet statutory requirements because insufficient time is spent on ICT, and coverage of the prescribed ICT curriculum is inadequate. The acting headteacher has already identified this weakness and has placed it as a high priority for improvement on her management plan. Although most other subjects are allocated adequate time over the year, many lessons are overlong. Time is not always used productively and when the momentum is lost, pupils often fail to complete their work within the time.
22. The school is generally socially inclusive, ensuring quality of access and opportunity to all pupils in its planning. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Suitable collaboration with outside agencies is ensuring that appropriate monitoring of achievements takes place. Due to inconsistent behaviour management, those pupils with behavioural difficulties do not always take part in all curriculum activities. They are given too much freedom to decide for themselves what they will and will not take part in, and therefore miss valuable learning. The school makes suitable provision for the one pupil identified as gifted and talented by enabling him to learn with older pupils.
23. The school's strategies for numeracy and literacy have been implemented satisfactorily and are beginning to improve standards. Opportunities are missed though to use literacy and numeracy skills across the whole curriculum, because they are not regularly included in teachers' planning in other subjects. The overall planning of the curriculum is biased towards teaching content and in some subjects neglects skills. This is one reason why, for example, standards attained by pupils in geography and ICT are below national expectation. There is also insufficient attention paid to improving pupils' speaking skills, and their handwriting and spelling. Although progress has been made, pupils' ability to use mathematical knowledge to solve practical problems remains a weakness, particularly in Year 4.
24. The provision for extra curricular activities is unsatisfactory. Many parents have expressed this view to the governing body, which has responded positively and placed it as a high priority on its short-term aims for school improvement. At the time of this inspection no clubs were being offered, although pupils have had opportunities in the recent past for football coaching, French and art.
25. The school makes satisfactory provision for drugs awareness, sex education and personal, social and health education. Opportunities are given for the youngest pupils to talk about their feelings in circle time and assemblies. Older pupils discuss strategies for dealing with quarrels, tensions and name calling in their relationships with others. This helps the pupils to have an enhanced awareness of their duty of care to their school and home communities.
26. The school has satisfactory links with the community. There have been visits to the school by local people to talk about the locality and their interests. Visitors include ministers from the confederation of Christian churches who take assembly, and representatives from local public services and organisations. During the inspection, the school nurse came to talk to older pupils about caring for their teeth. The 'red tablets' caused considerable excitement and provided an enriching experience for the pupils' learning. The school uses the local church field for athletics and other sporting events, and the school has strong links with the farm next door. Pupils occasionally visit museums, the theatre, the local church and the science museum in London. The school benefits from good relationships with partner institutions and is a member of a local cluster of schools. There are no curriculum links at present and these could be stronger. Links with the local college has provided a useful opportunity for parents to attend a computer course.

27. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural education is satisfactory. It is good for pupils' social development. Assemblies now play an important role in pupils' personal development and this is an improvement overall since the previous inspection. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements.
28. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and is strongest in RE lessons. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 reflect upon why people are baptised and why water is used in religious ceremonies. This is effectively linked with music and art. Younger pupils reflecting on the story of Noah's Ark, start to understand the symbolism of the rainbow and share promises with each other. They also have opportunities in personal, social and health education lessons to think about special places and feelings. Assemblies seen during the inspection offered pupils opportunities to think about how they can try to succeed, and prayers encourage them to think about peace in the world. However, there are insufficient opportunities across the curriculum as a whole for pupils to consider, reflect and wonder at what they are learning and creating.
29. Provision for moral development is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to care for each other. All staff throughout the school offer good role models for this, showing considerable patience in dealing with pupils' needs and difficulties. Pupils are now being actively encouraged through the school council to think about needs of the school and their immediate environment. They have raised funds through a matchbox competition and the Christmas Fayre, for both charity and for extra resources for the playground and library. They are helped to develop a sense of right and wrong through their class rules and are encouraged to share and take turns in their lesson activities. This is particularly noteworthy in the reception class. The children respond to the higher expectations, and the organisation of group activities in the afternoon provide good opportunities for them to share toys and take turns.
30. Social development is a strength of the school and is good. Personal, social and health education lessons promote social skills well in a supportive and reflective way. Circle time activities are particularly well planned to focus on school and world issues, and these give pupils good opportunity to talk openly about their concerns and any actions they need to take. Through carefully chosen stories, they are learning how to cope with any quarrels and that what they do will affect the outcomes of any confrontation. One idea emerging from these discussions is the planned 'friendship seat' to 'make sure everyone has someone to play with at playtimes'. Pupils enjoy celebrating success and are eager to gain minutes for golden time. Teachers strive to provide a caring and safe environment and, with the exception of 2 or 3 boys, nearly all pupils have good relationships with each other. They enjoy those opportunities provided for them to work together, and co-operate happily with each other in pairs and larger groups. They are keen to take responsibility for the many small jobs around the school, such as helping tidy the classroom, but as yet have too few opportunities and are not encouraged often enough to use their own initiative. Lunchtimes are social occasions when pupils chat in a friendly way to each other. They receive good support from adults who share these conversations, and this helps them to wait patiently for their pudding.
31. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school provides a satisfactory number of opportunities for pupils to experience traditional customs and these sometimes reflect the multicultural dimension well. They are helping pupils gain a good insight and develop a good respect for the culture of others. A very good example of promotion of the multicultural aspect of their education was an 'Eid' assembly led by the acting headteacher and visiting pupils from another school. Dressed in traditional Bangladeshi costume, teachers and volunteer Cotton End pupils joined in a traditional dance. Food and sweets were shared by all at the end of a transfixing experience, reflecting the importance of this occasion to Muslim culture. Pupils regularly celebrate the festivals of different countries. Currently the Chinese New Year (Kung Hoy Fat Choy) provided a suitable context for pupils to learn about this particular festival. Pupils are taught to appreciate their own culture by visitors to the school, although their own visits to the locality and wider afield are only occasional. Although provision to learn about western art culture is good,

there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to learn about the work of non-western or female artists. The range of literature and music planned within the whole curriculum is too narrow and does not develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of local or wider cultural traditions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school has worked hard to maintain the effective provision for the support, guidance and welfare of the pupils despite the lack of continuity in staff.
33. The school makes good provision for the welfare and support of pupils in a caring environment. Inspection evidence confirms parents' opinions that the school provides good support for their children, and is a caring place in which their children are happy and safe. Teachers and support staff provide good role models and mostly work effectively together. They have a good personal knowledge of individual children which they use to provide appropriate support to develop most pupils' academic and social needs.
34. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Parents are conscientious in notifying the school, and staff follow up any absences where no notification has been received. Punctuality is monitored carefully. The school involves the education welfare service where necessary.
35. There are good procedures in place for child protection and promoting the well-being, and health and safety of all pupils. Staff are very aware of the issues. The school has close links with other agencies and deals very effectively with any concerns they may have. The school has a suitable policy ready for when pupils access the Internet. The school is clean and satisfactorily maintained. Regular health and safety checks are carried out and the school promotes healthy and safe living through the personal, social and health education programme.
36. The school has established satisfactory procedures to promote good discipline and behaviour with a reward system that pupils understand and value. However, these are inconsistently implemented and reinforced to guide good behavioural habits. Guidelines for staff are inadequate, and result in unsatisfactory management and monitoring of some pupils with difficult or challenging behaviour in many lessons. The acting headteacher has implemented more rigorous systems recently but there has been little time for these to guide current behaviour of some pupils. Satisfactory procedures are in place for dealing with bullying or racial harassment, and any incidents that arise are taken seriously, and are dealt with promptly and effectively.
37. Induction procedures are satisfactory. Parents visit with their children before they start in reception and this helps settle the youngest children into school. Suitable transfer arrangements are made with the middle schools and these help achieve a smooth transition between the different stages of education.
38. Procedures for monitoring personal development are satisfactory. Although there are no formal procedures, adults know pupils well and this helps provide suitable guidance. However, the lack of formality means that there is too little encouragement for pupils to use their initiative and take responsibility for their own learning.
39. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. They are satisfactory in English and mathematics. There are no procedures for many subjects and this means the school is unable to track the achievement of individual pupils well enough. Information is collected when the children first start school and this is used to plan suitable tasks for the children in literacy and numeracy. While teachers collect extensive information about the children's achievements in other areas of learning, this is not used to match tasks to individual needs often enough. Individual progress in reading, writing and mathematics is tracked against

national curriculum levels as pupils move through the school. However, while this provides useful information on how well pupils have done, the school does not ask or answer the question whether they have done well enough. The development of particular skills is not tracked and this means that although the school is aware of poor handwriting and spelling skills, it has not done enough to put these right. Although the underachievement in mathematics at the end of Year 2 was identified after careful analysis of test questions, this is not whole school practice.

40. The use of assessment information to plan learning, which matches the needs of individual pupils, is unsatisfactory. Consequently, pupils mostly do the same work, often on worksheets and regardless of their ability. While some planning indicates different tasks for groups of pupils, this is usually by age rather than ability. Until recently, the school has not analysed or interpreted assessment information well enough to help provide a curriculum capable of developing particular learning and skills. Recent identification of a weakness in pupils' ability to solve problems in mathematics has led to improved curriculum provision in Year 2 this academic year. However, this lack of rigour in analysing assessment information has held back quicker improvement in standards in all subjects.
41. Satisfactory records are kept to show the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans are improving for pupils in Years 1 and 2 with more specific targets matched to their needs. This is helping to guide support from learning support assistants in lessons and making sure that pupils take a full and active part. Targets for pupils in the mixed 3/4 class are not yet precise enough to guide learning, especially for those pupils with challenging behaviour associated with their special educational needs. Therefore, this group of pupils are not always involved enough in learning in lessons.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school has worked hard to maintain relationships with parents despite the many staff changes. It actively promotes partnership with parents and welcomes them into the classroom to help with some activities. A computer course for parents is proving very popular and parents are putting their new skills to good effect through the production of posters and newsletters to publicise school events.
43. Parents generally have positive views about the school. Most parents comment favourably on the openness of the school, say they are made to feel welcome and staff are approachable. At the end of the day, many teachers take their classes to the playground and this provides good opportunity for parents to talk to teachers both informally and formally. The school has effectively implemented 'Home School Agreements'. A satisfactory range of opportunities is provided for parents to find out about the work of the school. These comprise of Friday assemblies, open evenings and parents' consultations evenings.
44. The quality of information for parents is satisfactory. Parents are kept suitably informed through regular letters and newsletters about school life. Satisfactory arrangements are organised for parents to visit with their child before starting school to find out about the routines and activities. The school prospectus and governor's annual report to parents provide suitable and current information on the school. Annual written reports to parents are satisfactory and provide information on pupils' progress and knowledge. Some have pertinent comments for improvement and targets to be worked on. Parents are appreciative of the opportunities they have to see how subjects are now taught, but these sessions are held during the day, which is difficult for parents who work to attend.
45. The parents' involvement with the work of the school is satisfactory. The active Friend's Association has raised significant funds last year to enhance the school environment and provide resources for some subjects. The parents' contribution to their children's learning is satisfactory.

Parents are encouraged to be involved in helping children at home with reading, spellings and other homework activities. The inspection team agrees with those parents who feel that homework is sometimes not relevant to work in class and is often finishing off work, which should have been completed during lessons.

46. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are not given enough information about their children's attainment and progress. Individual education plans are drawn up, but these are not always shared with parents. Consequently they cannot support their children's learning at home as well as they could. When appropriate, parents of those children who receive help and support from people outside the school are invited to attend review meetings to discuss their children's progress and future targets.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. The recently appointed acting headteacher provides very strong leadership and has very precise objectives for planned improvements in standards, teaching and learning. In a very short time, she has developed a comprehensive management plan, which outlines precisely what needs to be done to address the significant weaknesses in the school's management, and a good start has been made. The recently appointed senior teacher plays a significant role in this process. There is clear evidence that teachers' expectations are rising and improvements to teaching and learning are beginning to take place.
48. The new management plan addresses the weaknesses identified in the previous report about strategic planning. It has clear and appropriate objectives linked to an initial review of the school's performance. However, because there are weaknesses in the school's use of assessment information, priorities are not based on an accurate analysis of pupils' achievements. This is why improvement in management since the previous inspection is currently unsatisfactory. There is every indication that the acting headteacher and senior teacher have good commitment and skills to drive forward the necessary improvements. Improvement has already been noted in the leadership and management of special educational needs by the teacher responsible for this area, reflected in the more precisely matched targets in some individual education plans.
49. The leadership and management of subjects is however poor. Co-ordinators have not until recently been given the recognition, responsibility and support to fulfil their role. They have limited awareness of the weaknesses in standards, teaching and learning in their subjects. There is however a strong commitment to improve, and plans are ready to develop the role and to enable co-ordinators to lead and manage more closely what is happening in the classroom in their subjects.
50. Although an appraisal system has been in place for some time it has been ineffective because of a lack of direction from senior management and the governing body. The introduction of performance management has not yet improved the situation and is unsatisfactory. The governing body has been slow to agree targets for the succession of headteachers in the past few years, and respective headteachers have not fully agreed targets with teachers for improvement, especially in relation to teaching. As a consequence teachers are confused as to their targets and have insufficient opportunities to discuss and analyse their performance and development needs with senior management. Induction is satisfactory. There is a comprehensive handbook, which gives satisfactory guidance on procedures. However, there is no staff development plan to identify and organise suitable training.
51. The governing body is very new with many members joining at the beginning of this school year. They are keen to learn and the chair's commitment to make the school 'the first choice for parents' is driving the school forward at a much faster rate of improvement over recent months.

It gives suitable support to the school in terms of making sure that statutory requirements are met. Governors ask searching questions and are beginning to become more involved in deciding how the school will move forward. They have suitable responsibilities for looking at subjects and aspects and are aware of the weaknesses in standards, teaching and learning. They are seeking guidance from outside agencies to help them develop their role further.

52. In recent times the school has made unsatisfactory use of its financial resources. There has been little planning in order that major priorities for spending should be dealt with first, and until recently the school was not really aware of its rapidly deteriorating financial situation. The absence of medium and long term strategic financial planning has taken the school almost into debt. The acting headteacher, with external support, has now established a clear view of the school's financial state of health, and has instituted a moratorium on all spending until priorities are clearly identified by the governing body.
53. The school has been fortunate that during this time it has been so well supported by the grants from the Educational Action Zone, to which it belongs. This has enabled it to spend money on staff development, new reading books and extra funding for pupils with special educational needs. All these grants have been used appropriately, and staff have benefited from the opportunities to work with other schools in the EAZ. Grants to develop ICT resources have not been spent efficiently. The range and use of ICT remains unsatisfactory.
54. Although the governing body is beginning to look for cost effectiveness by securing goods and services 'at the right price', it does not yet consult with the broader school community on what the school should do, or what others think about proposed changes. Insufficient comparison is made of the standards achieved by the school as against other schools. Consequently, not enough thought has been given to how the school might improve its quality of education and standards, by applying the principles of Best Value.
55. The school's use of new technology is unsatisfactory. Standards in ICT in the school are below the national expectation, as is the use of technology across the curriculum. Some staff, especially learning support assistants, are using technology to help in planning, but this is not yet embedded across the school. Although day-to-day financial management of the school is satisfactory, technology has not been used effectively in medium and long-term financial management.
56. The school has had a number of changes and difficulties in staffing, especially at senior level in recent years. This has clearly had a negative effect on the continuity of the leadership and management of the school. There is sufficiency of teachers, although the responsibilities allocated to the one full time teacher are excessive. There is a higher provision of learning support assistants than normally found in a school of this size. They make a conscientious and hard working contribution to the life of the school, and are well liked by its pupils. However, their deployment and way they are used, are not always to maximum benefit to the pupils, or cost effective. Additionally, the school's priorities have not included sufficient training for them, particularly in behaviour management where there is an obvious need with some pupils.
57. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. Children in the foundation stage do not have easy access to the outside area for it to be used effectively as a learning resource. Their classroom area is too small, necessitating very small role-play areas and places where the children can sit quietly to read and write independently. The library is small and does not allow for independent research and browsing. The stock of books is adequate overall. The hall space is extremely limited by its size and use as a general storage area, and this affects provision for PE. Although there is no grassed area, the school has access to a local field. Some resources are not easily accessible and are stored in places and rooms all over the buildings and sheds belonging to the school. Therefore this does not support pupils' independence to select their own resources and take responsibility for their learning.

58. Although learning resources in English and mathematics are satisfactory, they are generally insufficient in a number of subjects where standards are too low. They are therefore unsatisfactory overall. Shortages in equipment identified in PE in the previous inspection have been alleviated to some extent, certainly for small games. Appropriate larger apparatus for gymnastics is insufficient. Resources in ICT, in spite of the recent provision of new desktop computers, are inadequate. There are a limited number of computers and range of software in classrooms to support learning in other subjects. Resources for geography and history are unsatisfactory. There are too few artefacts, maps, globes or appropriate textbooks readily available. There are no resources available to develop pupils' learning about 3D work in art and design. The range of recorded music does not reflect a wide range of cultures and therefore inhibits provision for pupils' cultural development.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the quality of education for all pupils, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in writing and mathematics in Year 4 by:
 - Raising teachers' expectations about the level and amount of work pupils can do.
 - Using assessment information to match tasks to prior learning in order to provide more challenge for higher attaining pupils.
(Paragraph Nos. 4, 15, 17, 40, 72, 75 and 78)

- (2) Raise standards in ICT and geography by:
 - Identifying the skills pupils are to learn in both subjects.
 - Teaching ICT and geography skills in lessons.
 - Developing assessment information to inform the school about pupils' achievements.
 - Improving teachers' subject knowledge and expertise.
 - Planning more regular opportunities for all pupils to use ICT in lessons and other subjects.
 - Ensuring that statutory requirements are met in ICT through implementing a scheme of work.
 - Monitoring the standards, teaching and learning, and the curriculum more closely.
 - Improving resources for both subjects.
(Paragraph Nos. 7, 18, 39, 40, 73, 76, 80, 87, 91, 92, 94, 95, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 111)

- (3) Raise standards in handwriting, spelling and speaking by:
 - Raising teachers' expectations about the amount of work pupils can do in lessons and to expect them to always do their best.
 - Planning more regular opportunities for pupils to develop and use their speaking and writing skills.
 - Improving the quality of handwriting and standards of spelling in written work.
 - Identifying and sharing with pupils more focused targets, to develop a greater awareness of what they can and cannot do, and give guidance on how they can improve their work.
 - Using assessment information to match tasks to prior learning in order to identify specific support for pupils with special educational needs and challenge for higher attaining pupils.
(Paragraph Nos. 5, 6, 17, 19, 20, 23, 40, 61, 64, 67, 69, 70, 72, 73, 74, 91, 93, 97, 98)

- (4) Improve the way the school evaluates how well it is doing by
 - Implementing the school's recently developed management plan.
 - Empowering and providing more regular opportunities for co-ordinators to monitor standards, and teaching and learning in their subjects more effectively.
 - Using performance management procedures more effectively to focus on raising standards.
 - Putting assessment procedures into place to inform teachers, senior managers and governors about pupils' performance and achievements in all subjects.
 - Interpreting assessment information more carefully to identify what the school needs to do to improve.
 - Monitoring all agreed procedures to make sure all staff follow them and ensure all pupils take part in lessons.
(Paragraph Nos. 17, 39, 40, 48, 49, 50, 62, 78, 83, 87, 91, 95, 99, 102, 103, 107, 111)

In addition to the key issues above, the following areas should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improve the number and range of extra curricular activities.

- Improve the quality and range of resources.
- Improve the use of the accommodation.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

20

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	6	11	2	0	0
Percentage	0	5	30	55	10	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	4	53
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	11

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	7	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (83)	87 (67)	87 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (50)	87 (67)	93 (67)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
44	0	1
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	21

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	219929
Total expenditure	211962
Expenditure per pupil	3533
Balance brought forward from previous year	15830
Balance carried forward to next year	23797

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.8
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	61
Number of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	21	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	38	12	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	59	8	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	42	25	0	0
The teaching is good.	50	38	4	8	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	42	25	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	38	8	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	50	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	42	21	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	29	38	17	8	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	50	8	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	38	21	8	0

Other issues raised by parents

A few parents at the meeting raised the concern that their children were developing more negative attitudes about their own abilities. The pupils we spoke to had good views about themselves generally. The inspection team however agrees that pupils do not have a good enough knowledge of their own learning and therefore are not clear about what they can and cannot do. They do not receive clear enough guidance on what they need to do to improve.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. Children start in the reception class in the term following their fourth birthday. They attend in the afternoons only until the beginning of the term they reach five when they start full-time. They start in Year 1 in the September following their fifth birthday. There are currently 16 children in the reception class. Eight attend full-time and at the end of the reception year, eleven children will move to Year 1. The remaining five children will start full time in the reception class for another year. There are no children currently identified with special educational needs.
60. Children start school with average levels of attainment in most areas of learning. There are weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and understanding of letter sounds and mathematical vocabulary. The children make good progress in developing a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of letter sounds and this helps them make a positive start to reading during their time in the reception class. They make satisfactory progress to learn suitable mathematical vocabulary through relevant and interesting activities. They make satisfactory progress to attain the early learning goals, the expected levels, in all areas of learning. Their personal, social and emotional development is much better and many children exceed the expected levels when they start school.
61. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Expectations of their behaviour and involvement in activities are good. Therefore the children are keen to learn and take part in all planned tasks willingly. There are suitable procedures for collecting information about what the children can do in all areas of learning. Although these are not used effectively to set targets for attainment at the end of the year, adults know the children well and therefore intervene at appropriate moments to ask questions or guide them in their efforts. In the PE lesson for example, the learning support assistant made sure that the children were clear about what they had to do and, as a consequence, they all managed to find their own spaces and move safely on the apparatus. Some lessons in the morning are too formal and the children are engaged in activities, which require them to sit and listen for too long. However, satisfactory emphasis is given to the learning of the basic skills of reading, and the children are making good progress in this aspect as a result. There are enough adults working in the class to allow the children to learn in smaller groups, and this enables staff to match tasks accurately to ability levels in reading. However, there are some weaknesses in the match of work in mathematics to challenge potentially higher attaining children.
62. The two part-time teachers work well together to make sure they are covering different skills and knowledge. They pass useful information to each other at lunchtime so that they are both aware of any difficulties individual children may be having. However, the co-ordinator does not monitor the work of all adults in the reception class so therefore is not aware of the weaknesses in provision. There is no action plan to improve teaching and learning further and, while this is satisfactory and personal commitment is evident, there is no formal drive to make it even better. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The classroom is small and this sometimes inhibits the range of practical activities, which can be organised at one time. The hall is used when the number of children increases in the summer term. However, during the inspection, this space was not used despite it being empty for much of the day. There is no direct access to the outdoor area. Although the children use it every day to play, it is not yet used effectively as a learning resource for the whole curriculum.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Children start school with above average levels of personal, social and emotional development. They settle quickly into class routines and are ready to learn when they start school. Relationships are good so the children are confident and happy to approach the adults in the class for help, and

because of this they are ready to learn. The wide range of activities in the afternoons encourages the children to play together. Consequently they are learning the important skills of negotiation, sharing and taking turns. During PE they listen very carefully and always follow the rules sensibly. They follow instructions astutely and consequently put the apparatus away at the end of sessions very sensibly. They demonstrate very good behaviour, when waiting patiently for their turn on the apparatus and when watching each other complete the tasks. They are happy to join in with older pupils at playtimes. By the end of the reception year, all the children are attaining the early learning goals in this area of learning and many are exceeding them.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Pupils start school with average communication, language and literacy skills overall. Their speaking skills are above average. Role-play activities are well planned in the afternoons, so the children are developing vocabulary linked to their termly topics. During the inspection, they all played well in the hospital, taking details of each other's conditions and acting out the roles of patient, doctor and nurse with a good sense of reality. Their conversations are confident and self initiated. This reflects satisfactory progress and by the end of the reception year, they are competent and confident speakers, exceeding expected levels of attainment. Their knowledge and understanding of letter sounds are below average when they first start school. The day is organised so older children learn these basic skills in the morning. They make good progress in this aspect and develop suitable early reading skills as a result. By the end of the reception year, many are already reading simple texts independently. They all write their names independently because of their better knowledge and understanding of letter sounds. Although they are not yet linking these with the names of letters, many older children are beginning to use this knowledge to spell simple words correctly. Letter formation is not yet secure, because the children are given freedom to develop their ideas rather than writing skills. This means that there is too little guidance given to letter formation in writing activities. Overall the children make satisfactory progress in their writing to attain the early learning goals in this aspect by the end of the reception year.

Mathematical development

65. Children start school with average mathematical development, although there is a weakness in their understanding and use of mathematical vocabulary. Teaching is satisfactory. Good focus is given to the development of counting skills. Older children take part in a numeracy lesson every morning, and while this focuses on important skills, the activities are too formal and are not based sufficiently in practical play activities. Assessment information is not used well enough to match work closely to individual needs and to extend learning for the higher attaining children. Consequently some children who are able, are not always moved on to more challenging work soon enough. Their knowledge and understanding of shapes are presented in more interesting contexts. Their pictures of vehicles are detailed and the children can tell you that they used circles, rectangles, squares and triangles to make these. This reflects the suitable emphasis given to developing the children's vocabulary. Overall, the children make satisfactory progress to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. The children are developing a growing knowledge of different cultures through the range of well-planned activities to celebrate Chinese New Year, Christmas, Easter and Divali. Computer skills are satisfactory. Pupils know their way around the keyboard letters, although many still do not know the delete, spacebar and return keys by their name or function. Mouse skills are developing well. The children selected from a simple tools menu to write their own names as labels for their artwork. The names were written in bubble writing reflecting good levels of mouse control. The curriculum is organised into topics, and this links learning in a meaningful way and makes activities interesting for the children. They therefore concentrate well and stay focused on the immediate

task. For example, the current topic on transport has provided good opportunity for the children to learn about transport in the past. The carefully produced pictures of penny-farthing bicycles developed the children's knowledge about this mode of transport, and the physical skills of sewing when threading wool to make the spokes for the wheels. However, because the adults work with the younger children at this time developing early literacy and numeracy skills, there is too little adult intervention in learning specific knowledge, and planning focuses too much on what the children will do rather than on what they will learn. By the end of the reception year, due to satisfactory teaching and learning, most children are attaining the early learning goals in this area of learning.

Physical development

67. Physical development is taught well and pupils make good progress in their movement and fine motor skills. Planned opportunities to use scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and computer mouse, means that pupils have good levels of control by the time they join Year 1. There are weaknesses in letter formation. This is because the school lets the children write freely and, while this allows them to make satisfactory progress in their writing content, the skills of handwriting are not secure. In PE lessons, and when the children are playing outside, the learning support assistant is helpful and keeps a careful eye on the children, drawing them into the activity when she notices they are not taking a full part. During lessons, adults supervise closely what the children are doing, giving guidance and advice. This results in an increased range of movements, and an understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. The children move confidently on the apparatus and this is ensuring a growing awareness and use of the space around them. By the end of the reception year, most children are attaining the early learning goals in this area of learning and some exceed these.

Creative development

68. There is a satisfactory range of activities planned to develop the children's creative ideas and development. Their 'dream car' pictures show ideas, which help them to develop their imagination well. This is developed further through the well-planned role-play areas, which allow the children to act out 'pretend' situations based on real life experiences. Paintings displayed outside the classroom indicate that the children have freedom to express themselves and learn a range of painting techniques at the same time. No musical or dance activities were seen during the inspection, although planning indicates that these are organised on a regular basis. By the end of the reception year, most children attain the early learning goals.

ENGLISH

69. In the 2002 national tests for seven year olds, standards were average in reading and writing, and well above the standard found in similar schools. Although this was an improvement on 2001 results, standards in reading have gone up and down over the last few years. This erratic trend is partly due to the small size of the year groups. Standards in writing rose significantly from their previous well below level. During the past year, the school has focused on improving writing and spelling with some success. Standards in both reading and writing are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are average overall, however there are still significant weaknesses in pupils' basic skills of handwriting and spelling. Achievement at the end of Year 2 is satisfactory overall.
70. Pupils attain average standards in speaking, although some are capable of higher achievement. Although most pupils are articulate, they are not always encouraged to give extensive and thoughtful comments in lessons. Younger pupils, whilst eager to contribute, sometimes mumble or speak very quietly, although they are more assertive in group discussions and role-play. Older pupils, who talked with inspectors, are generally confident and have a good range of vocabulary.

In some lessons observed, they sometimes talked over each other and shouted out comments, subsequently not listening carefully enough to either their teacher or their peers. Listening skills overall are in line with expectations but are dependent upon the interest pupils have in their learning at any one time. Taking into account their above average skills when they start school, achievement in speaking is unsatisfactory.

71. Standards in reading are in line with expectations at both seven and nine and there is more consistency of attainment across the school than in the past. Achievement for all pupils is satisfactory. The majority of pupils rely on word recognition and picture clues, and tend to guess unfamiliar words. Very few attempt to use phonics and build words, which the school has been trying to promote. Most pupils enjoy reading, and their diaries confirm regular support at home and school. This contributes well to their progress, and gives suitable support to pupils with special educational needs. Nearly all younger pupils can identify 'author' and 'illustrator', and older pupils understand the use of 'content' and 'index' pages. Higher attaining pupils are given books, which challenge their understanding of a range of different texts. All pupils heard reading by inspectors, indicated that they used the school library on a weekly basis under adult guidance. The library is very small and in the main building, and although pupils enjoy using it, there is insufficient room, either there or in their classroom, for independent or small group work in reading.
72. Standards in writing vary widely, but overall are average except in Year 4, when they are below those expected. Standards had risen under a previous junior teacher, but there are indications that Year 4 pupils are not making enough progress this year. Work in books shows that there is considerable inconsistency in pupils' achievement, and that they do not always do as well as they should. Teachers have raised their expectations this term, which has resulted in a small number of pupils in Year 3 reaching the higher levels of attainment of which they are capable. Year 3 pupils, in the mixed Year 3/4 class, are therefore making better progress. Achievement in Year 4 is unsatisfactory. Not enough has been expected of the higher attaining pupils in particular, and they have not made enough progress this year. Although the school feels that writing has improved, which has been confirmed by tests, there is still considerable scope for further improvement. This is because although the content of pupils' writing in a variety of contexts shows some imagination and interesting vocabulary, as in Haiku poems in Years 1 and 2, there is little structure, and the quality of the handwriting, spelling and punctuation is often disappointingly sloppy and careless. This applies to their work in English and to other subjects across the curriculum. Although there are good examples of neat handwriting where pupils are learning letter formation and 'practising', this is not carried over into their creative writing or comprehension work. Standards expected of them are not always made clear enough by teachers.
73. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Although planning is generally thorough and conscientious, pupils often do the same work regardless of their abilities. All pupils have recently been set 'literacy' targets, but they are unclear as to why, or when they are to be achieved and reviewed. Good emphasis is given to developing reading skills and pupils use these skills regularly in English lessons and in other curriculum subjects. Written work is regularly marked. However, teachers do not always give enough guidance on what and how pupils can improve. As a result, pupils are given too little responsibility for, and have too little knowledge of their own learning as they get older. Expectations are too low, especially for older higher attaining pupils. Too often lessons are aimed at middle and lower attainers and the more able become bored and their work is below their capabilities. Although they are not always sufficiently briefed on what their contribution will be, the learning support assistants available in all English lessons work hard and conscientiously. When able, they give good support to pupils with special educational needs of an academic nature. This is especially so in Years 1 and 2 because targets in individual education plans are now more precise and give clear guidance on the support pupils need. On a number of occasions during lessons in Year 3 and 4, they were required to deal with a small minority of disruptive pupils in order to keep them on task and not distract the remainder of the class. This means that sometimes other pupils do not get the benefit of their expertise, help and guidance. Computers are

used only occasionally, mostly for word processing, but this is not a consistent policy and there is little evidence of drafting and redrafting of writing, or using computers for research.

74. The leadership and management of English are satisfactory. As a result of monitoring and identifying weaknesses, in writing in particular, the school has concentrated quite successfully on improving standards in writing and reading in the last year. Although standards have risen, the school knows that they could rise more with a greater consistency of approach and encouragement to pupils to take more responsibility for their own achievement. Resources are generally satisfactory and some good quality new books have been purchased with help from the EAZ. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and the school is building a useful bank of information on the progress of each pupil through the school. This information though, is not yet being used effectively enough in teachers' planning to match work to individual needs.

MATHEMATICS

75. In the previous inspection pupils' attainment in mathematics was below national expectation at the ages of seven and nine. In 2002, Year 2 pupils attained standards, which were well below average, and below those achieved by similar schools. This confirms a picture over several years of standards being low. This is partly explained by the fact that over time, a less than average proportion of the pupils achieved above average levels. This is not through lack of ability, because the same pupils achieved better in English and science. This situation is improving rapidly, because the school has identified where pupils lacked understanding, particularly in problem solving and using and applying their knowledge of mathematics in practical work. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in Year 2 are attaining average standards, and higher attaining pupils are being challenged to reach higher standards this year. Year 3 pupils in the mixed Year 3/4 class, have shown considerable improvement, and the standards reached in lessons and their work in books are now in line with expectation. Pupils in Year 4 in the same class, attain below average standards because work is often pitched to the average ability and, while this provides good challenge for all Year 3 and some Year 4 pupils, it does not provide enough challenge for the higher attaining pupils in this year group. Overall achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs is satisfactory, with the exception of Year 4, which is unsatisfactory.
76. In the mixed Year 1/2 class, work is aimed at different abilities and provides suitable challenge for higher attaining pupils. Pupils in Year 2 and several in Year 1 can identify the number between 23 and 27, can total 5, 8 and 3 and complete sequences of numbers in the hundreds. The majority of these pupils can identify up to 20 everyday objects that have right angles, and most can draw whole, half and quarter turns on a blank clock face. Work is aimed at their particular abilities and is sometimes highly challenging, although there is still evidence that some pupils have considerable difficulty in understanding written instructions in problem solving. Year 3 and 4 pupils understand and can indicate time to $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ past the hour, but have much more difficulty in working out minutes to the hour. Due to the practical nature of one problem solving exercise, some pupils were highly motivated and showed a good understanding of $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ turns and compass directions. However, the books of pupils in Year 4 last term showed they all did the same work for most of the time, and often work of an undemanding nature like counting on in twos, 9 take away 5, double 6 or fraction work in halves and quarters. In all year groups there is considerable evidence of number work, and some evidence of this to solve problems. There is little work in data handling and, except for pupils with special educational needs, ICT is used infrequently.
77. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In many lessons, resources are used well and this engages pupils and keeps them involved in learning. Pupils enjoy these practical lessons and listen well as a result. Due to recent improvements in monitoring, learning objectives are more precise and focus well on what pupils are expected to learn in lessons. Expectations however are too low and there is not enough demand for pupils to do their best. Pupils enjoy number challenges in the verbal work they do as a class, although the pace and effort they put into group and individual

tasks could be better. They co-operate well with each other and nearly all have good relationships with adults and other pupils. Learning support assistants generally work effectively with the pupils, although in the mixed 3/4 class, much of their time is taken up with the small number of pupils with behavioural difficulties associated with their special educational needs. Although marking is done conscientiously, there is little guidance as to how pupils can improve, so pupils do not have a clear understanding of their own learning levels.

78. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Standards in mathematics have clearly been unsatisfactory for the past few years because co-ordination has not been effective. Although there are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment, and steps taken to make changes to the curriculum as a result of an analysis of test results, the information is not used effectively to track and monitor whether pupils have made enough progress as they move through the school. Therefore the weaknesses in pupils' progress in Year 4 have not been identified. The co-ordinator has had little opportunity, nor the recognition, to monitor teaching, learning and standards. The acting headteacher has already integrated into her new school management plan the wherewithal for far more effective co-ordination in order to maintain recent improvement.

SCIENCE

79. Standards in science are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection. At the end of Year 2 and Year 4 they are average. Strengths in the organisation of learning through practical investigations continue, and this is helping pupils to understand more clearly what happens and how things work in their experiments. This means that pupils are achieving well in this aspect. Teacher assessments in 2002 indicated that pupils attained above average standards. This is because more than the usual proportion attained the higher level 3 last year, and reflects satisfactory achievement since they started school.
80. Pupils enjoy the practical activities they do in science and this is helping them to gain a deeper understanding of scientific processes. Year 3 and 4 pupils talked knowledgeably about their investigations of magnets and all knew that they stuck to some metals but not all. When asked how they would test which was the strongest magnet, they all came up with plausible ideas. The range of work in books indicates satisfactory understanding overall, although pupils' books show a recent and significant improvement in detail, levels of understanding and amount of recorded work. There is no evidence that ICT supports learning in the subject and this is a weakness in provision.
81. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are learning appropriately about how they should care for the local environment. They thoroughly enjoyed finding the types of litter they found in their lunchboxes and were amazed to find that the most rubbish was plastic, which could not be recycled and did not decompose. Although their understanding of these terms was not clear, by the end of the lesson they knew that the less plastic packaging they bought the better. Pupils recorded their findings as a tally chart and they were able to interpret this afterwards by comparing the length created by the different groups of tallies. The organisation of groups by ability enabled higher attaining pupils to think more carefully about the criteria being used to sort their rubbish and to represent this on a block graph.
82. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although there is evidence that this is improving. Teachers' planning focuses on the knowledge pupils will learn rather than the skills. However, because teachers' subject knowledge is secure and they know the pupils well, skill development is addressed through regular investigative work. They make sure that pupils are clear about what is expected, and that they learn through first hand experience and investigation where possible. Questions are focused to probe understanding and this makes pupils think for themselves about what they see and find out. Because lessons are interesting and organised to involve them in practical tasks, all pupils remain engaged throughout. Their concentration and

interest is reflected in the improved quality of individual pupil's recorded work in books this term. It shows pride in presentation and individual recorded ideas show that the learning needs of different ability groups are being addressed.

83. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are unsatisfactory. There are useful assessments to test the knowledge of pupils at the end of each half term, but there is no focused assessment of skills. There is no record of what pupils have achieved in this area, and therefore too little use is made of prior attainment to plan further work. Although the scheme of work is good, the school relies too much on the individual expertise of teachers in ensuring that pupils are learning at the right level for their ability. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new co-ordinator evaluates and monitors standards in the school by looking at books and talking to pupils. She has not yet monitored teaching and learning in lessons to evaluate whether practice is consistent. Her input however is evident in higher expectations across the school. The scheme of work makes sure that expected learning is covered and collaborative investigations means that the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' social skills of co-operation.

ART AND DESIGN

84. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and remain in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Achievement is satisfactory. Discussion with pupils reveals that there are not enough opportunities for them to learn about sculpture and modelling. However, their knowledge and understanding of drawing, mixing colours and appreciation of how artists create effects in their paintings are good.
85. Year 4 pupils talk knowledgeably about the work of Picasso and how his work with portraiture in particular has developed over his career. They know he is Spanish and that he is a modern painter. Their appreciation of artists and portraits has been extended this term through their study of Van Gogh. They compare and contrast the styles of these two famous artists and this knowledge is reflected in their own work reproducing the portrait of Joseph Roulin. Some contribution to pupils' social development is made through collaborative group work and this is developing well. However, although pupils have a good understanding of the work of Western European artists, their knowledge and understanding of other artists is limited. This does not help pupils' gain an awareness of different cultures.
86. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Work in books reflects that pupils have good opportunity to evaluate their work and make the necessary improvements. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils evaluated carefully how well they had drawn features on their portraits. This evaluation was used effectively by the teacher to develop pupils' drawing techniques. Consequently after a few weeks, the pupils' drawings of Henry VIII show good improvement in composition and perspective. The range of suitable activities enables pupils of all abilities to make satisfactory progress. This was reflected in pupils' adventurous choice and use of colour, and dramatically presented angular features, which accurately reflected Picasso's style. The combination of colour and design by higher attaining pupils was stunning. Sketchbooks are used effectively to try out and develop ideas before putting pencil to paper. This was reflected in Years 1 and 2 when pupils collected and explored bark and leaves, practising drawing the different lines they could see before completing detailed observational drawings of their chosen item.
87. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Standards remain in line due to the secure subject knowledge of teachers who follow the structured scheme of work conscientiously. There are no assessment procedures and no monitoring of standards, teaching and learning in the subject. Therefore the weakness in 3D work has not been picked up. Planned opportunities to use ICT to support learning are unsatisfactory. Resources are unsatisfactory as there is no clay or other materials to teach sculpture and other 3D work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88. Standards in design and technology remain in line with expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This reflects satisfactory maintenance of standards since the previous inspection. Achievement is satisfactory throughout the school.
89. Older pupils have a good understanding of the design process. They know how important it is to think about the purpose of what they are making and the order in which this will be done. Designs show a structured approach to making the different items, with clearly labelled drawings and sequenced instructions, recorded independently to reflect individual designs. This builds systematically on learning in Years 1 and 2 when pupils learn to decide for themselves the resources they need to make different things. Younger pupils are currently engrossed in producing a coat for Joseph and although the style of the coat will be the same, the ideas for its decoration are all different. Good links are made with other subjects. For example, older pupils are studying portraits in art and design, and these are used as a context for making frames for their finished pictures. The thinking behind these indicates consideration of size, shape, colour, pattern and use of materials, and as a result they are all individual in design. Older pupils are totally engaged in the task because of the practical nature of lessons. This means that all pupils are interested and involved in their learning.
90. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Due consideration is given to the development of skills. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work in process and this is helping them to make necessary improvements as they go along. Learning objectives are more focused so teachers know precisely what they want pupils to learn and what they want them to do in lessons. More consideration of how they want them to do it would lead to less direction and pupils being given more freedom to use their imagination when designing and making the products. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils are clear about the need to make a pattern for Joseph's coat. They realise the importance of trying out whether it is the correct size and shape with paper first, and how this will be used to make sure that the fabric is cut out correctly. They relate this to the costs involved and how much cheaper and easier it is to make any mistakes with paper first. However, the way they went about the task of making the pattern was overly complicated and this led to some confusion and unsuccessful results, causing some frustration.
91. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory because it focuses on pupils developing the necessary skills. The use of literacy skills is developing through more detailed recorded work. However, pupils do not have enough opportunity to talk about their work in lessons and this is a missed opportunity to develop speaking skills. ICT is not used often enough to support learning. There are sufficient resources to support the curriculum. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is extremely new and has not yet gained an overview of standards, teaching and learning. There are no assessment procedures and therefore continued improvements in standards rely on teachers' individual expertise to match work to suitable levels.

GEOGRAPHY

92. At the end of Year 2, and when pupils leave school at the age of 9, they attain standards below those expected nationally. Pupils develop limited knowledge and skills. Pupils have too few opportunities for practical experiences and visits. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is unsatisfactory. The previous inspection judged standards to be satisfactory, and this indicates a decline in standards.
93. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 are learning about the school grounds and its features, and have an elementary knowledge as to who would use a plan. Their knowledge of features and uses of

maps, though, is very limited. They have had opportunities to watch Barnaby Bear at the seaside, but have not really translated this to a greater knowledge of other places and countries around the world. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have described how they would improve the outside school environment by having 'a gazebo to give shade' and 'paint the bench'. They also identify 'quiet' places in the school like the library and the pond 'because no one is there'. Pupils have little recall of what they have covered in any other aspects of geography. They cannot recall studying any other countries, or comparing their local area with any contrasting locality in this country. They have not developed skills in asking and answering questions or using selected information, and rarely use or know any geographical vocabulary.

94. The teaching of geography is unsatisfactory because the development of skills is neglected, and there is insufficient challenge to pupils at all levels of ability. They nearly all attempt the same tasks, often on worksheets, and their work is frequently careless and untidy. Literacy is under emphasised, and ICT is rarely used. This is partly due to teachers' weak subject knowledge and expertise so opportunities are not identified, and to the lack of appropriate software in the subject.
95. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has not monitored standards, teaching and learning through the school and has therefore little awareness of the strengths and weaknesses. There are no assessment procedures so the school does not know how well pupils are doing. As a result of insufficient monitoring, resources are inadequate because not enough money has been allocated from the school budget.

HISTORY

96. The previous inspection reported above average standards in history. Pupils continue to have a good knowledge of historical facts, for instance in understanding reasons for change and their consequence. However, standards are currently average by the end of Year 2, and when pupils leave school at the age of 9, because not enough emphasis is given to developing their skills of research and interpretation of information. Progress by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. All pupils participate fully in all history activities due to the support they get in lessons.
97. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a satisfactory knowledge of famous people in history such as Florence Nightingale. They have an appropriate understanding of chronology, being able to suggest reasonably accurately for example, that she lived 'about 150 years ago'. They know that this was in the time of Queen Victoria, and that Florence 'had a lamp to be able to see them in the hospital'. They also understand that 'sources of information' could be 'newspapers, books and websites.' In Years 3 and 4, pupils have good recall of a Tudor kitchen, and know what foods would have been eaten by 'rich' and 'poor' people. They are able to explain what 'manchet', 'venison' and 'pottage' are. They are less confident at devising their own questions. Their books show a number of question and answer worksheets but with only very limited original writing. In discussion, pupils recalled facts they had learned about Romans and Celts, and were particularly animated about their visit to Stevenage when they dressed in Victorian clothes. Pupils' learning and understanding increases when history is brought alive through practical activities.
98. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers enjoy teaching history and this is reflected in the enthusiastic approach in all lessons. The best lessons sustained pupils' interest and gave them well-matched tasks for their abilities. In these lessons, pupils concentrated well and paid good attention to the teacher. Learning support assistants were used well to assess pupils' understanding and to help those with learning difficulties. However, work in books shows that pupils are not always sufficiently challenged, especially the more able, and inadequate guidance is given by teachers as to how pupils can improve their work and presentation. The link between history and literacy is not well developed. There are too few opportunities for pupils to talk about

what they have found out, and overuse of worksheets means pupils rarely get the opportunity to record what they have learned in their own words. Some lessons are too leisurely in their approach because they are too long. Despite this, many older pupils do not complete their work in the time allocated because expectations on the amount of work they can do are not high enough. A number, though, are eager to take work home to complete.

99. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The experienced co-ordinator has been successful at ensuring the school has an appropriate scheme and policy. However, she has not monitored standards, teaching and learning in other parts of the school. She is aware that resources, particularly reference books, artefacts and ICT software are inadequate and need improvement, so that pupils can better develop their independent use of information sources. There are no assessment procedures for history and this is currently unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

100. By the time pupils are 7, and when they leave the school at the age of 9, standards are below expected levels and have not improved since the previous inspection. Standards in Years 1 and 2 are lower. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should because teachers lack the necessary subject knowledge and expertise to teach specific computer skills. This is despite recent training. There are too few computers and other technology resources available to use, and very little software to support learning in other subjects. Teachers rarely plan for pupils to use the computers, which are in classrooms. There is no scheme of work so teachers receive too little guidance on what and how they should teach. The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements because some required aspects are not taught.
101. Teaching and learning are poor. During the inspection only a small number of pupils were seen using computers. These were mostly boys with behavioural difficulties, who worked with learning support assistants, occasionally at topics unrelated to what was happening in the rest of the class. All pupils have their own ICT folder and individual discs to keep their work. The folder includes a new self-evaluation tick sheet on which pupils can enter what they can do. When asked, older pupils were very vague about these. They did indicate that they had opportunities to ‘change text every Friday’ which involved changing the colour and style of the writing, but the range of work did not extend beyond this to other skills including control, sorting and organising information, or communicating ideas in pictures and sound. This remains a weakness from the previous inspection. Teachers encourage pupils to use computers at home to develop those skills not taught in school, but not all pupils have access to these so are excluded from the learning.
102. Leadership and management are poor. The co-ordinator and acting headteacher are very well aware of the deficiencies but have not yet started to address these. The co-ordinator, who has several other major responsibilities, has had no opportunity to monitor standards, teaching or learning in ICT, and has not been empowered to lead and manage this subject. As a consequence the school has not only been unable to maintain past standards, but has fallen further behind in an area, which is constantly improving nationally.

MUSIC

103. There was insufficient evidence to reach a judgement about standards, and the quality of teaching and learning. Music was not taught during the inspection and unusually, pupils did not sing in assembly, therefore missing an opportunity to practise performance skills in this aspect. Pupils recalled in discussions their weekly music lessons and it is evident that they have suitable opportunities to add sound effects to stories and poems, add instrumental accompaniments to songs and perform to parents on a few occasions. They record their compositions in picture form and follow these when performing to each other in lessons. Pupils know the names of most percussion instruments and describe how these should be played to produce certain sounds. However they do not know the subject specific vocabulary to describe their work, and have limited knowledge of musicians and composers. They could not recall one song to perform and cannot recall studying music from different countries. This indicates that although they have regular music lessons, they do not develop their performance skills sufficiently well. There are weaknesses in the curriculum, as the subject does not make a strong enough contribution to pupils’ spiritual and cultural development. ICT is not used to support learning at all and therefore is unsatisfactory. There are no extra curricular clubs, although pupils recall a visit from musicians who played various stringed instruments. Leadership and management of the subject are poor. There is no co-ordinator so no one is leading or managing the necessary improvements. Standards were unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection and there is no indication that these have improved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. Physical education was reported as a weakness in the previous inspection with pupils attaining below average standards. In this inspection only one lesson was observed, in Years 3 and 4. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to reach a judgement about standards, and the quality of teaching and learning. However, the scheme of work provides full coverage of the curriculum. Older pupils talked enthusiastically about their activities in gymnastics, rugby, dance, and soccer, and about sports day on the nearby church field, although they were disappointed that they do not use the field more frequently.
105. In the one lesson observed, with older pupils learning hockey skills in the school hall, teaching was unsatisfactory. This was taken by a temporary teacher. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were poor. This was caused mainly by one boy who was constantly disruptive, encouraging many of the class to be noisy and over boisterous. After he left the class of his own volition, behaviour and standards improved.
106. Since the previous inspection, resources have improved although the accommodation for PE remains unsatisfactory. The hall is small, and cluttered with a wide variety of furniture necessary for assemblies, music, lunchtimes and storage, causing several safety hazards for groups of more than a dozen pupils. There is more space in the playground, but teachers only use this in the summer. This is an inefficient use of a resource.
107. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a sound knowledge of PE and is beginning to develop a picture of the subject through the school. There are no assessment procedures and this is unsatisfactory. She has not monitored standards, and teaching and learning in other classes. In spite of some improvement, there are still clear weaknesses in provision, which the school needs to address.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

108. Standards in RE meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are developing a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of festivals, sacred texts and the places of worship of different religions, due to the comprehensive scheme of work this provides. Achievement is satisfactory.
109. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a suitable understanding of baptism. They know that it is a Christian practice and not followed by other religions in the world. They have a good understanding that people who believe in Christ follow Christianity. Because the scheme of work is organised into themes, it means that pupils have good opportunity to consider different faiths in all their work. Therefore, older pupils consider the importance of water to different religious practices and, when looking at sacred texts, younger pupils are learning that the same stories appear in many of them. They know for instance that the story of Noah can be found in the Bible, Torah scrolls and the Qu'ran.
110. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers use a range of teaching methods to interest pupils and this helps them to remember important information. Paintings and artefacts bring lessons to life and this adds to the development of spiritual awareness of many religious practices. Video is used effectively to keep pupils interested and this helps them to concentrate on the messages we learn from religion as well as religious facts. Role-play is used to good effect in lessons with the younger pupils. They act out various roles and this helps them remember the content of the story. Those asked, recalled the story of Zacchaeus in some detail and discussed why the people did not like Jesus choosing to have tea with him. Year 1 and 2 pupils are learning the story of Noah. Their learning from religion is reflected in their understanding of the symbol of the rainbow, used as a message from God. As a result, higher attaining pupils thought about the

importance of their own promises made to people, and those promises they appreciated others made to them. This helped them gain a deeper understanding of the meaning behind the story and helped them to attain higher levels of understanding for their age. This better match of work is relatively new. Previous work indicates that much of it was the same last term and often recorded on worksheets. This general lack of challenge has been recently addressed so that higher attaining pupils in particular are given more reflection time to think about the purpose and meaning behind many religious practices.

111. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. However, monitoring of standards, teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, and too little guidance is given to teachers about content and skill development. There are no assessment procedures so no information is available to build on pupils' previous learning. Although the scheme of work is taking learning forward, it relies too much on teachers' secure subject knowledge to continue to maintain standards. ICT is not used to support learning in the subject and is unsatisfactory. Resources are satisfactory overall, and further artefacts to support knowledge and understanding of different faiths continue to be developed.