

INSPECTION REPORT

CHRISTOPHER REEVES CE VA LOWER SCHOOL

Podington, Wellingborough

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109622

Headteacher: Mrs. Sandra Rhodes

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Jean Harding
21378

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 March 2003

Inspection number: 246930

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Lower
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hinwick Road Podington Wellingborough
Postcode:	NN29 7HU
Telephone number:	01933 353531
Fax number:	no fax
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Pauline Cameron
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21378	Mrs. Jean Harding	Registered inspector	Science History Art and design Music The Foundation Stage of Learning	The school's results & pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led & managed Special educational needs Educational inclusion
9173	Mrs. Sarah McDermott	Lay inspector		How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
29688	Mr. Michael Brammer	Team inspector	English Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography Physical education	Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development The curricular & other opportunities offered to pupils English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a very small village school for boys and girls from 4 - 9 years of age. There are 61 pupils on roll, with more boys than girls. There are many more pupils than there were at the last inspection, and the school has expanded past its original capacity. Almost all pupils are of white ethnic origin; three speak English as an additional language. There are three classes for five year-groups, and the numbers in the reception and class for pupils in Years 3 and 4 are small. Very few pupils have special educational needs and none has a statement; their difficulties are mostly moderate learning difficulties. No pupil is eligible for free school meals, which is well below average. The school serves a prosperous rural area; it is situated in a small community but many pupils are brought in from outside the village, and the school is over-subscribed. Most children have had pre-school educational experience in play-groups, and their attainment on entry to the reception class varies considerably but it is currently higher than expected. The school is about to have extensive building work to extend the accommodation, and this has been planned for some time.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school that is improving despite the restrictions of the current accommodation. Overall, it provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils, but the quality of education given to children in the reception class is very good. The teaching in reception is very good and so the children achieve well; in the other classes the teaching and learning are satisfactory. Standards of attainment in English are above those expected, and in most other subjects they are in line with national averages and expectations. In some non-core subjects they are below expectations either due to the difficulties with the accommodation or to unsatisfactory curriculum planning. Pupils' attitudes to school and behaviour are very good. The leadership of the headteacher and governors is good and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- It provides very well for children in reception and so they make good progress in their learning.
- Standards in English are above average.
- The leadership of the headteacher is good.
- The teaching of English is good across the school; it is also good in mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2, and in information and communication technology in Years 3 and 4.
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very good.
- The governors make a good contribution to the development of the school.
- Parents and the community make a good contribution to the school and pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in physical education in Years 1 to 4, in history, geography and music in Years 3 and 4, and in information and communication technology in Years 1 and 2;
- The accommodation, which is poor and has a detrimental effect on teaching and standards;
- The planning of the curriculum, especially for Years 3 and 4;
- The procedures for assessment in non-core subjects and the use of assessment;
- The monitoring of teaching;
- Aspects of care.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1997. The education world has changed greatly since then, and all pupils and governors, and all but one part-time member of staff, have changed. This is essentially a different school from the one previously inspected. It would, therefore, not be appropriate to compare the current school with the one inspected five and a half years ago. However, all the key issues for action identified at that inspection have been addressed, mostly well. Comments on improvements, in this report, will be based from the time of the appointment of the current headteacher in January 1999, with an

emphasis on improvements over the last two years. Given the current staff and governors, there is sound capacity for further improvement.

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 ¹ ,
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	A*	A	B	C
Writing	A*	B	B	C
Mathematics	A	B	C	D

Key	
Top 5% nationally	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

It is not possible to draw any statistically valid conclusions from these grades or to determine trends, as the numbers in each cohort are so small, and the presence of pupils with special educational needs, such as last year, distorts the results. Current pupils in Year 2 attain above average standards in speaking, listening and reading, and average standards in writing and mathematics. Standards are in line with national expectations in science, history, geography, design and technology, art and design and music, by the end of Year 2. In information and communication technology and physical education they are below expectations, as pupils have not been given work in all the required elements of the National Curriculum in these subjects, owing to the restrictions of the accommodation.

By the end of Year 4 pupils' standards in English are above those expected, and standards are as expected in mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, and many aspects of art and design. Pupils' attainment in history, geography and music is below that expected, as the curriculum in these subjects has not been good enough. Standards are below expectations in physical education as pupils have not been able to do all the programmes of study, because of the accommodation. The current small group of pupils in Year 4 have had considerable changes to their education since they have been in the school and these have affected their achievements. The school has set appropriate targets for all pupils in English and mathematics, and is on course to achieve them.

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and most are working at higher levels than would be expected, even those who did not have highly developed skills when they joined the school. Across the school there are no obvious differences in the attainment of boys and girls. More able pupils make satisfactory progress, but this could be better. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their language skills and generally the same progress as other pupils in other subjects, which is satisfactory overall. The few pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning, but, due to the careful provision, any pupil with marked difficulties can make good progress in the targets set. Pupils make sound use of the key skills of learning, such as numeracy, information technology, and problem-solving, in other subjects. They use their listening, speaking and reading skills well, but do too little writing across the curriculum to ensure that these skills are developed to the full.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are proud of their school enjoy it very much.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave well at all times, and there have been no exclusions. No bullying has been reported to inspectors.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils show respect for each other and for adults. They work very well together. They like to accept responsibility but could be given more.

¹ 'Similar schools' are defined by the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment found in schools nationally.

Attendance	Very good, but increasing numbers of pupils are taken on holiday in term-time and this affects the statistics and pupils' achievements.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	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.

All lessons that were graded for teaching were at least satisfactory, and many were good or very good. However, other evidence points to the fact that over time, the teaching in Years 1 to 4 has been satisfactory. The result is satisfactory learning by pupils of all abilities. The very good practice evident in the reception class is a model for the rest of the school. The teaching in this class is characterised by rigorous planning for children of all abilities based on the very good knowledge and understanding of the teacher, and careful ongoing assessment. Lessons are fun but purposeful, and children know what they are doing. Children in reception try hard and concentrate well for quite a long time, this ensures that they achieve well. The teaching in the rest of the school has strengths in the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and in sensitive management of pupils based on good relationships. Although the planning of lessons is satisfactory, it could be better so that the evaluation of success for pupils in both year-groups in the class, and of all abilities, is more thorough. Pupils show interest in their lessons, but their independence in learning is constrained by the curriculum and the accommodation.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good in reception, but in Years 1 – 4 it lacks balance and not all subjects are taught in sufficient depth. More could be done for more able pupils. The time available for teaching is too short. There are no extra-curricular activities. The cramped accommodation means that not all elements of physical education can be taught.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory, but too many pupils are identified who are just lower attaining than other pupils. The individual education plans for pupils with marked difficulties are sound, but for others they are unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. There are no formal procedures to check up on these pupils' progress with reference to their acquisition of language, but they are followed as individuals and make at least satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Provision for moral and social development is good, and it is satisfactory for spiritual and cultural development. Too little is planned to develop pupils' awareness of cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a family atmosphere, which is appreciated by parents, and some aspects of care are good. Some aspects of care are unsatisfactory and these have been brought to the attention of the governors. The assessment in English and mathematics is good but in some other subjects the assessment is unsatisfactory. Assessment data are often not used well.

The provision for personal, social and health education is good. The school is very much part of the community, and there are effective links with parents who generally think highly of the school. Parents are provided with satisfactory information about how their children are getting on.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership. The management is satisfactory but there are too few systems set up to ensure compliance and conformity. Most subject co-ordinators do not do enough to check on pupils' attainment and the teaching in their subjects. There is not a 'whole-school' approach to planning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They are committed to improvement and well involved in leading the school. Statutory requirements are mostly met, including a suitable policy for racial equality. But there are some instances where information is not given to parents and appropriate policies for care have not been devised.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher and governors know what is done well but do not always know the weaknesses, as they are not aware of the best practice in some areas. Insufficient attention has been given to improving practice in some aspects and subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The poor accommodation is a big issue for the staff to cope with, and mostly they make the best of it. The very large carry forward is to finance the new building, but more needs to be spent on current pupils.

The school has a satisfactory number of appropriately qualified staff, but more lunchtime ancillary staff are needed in order to use the time efficiently and to improve the supervision of pupils. The cramped accommodation is having a directly adverse effect on the delivery of the curriculum in terms of physical education and information and communication technology, and an indirect effect for other subjects, in which there are deficiencies in resources because there is nowhere to store them. The lack of a library is a particularly inhibiting factor in pupils' independent learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>That their children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are expected to work hard and do their best; are making good progress; behave well; like school. <p>That the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is well led and managed; helps pupils to become mature and responsible; provides good teaching; is small and has a supportive family atmosphere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> most parents think that there are insufficient extra-curricular activities; some parents of children in reception would like them attend full-time in the autumn term. <p>A minority of parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not feel comfortable about approaching the school; think that their child's progress could be better; would like more information about their child's progress; feel that the communication between them, the staff and the governors could be better.

Parents are generally supportive of the school and feel that it is doing a good job. The inspection team agrees with many of the parents' views, although teaching and progress are judged to be satisfactory, rather than good. There are currently no extra-curricular activities and parents should not be expected to pay for after-school lessons in music or sport. Older children in reception would benefit from attending full-time earlier, as they settle so well and are ready to learn. Inspectors can understand why a few parents have concerns about communication, information and pupils' progress, but this depends on individual staff, parents and children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The overall attainment of children on entry to the reception class varies tremendously from year to year, as with such small numbers a few pupils with special educational needs or of higher ability can distort the statistics. On the whole, attainment is at least as expected, and is often above expectations in the areas of personal and social development and English and mathematics tested. There is no data available for the current Year 4 pupils when they joined the school. The cohort that is currently in Year 3 was less able in comparison with other years, but some pupils have joined and left since they started in reception. The pupils currently in Year 2 were, as a group, more able than others when they started. The children currently in the reception class make good progress in learning, due to the very good provision that is made, including the teaching. The provision is relatively new and so the progress is speeding up as the routines become embedded. But pupils who joined the school two years ago have not had the benefit of this high quality provision and so did not have such a good start as the children have now. Currently, almost all children are likely to attain the learning goals for young children by the time they join Year 1 and many are working securely within the programmes of study for pupils in Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2).
2. As so much has changed it is not possible to compare pupils' attainment in the rest of the school since the previous inspection, but evidence of tracking and assessments in English and mathematics show that over the last three years, at least, pupils have made at least satisfactory progress in their learning from a solid base as they leave the reception class. Most pupils make the progress of which they are capable, but this could be better for more able pupils; their attainment has been compromised by the deficits in the curriculum in Years 3 and 4.
3. Currently, by the end of Year 2, standards of attainment for pupils' English, including speaking, listening and reading are above average, and in writing and mathematics they are in line with national averages, with strengths in their understanding of number. Standards of spelling are satisfactory and improving. Standards in science, design and technology, art and design, history and geography are as expected. Little music was seen but pupils' performance and their singing suggest that attainment in the subject is in line with national expectations. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology and physical education is below expectations.
4. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, for the four years between 1999 and 2002, show fluctuating picture, reflecting the overall ability of that year-group. Last year (Summer 2002), pupils' grades were above average for reading and writing, and average for mathematics. However, in comparison with schools that admit pupils from similar backgrounds², results were average for reading and writing and below average for mathematics. From the teachers' assessments the percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard in science was very high. The assessed levels of attainment in speaking and listening were below expectations. Care must be taken when considering these statistics as the numbers doing the tests were so small, and a highly significant percentage of pupils had special educational needs.
5. No reliable assessment data about pupils' attainment on entry to the school is available for pupils in the current Year 4 in order to evaluate their progress through the school. Also, the numbers are so small that the data to compare with their attainment in the tests when they were in Year 2 are unreliable. The few pupils in the current Year 4 have had somewhat disorganised educational provision since they joined the school, with big changes in management, teachers and the curriculum. These changes have had an impact on their achievements. They are attaining above

² 'Similar schools' are defined by the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment found in schools nationally.

average levels in English and average levels in mathematics and science. Their attainment is in line with national expectations in information and communication technology, design and technology, and aspects of art and design. Pupils' achievement in information and communication technology is good, considering how much ground they have had to make up. Attainment is below expectations in history, geography, music and physical education, and their progress in learning in these subjects has been unsatisfactory.

6. Evidence gathered during the inspection show that pupils are acquiring sound literacy and numeracy skills, but do not always use them effectively in other subjects. The school has identified that pupils' spelling is not as good as it should be and has set in motion an appropriate programme to address this. The progress in learning of children in the reception classes is particularly good. In the rest of the school pupils' achievements in most subjects are generally satisfactory; where they are not satisfactory, this is due to the unsatisfactory planning of the curriculum or the restrictions of the accommodation. However, pupils' key skills of learning, especially their ability to work with others and to solve problems is often good due to their high self-esteem which has been nurtured by the school.
7. Given the small size of the school pupils are considered individually when assessing their progress. The progress in learning of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and for those with emotional and behavioural difficulties the progress in the targets set for them is good. During the inspection there were no observable differences in the attainment and progress of boys and girls. No pupil has been identified as being gifted or talented. Pupils of higher ability are usually sufficiently challenged, but a few are not working at high enough levels in the National Curriculum programmes of study; this is because they are not always given work that is appropriate to their needs. There are no special arrangements for pupils with English as an additional language, but their progress in acquiring English has been good. The school does not know whether their achievements are good enough in other subjects, as they do not have the systems in place to find out. Most parents are pleased with their child's current progress.
8. The headteacher has analysed performance data from the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 for the last four years. The school has set appropriate targets for overall improvement in pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for the last two years and the current year. These are based on an evaluation of what is possible, taking into account pupils' attainment on entry. Targets for this year aim for all pupils attaining the required grade. Sound targets are also set for the percentage of pupils to reach the higher level. Suitable targets have also been set for pupils to attain the expected grade and a higher grade in the optional tests in English and mathematics at the end of Year 4.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Overall, the pupils' attitudes are a strength of the school. They are very good and have a positive impact on their learning. This reflects the position that has been reported by parents, residents and staff over many years. Almost all pupils concentrate well during lessons and in acts of collective worship. They persevere well when given written tasks. In mental mathematics sessions they respond quickly and are completely involved in the activity. They are pleased by their own and other pupils' success.
10. The children in the reception class make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They settle down well to all activities and enjoy what they do very much. Their behaviour, and that of pupils in the rest of the school, is very good. Pupils move sensibly around the school and, in cramped conditions, are careful about others' need for space. They play sensibly outside with the equipment that is available and are mindful of each other's safety. Parents who accompany them on school visits comment very favourably about their behaviour. There have been no exclusions or recorded incidents of harassment or bullying. This reflects the ethos that has been created and is sustained by the whole school staff.

11. The relationships between pupils and pupils with staff are very good. This reflects the strong feeling of community that is found in the school. The pupils treat one another and the staff with respect and this contributes towards their good social development. At lunchtime there is a sociable atmosphere in each classroom and, in a physical education lesson, almost all the pupils in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4 work well together in groups and support one another.
12. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The older pupils help with the organisation and running of assembly and with school dinners. The headteacher is aware that more needs to be done to develop this area. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory; although this is a church school it is not strongly in evidence in the provision, or the outcomes.
13. The attendance and punctuality of the pupils are very good. Nearly all parents report that their children like coming to school. During the inspection many pupils were eagerly waiting in the playground well before the bell was rung for the start of the school day. Last year the attendance rate was 96.4 per cent, which was well above the national average. The very good attendance and punctuality are major factors in the pupils' effective learning. However, there is a growing and significant number of pupils who are taken out of school in term time for family holidays. Before the spring half-term holiday four pupils in the oldest class (a significant number) missed a week's schooling for skiing, which caused disruption to the smooth progress in teaching and learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The teaching is very good in the reception class. It is satisfactory in the other classes, with areas of strength in the teaching of basic skills, especially to pupils in Year 2. All lessons graded for teaching that were observed were at least satisfactory, and eight out of the 20 seen were good, and four were very good. Consistently high quality teaching was observed in the reception class, and the evidence of planning, assessments and relationships show that it has been of this quality since the reception class teacher took over about a year ago. Lessons in this class are fun and have good pace, and so children are very eager to learn. The evidence of the teaching over time in Years 1 to 4 is that it is satisfactory. Where pupils have lower than expected attainment in some subjects, it is usually due to the lack of teaching in those curriculum areas, rather than unsatisfactory teaching itself.
15. The teaching of English is often good, as is the teaching of mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2. The teaching of information and communication technology to pupils in Years 3 and 4, done during odd times such as lunchtime, is good and has ensured pupils' good progress in learning in this subject. No reliable judgement can be given about the teaching of information and communication technology to the class for pupils in Years 1 and 2 as no direct teaching was seen. Similarly, no definite judgement is given for the overall teaching of physical education, as only dance was observed, or of art and design or music as so little was seen, or history and geography as none were seen. However, evidence available suggests that when it is given, the teaching in these subjects is satisfactory.
16. Staff's knowledge and understanding of the subjects is very good in the reception class and satisfactory in the other classes. Staff's skills in the teaching of information and communication technology have much improved in recent years. The teaching of English and mathematics is good in Years 1 and 2 and this is leading to pupils' good learning in these subjects; the teaching in Year 2 is particularly strong. The learning support assistant gives good help to the teachers and so promotes pupils' learning.
17. The planning of lessons is very good in reception and satisfactory overall in the other classes. This is the aspect of teaching in which the most improvement could be made in Years 1 to 4; the sort of detail recorded in the reception class is a model for them to use. The planning of some lessons in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4 is unsatisfactory, given that it does not allow for

- sufficiently differentiated teaching for more able pupils and those who might have difficulties. Scrutiny of past work shows that in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4, pupils nearly always do the same work, and this disadvantages the most and the least able. The lack of detail in the planning also does not ensure that lessons can be evaluated properly to ascertain what worked, and what did not. Lessons in this class sometimes lack challenge and inspiration.
18. Teachers in the two older classes use a satisfactory range of strategies in their lessons but do not plan for information and communication technology to be practised, as a matter of course. Pupils have done too little writing, to be able to develop speed and fluency in other subjects and this is hindering the effective development of their literacy skills.
19. A strong feature of most lessons is the mutual respect shown by staff and pupils. Pupils feel able to question in an open way and no glimmer of unsatisfactory behaviour was detectable during any lesson observed. These good relationships are crucial considering how much moving about, and movement of equipment and materials is necessary, in most lessons, given the problems with the accommodation and storage. The staff's good management of pupils is the result of high expectations of behaviour set over many years. Due to the respect that they have for the staff, and their good behaviour, pupils show an interest in lessons and concentrate well. They do not show as much independence as would be expected, given their abilities and maturity, as with so little space and no library, they do not often have the chance to work independently. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 have a good appreciation of what they know and what they need to learn. They were overtly concerned when they could not answer the inspectors' questions about what they knew and understood in subjects such as history and geography.
20. Teachers' ongoing assessment is satisfactory but could be better, and if done more effectively this is likely to improve pupils' pace of working. Reading records in the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4 are insufficiently evaluative and sometimes, therefore, pupils read books that are too easy. Marking is done, but not as effectively as it could be and so pupils are not given enough pointers about how they could improve. The marking of the pupils' work is supportive of their efforts but it is rarely influenced by the learning objectives. The result is that it does not give information that will help the pupils to make good progress. Most parents and pupils are content with the homework given, but the amount and timing of this could be better organised.

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

21. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. The curriculum for children in the reception class is very good, and the range of opportunities provided can ensure that children will benefit from a wide range of work appropriate to their needs. For the older two classes (Years 1 to 4) all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are included, and there is a good programme of personal, social and health education. The school does not formally teach sex education. Its provision for education against drugs misuse is enhanced by the use of the Life Bus to which parents are also invited.
22. The breadth and balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory for Year 1 to 4. The school has used official guidelines to decide how much time should be allocated to each subject but some literacy lessons are too long and no time is earmarked for the teaching of skills in information and communication technology. The time allotted to the teaching of music and religious education is below that recommended. The total teaching time available during the week is much lower than average and this has affected standards in some subjects. History and geography are not planned coherently across the whole of Key Stage 2, within this school (Years 3 and 4) and the school to which most pupils will transfer for Years 5 and 6.³

³ Within two weeks of the inspectors leaving the school, most of these issues about timing and continuity were addressed.

23. The poor accommodation has an adverse effect on the curriculum and hence the standards that pupils attain. The hall is too small for all aspects of physical education to be taught safely and the collection of books that forms the library is not easily accessible, being in the entrance corridor. The fact that two classes share the hall as a classroom each morning means that speaking and listening is more difficult despite the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils. Pupils in Year 2 have no access to computers.
24. Both the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been introduced successfully. Literacy skills are taught well. Most subjects have an appropriate policy with some due to be ratified by the governing body. The school makes satisfactory use of national guidelines when planning schemes of work. Although there are few formal policies and strategies available, the school generally ensures that all pupils are included in activities regardless of gender, ethnicity, background or prior attainment. This is done because the school is small and pupils, and their families are well known to staff. Pupils who need special help have been identified. The teachers have a tendency to include pupils on the special educational needs register who really do not have special educational needs.⁴ Pupils who are more able are given extra work. The school has taken advice from outside professionals to ensure that pupils using English as an additional language are not disadvantaged, and support for them is satisfactory. A careful eye is kept on any possible problems over gender.
25. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. The school has a particularly strong and fruitful association with the village of Podington. Pupils are benefiting positively from the generosity of the villagers, who are enthusiastically contributing towards the fund raising for the new school building. In return pupils participate in Podington events, such as the Golden Jubilee celebrations when they all dressed up as "children of the future" for the village parade. Consequently the pupils are learning how important and enjoyable it is to be part of an active and mutually supportive community. The school has a well-established link with the American Airforce via the 92nd Bombardment Group Veterans, which brings reality to their study of 20th century history. As a church school the pupils benefit from effective links both with the parish church and the local Methodist chapel. However, the use of the local community to benefit other subjects of the curriculum is limited and does not yet bring sufficient local interest and colour to the pupils' learning. There are no extra-curricular activities and this is poor.⁵ This is a concern of many parents, and this concern is shared by the inspection team.
26. The school has a satisfactory working relationship with other educational establishments. There are effective links with a range of pre-schools and nurseries to ensure the children are settled in quickly into school life. The school is part of the respected Sharnbrook pyramid of high, middle and lower schools, so benefits from a cohesive system to give pupils good pastoral support as they move on to the middle school. There is a steady stream of visits between pupils and teachers in the term before transition, so the pupils move on confidently and happily at the end of Year 4. However, there is insufficient agreement between the schools on the content of the curriculum for pupils as they move from lower to upper Key Stage 2, especially in the humanities.⁶ Currently the pupils' learning is not smoothly progressive because there are either gaps in curriculum coverage or repetition of areas already covered. The school makes satisfactory use of the local education authority for advice relating to the organisation of the finances or the attendance of the pupils. However, as the school has been designated for a 'light touch' level of educational support, it has missed out on sufficient education authority contact to ensure that the relatively inexperienced staff are given enough guidance on the organisation of the curriculum for the benefit of the pupils' learning.
27. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is satisfactory overall. The provision for the spiritual development of the pupils is satisfactory.

⁴ This issue has also been addressed.

⁵ Suitable activities are now planned for next term.

⁶ See before – footnote 3.

Pupils are given an insight into Christian beliefs and values through the acts of collective worship. They learn about what lies behind the customs of Shrove Tuesday and about the meaning of Ash Wednesday. There are opportunities for them to reflect and pray in assembly and pupils consider the possibility of war in the Middle East. There is an example of awe and wonder in an English lesson for Years 3 and 4. Two pupils were demonstrating how to play Nine Men's Morris. The others watched with rapt attention and one commented, *'He'll win now if he concentrates.'* There are many examples of planned experiences in the reception class, to ensure that children are fascinated and stimulated, such as by the wonders of nature. However, in general, there are too few examples of the planning for spiritual development in other areas of the curriculum.

28. The provision for the pupils' moral development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and of the impact of their actions on others, due to the school's provision for their moral development. This is seen in a mathematics lesson when pupils in Year 2 clearly know the rules of a game they are playing, in which they are not allowed to tell a friend, and insist that they are followed. The teachers and other adults in the school are good role models. They are easily approachable and the pupils have confidence in them. The school has few formal procedures and policies to underpin this work and no School Council, but it does benefit from a very strong ethos of fairness and concern for others.
29. The provision for the pupils' social development is good. Older pupils help with the arrangements for assembly and school dinners. In lessons the pupils are seen co-operating well in English, mathematics and physical education. Pupils are helped to feel part of the local community. The pupils took part in a mini-marathon to raise funds for leukaemia research, so developing their understanding of the needs of others.
30. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. In assembly music is played as the pupils enter and leave. Opportunities are missed to capitalise on this listening as the music is not commented on; pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work of established composers could be better promoted by more thought in this respect. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about the artist Henri Rousseau. An African dance group visited last year. Local studies in geography increase the pupils' awareness of their local community culture. The Chinese New Year is celebrated but there are few planned opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of a multi-cultural society and to raise their awareness of cultural diversity.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. This small, family-like school shows genuine attention and concern for every one of its pupils. Staff know the pupils and their families very well and this forms a sound basis for the school's care systems. However, overall the school only gives satisfactory levels of care because there are some inaccuracies in record keeping, and often organisation is not rigorous enough to ensure precise monitoring of the pupils' progress and safety.
32. The school has good procedures for child protection, welfare and health and safety. The headteacher is the person designated to deal with any issues surrounding child protection. She has had recent training and the child protection policy was reviewed last term. All staff know what to do should they be suspicious of child abuse. Internet access is suitably channelled to ensure pupils do not access inappropriate sites. First aid procedures are good, with both the headteacher and secretary holding current first aid qualifications. The accident book is well maintained and parents are contacted if the staff are at all worried about head bumps or cuts and bruises. Any member of staff can get hold of parents very quickly and efficiently, because the telephone is programmed with all the up-to-date numbers. The school nurse is a regular visitor for health checks as well as contributing to health education in the classroom.
33. The school has satisfactory systems to ensure that the pupils are not affected by hazards in school. The site agent is in regular contact with the office and makes sure equipment is safe or

- repairs undertaken as soon as possible. In some places the storage of equipment in the cramped accommodation is perilous as it juts out into the corridors and classrooms. The health and safety governors have been meticulous in a recent risk assessment, with recommendations made on several issues including safe drinking water and the washing of hands. Some parents pointed out that there is only one member of staff on duty at lunchtimes, and this, they felt, was insufficient. The inspection team agrees. The inspection team also has concerns about other aspects of the pupils' safety; these have now been drawn to the attention of the governing body.⁷
34. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. As the school is small it is easy for the staff to identify who is absent and to find out why. The good communication from home to school means that unauthorised absence is almost non-existent. Registers are called properly each morning and afternoon. However, it is not satisfactory that registers are kept in the classroom, because they are important legal documents and it would be difficult to access them easily if an emergency happened while the pupils were elsewhere.
35. The school has satisfactory systems for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The effective ethos of respect underpins the resulting good behaviour, with both parents and staff acting as very good role models. The pupils are successfully encouraged to devise their own rules and take responsibility for their actions. Much of the effective management of behaviour hangs on the fact that the school is small and pupils known to all. However, for the school to be thoroughly ready to deal with all types of behaviour, systems need to be tightened up. The behaviour policy is very dated and does not currently represent the agreed approach of staff, governors and parents. The school does not keep a central record of incidents of unacceptable behaviour, as it should. Mention in the Golden Book at the Friday celebration assembly is a positive way to reward pupils' good work and behaviour, particularly as the pupils are proud to write in themselves. However, its value is diminished because there is no record of why the pupil's name is included. Due to the constraints of the accommodation parents cannot be invited to the celebration assembly, which detracts from the sharing of rewards between home and school.
36. Procedures for dealing with any incidents of bullying are satisfactory in practice. However, there is no formal anti-bullying policy. In addition, it is unsatisfactory that the school does not have a policy on the safe and legal restraint of pupils, however small the likelihood of this eventuality. This is needed for the guidance of staff as well as the protection of pupils. There is an appropriate policy to counter racism.
37. The school has satisfactory systems for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Children new to the reception class are settled in very well and are very soon able to cope with a full day away from home. Although the governors have made a positive decision not to teach formal sex education, all pupils receive effective personal, social and health education (PSHE) across the school day. The visit of the Life Bus, which covers drugs education and healthy living, is very popular with the pupils and parents. However lessons in PSHE come in fits and starts and are not sufficiently planned across the timetable to be able to be used to track pupils' personal development in a meaningful way. Pupils are given appropriate small jobs around the school. Often this involves moving chairs as classes change venues in the cramped accommodation. It is good to see that pupils were surveyed on their views of the school, but as yet there is no School Council to provide a regular forum for issues relating to citizenship. The older pupils are given good pastoral support as they move on to the middle school.
38. The school's procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall; they are good for English and mathematics. The school conducts the statutory assessment of pupils at the end of Year 2. Use is made of optional national tests to measure the attainment of pupils in English and mathematics before they leave the school at the end of Year 4. A computer program enables the school to track the pupils' progress and to set targets in English and mathematics for pupils to attain at the end of Years 2 and 4. The assessment policy is not up to date. For non-core subjects individual teachers record the pupils' progress in their own way. The

⁷ Most of these issues were also addressed straight after the inspection.

pupils' work is not assessed against the National Curriculum attainment targets. This means that the co-ordinators have no secure way of knowing the standards in their subjects and so cannot take informed decisions on how to improve them.

39. Very few pupils have marked special educational needs. The planning of targets to tackle their learning or behaviour difficulties is satisfactory for those with the most marked problems, but so basic to be of little use to teachers for other pupils with special educational needs. However, the staff keep a good eye on these pupils and work with parents to overcome their difficulties. There is no formal assessment of the achievements of pupils who use English as an additional language, and this is unsatisfactory. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is unsatisfactory. This is linked to the sketchy planning of some lessons, and is particularly weak in some non-core subjects, such as the humanities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The parents have positive views about the school. Many have made the conscious decision to send their children out of their neighbourhood to Podington, because they have heard of its good reputation as a small school with a family atmosphere. A good number of parents returned questionnaires and attended the pre-inspection meeting. Parents are very supportive of their children's learning and particularly like the behaviour of the pupils, the quality of teaching, the progress their children are making and the fact that the pupils are expected to do their best. The inspection team definitely endorses the parents' view on the good behaviour, but concludes that teaching and standards, although good in the reception class, elsewhere are satisfactory and not as strong as the parents believe.
41. A very high percentage of parents is concerned that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspectors agree that this provision is poor, with limitations partly stemming from the cramped accommodation.
42. Some parents are not happy with the communication from home to school. On the practical side the quality of information provided to parents is satisfactory. It has improved a great deal since the arrival of the current headteacher. She has been proactive in building up the previously limited lines of communication between home and school by sending out a questionnaire to elicit parental views and then drawing up an action plan. Positive moves include the introduction of a preliminary open evening for parents to look at their children's work so that they are well prepared to ask pertinent questions at the parent teacher consultation. Parents now receive more curriculum information than usual, because the school sends out a summary each half term that helps parents to share in their children's learning. Information available to the parents of reception children is thorough and introduces parents well to the structure of the school day. The school works well with the parents of pupils with special educational needs.
43. Parents contribute well to their children's learning at school and at home. They are very keen to see them succeed. However, there are still some gaps in school information that need tightening up to enable parents to fully share the educational process with the school. Although many parents believe that the school sets the right amount of homework, several parents are unclear on its organisation and how it contributes to achievement. As the school does not have a homework policy, it cannot give a clear and consistent message to parents on what is expected from homework. Annual reports on pupils' progress provide good information on how each one has developed over the year. However, they do not advise parents sufficiently on how they can help their children to do even better, because the report does not include targets for improvement. Although pupils in the Year 1 and 2 class have a useful home reading diary, the older pupils have to make do with a scrappy reading log card, that detracts from professional dialogue between home and school. The annual governors' report to parents is much improved recently, with a good range of interesting detail, including the introduction of coloured photographs of the governors. However, it does not contain legally required information on the admission of and facilities for

disabled pupils. The prospectus also omits the telephone number of the school, the name of the chair of governors and the latest absence return.

44. The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. The newly invigorated Parent-Teacher Association has been most successful in raising funds for the school. In three months over £7,000 has been raised for the new building. Parents are invaluable in hearing pupils read, escorting classes to swimming and maintaining the garden. Other parents, who have jobs in the fire and police services, have visited the school to let the pupils know about the world of work and contributed well to personal and social education.
45. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. Parents are keen, supportive and a valuable resource. The headteacher has made great strides in including parents more as equal partners in their children's schooling. Many parents come to school with suggestions and ideas, with only the best interests of their children at heart. However, some still find that a few staff can be unreceptive and defensive. The quality of information to parents is inconsistent and not as comprehensive as it should be; the headteacher and her staff know they need to refine this, and are well able to do so, building on the recent good work in the school. Just as importantly the staff should communicate with parents openly and confidently, knowing that the progress of the pupils is the uppermost concern of both school and home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. Since her appointment four years ago the headteacher has moved the school forward a long way. Her leadership is good. There are now subject policies in place and appropriate schemes of work to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and personal, social and health education. Good staff appointments have been made and the school now works much better with parents. There is still some way to go, but the headteacher has a fair idea of what is necessary and has already started further improvements within the constraints of time, considering that she teaches for over half the timetable. She has continued the traditionally supportive family ethos, but has added an extra dimension of improving pupils' attainment in all areas of the curriculum. She has motivated and influenced staff through her own good practice, and her appointment has been the key factor in the improvement of the school over the last three or four years.
47. The headteacher's load is very heavy in terms of teaching, administration and pastoral issues. She has little management help within the school as other teachers, although working hard and doing that which is requested of them, have little experience outside this school. All the teachers have subject responsibilities, and some have further delegated tasks. Trainee teachers are well supported in the school by the senior teacher. Two of the teachers are relatively new to the school and have to start from scratch in the co-ordination of their subjects. Until recently the co-ordination of subjects has not led to higher standards, and this has been a weakness. The management of some non-core subjects is unsatisfactory, but improving. The policies and practices that have been put in place recently are at least sound, and sometimes good, and this bodes well for the future, but only if this is packaged with an effective programme of monitoring teaching and standards, which is, currently, unsatisfactory. For this the staff will require further training.
48. The management is satisfactory overall. It could, and should, be better. There have been good improvements to the management recently, resulting in improvements all round. But the school's own evaluations are insecure given that they assume that things are good, when really they are only just better than they were. The teachers do not have a proper yardstick to judge effectiveness. Although some sound improvements have been made in the management of staff and in communication, there are too few systems and structures in place that would ensure consistency and conformity. There are still elements of individualism, which mean that the teachers in the two classes for Years 1 to 4 do not work as team or evaluate each other's work. The planning for continuity between the reception class and the next class is now sound, and this

is a pattern that could be repeated further up the school. The management of the Foundation Stage⁸ is good and much very good practice has been evolved in a short time; this high quality management is having a marked effect on the achievements of children in the reception class.

49. Part of the problem in management is that most staff are not aware of the best practices and there is not an embedded culture of peer evaluation. The headteacher has little time available to do the monitoring of teaching that she feels is necessary. The lack of overall planning of the curriculum and of assessment has meant that deficiencies have not been picked up. Many areas of school life do not have specific staff delegated to deal with them. Informally, things do get checked, but this is not assured. There is no complacency, and all staff are determined that the deficiencies of the accommodation will not compromise their performance, but they have had insufficient help to prioritise the planning for development and so some essential aspects have not been put into place. There are no formal procedures for monitoring the progress of pupils with English as an additional language, but in reality these pupils get a fair deal; they are making good progress and are monitored just the same as all other pupils. The specialist staff from the local education authority have given a little advice to school staff about these pupils. There are no real issues over educational inclusion; the school is determined that all pupils get as good an education as they can, and its small size means that all staff know the pupils well.
50. The school has benefited greatly from having a supportive and active governing body in recent years. Their leadership of governors is good. The governors have been very involved getting the new building under way. Over the past couple of years governors have visited the school very regularly and reported on classroom practice. Governors are conscious that the school is part of a close-knit community and they meet regularly with parents and other visitors to the school. They have consulted parents and pupils about their views, and this is good practice. There are appropriate committees, but the one overseeing the curriculum meets infrequently, and has not found out the deficiencies in the curriculum detailed in this report. Governors are led by an effective chair, and generally statutory requirements are met, but there are some omissions in information for parents and in provision of care for pupils.
51. Most omissions are the result of the weak management in the past. A lot has had to be done, in a short time, and much has been done effectively. However, the school development planning, although satisfactory, needs to be better than this in order to move the school on in the most efficient way. The strategic planning for the school's improvement is satisfactory, but rather too lacking in focus, except for the detailed plans for the new building work. This long-term aim is about to be realised, to the relief of all. The problem in the past is that the rising numbers of pupils has had to be in evidence before planning permission was given for the building. A whole cohort of pupils has, therefore, gone through the school with sub-standard facilities, and governors are conscious that this has been unsatisfactory. They are aware of how much this has affected pupils' education. The evaluation of other targets in the school's work, such as the curriculum and the learning, is cursory; governors have left too much to the headteacher and staff. The governing body has members with expertise in appropriate areas, such as finance, and so the principles of best value are known and used. However, the costings and success criteria for several aspects of the development plan are insufficiently specific and so effective evaluation of what has been achieved is not easy to do.
52. The governors have had detailed plans to save up for their contribution to the cost of the building work. They have raised a considerable sum by their own efforts, and have kept reserves from public funding. The school is carrying forward a large sum into the next financial year. This sum represents over 20 per cent of the school budget. Over £30000 of this money is to pay for the school's contribution to the building work, to fit out the new accommodation and to resource it, especially with books and computers. There is still a large sum that is carried forward for reasons not specified in the long-term development plan for the school, although there is a shopping list of expensive items which are necessary as so little was spent on the fabric of the school and on

⁸ This is the reception class in this school.

resources until recently. However, it would appear that there has been a culture of carrying an over-large amount of money by governors for several years. Even taking account of the cash needed for the new building and essential replacements, nearly eight per cent of the school's funds are carried forward. This needs to be spent now in order to resource the education of current pupils. The local education authority staff have monitored the large carry forward, and the last audit report on the school's finances was complimentary. The governors might consider employing extra staff with this money to reduce the burden on current staff.⁹

53. There are suitable numbers of teachers and support staff to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. They are appropriately qualified with a range of skills and experience, but few have any management training, and this is what is most required now. This need has been identified by the school's sound performance management system for teachers. The very efficient secretary is a great help to the headteacher, and her input contributes greatly to the smooth running of the school. However, there are too few staff to cope with the lunchtime arrangements. The running of the lunch-break would tax even the most organised staff. Teachers do not have sufficient room, or time away from pupils, to prepare for the afternoon, as they have to be constantly vigilant to step in if there is a problem. Only one person is on duty within the dining room and outside. Not only might this compromise pupils' safety, it is an inefficient use of time. Young children sit in their places at dinner-time for over $\frac{3}{4}$ hour. Currently the school allows $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours as a lunch-break; this is too long in a rather short school day, and reduces the time available for teaching.¹⁰ The deficiencies in the domestic arrangements are affecting the delivery of the curriculum; a more effective committee of the governing body should have picked this up.
54. Resources are generally satisfactory and good use is made of them. Where there are deficiencies, such as in history, art and design and physical education, it is because there is nowhere to store them. But there is money set aside to acquire further resources, especially much-needed books, when the new extension is in operation.
55. The current accommodation is poor and severely detracts from effective teaching and learning. The school is not able to teach several subjects properly because of the cramped conditions. The Year 2 group and the Year 3 and 4 class are obliged to share the hall in the morning, when noise invariably impinges on each other's lessons. In the afternoon the older class remains in the hall, significantly curtailing any gymnastic use of the hall for the rest of the pupils. When the Year 2 group is using part of the hall these pupils have no access to computers for their ICT learning. There is no room for a separate library and the school has to make do with the narrow entrance corridor that is not conducive to research or engendering a love of books. The school lacks any small rooms for individual or group work. The peripatetic violin teacher is forced to use the kitchen. The headteacher does not have her own office, but shares a small room with the rest of the staff, so it is often difficult to have the privacy to deal with sensitive issues or the quiet to concentrate on her management role. The school can be accessed by people with mobility problems, but there are no toilet facilities for them; in fact there are too few lavatories all round. This will be rectified in the new extension. On the positive side, the reception class is sufficiently spacious and has good access to outside play and exploration. Externally the school has good accommodation with a well-marked tarmac area and a large grass field. The willow dome and the wooden pergola are attractive additions and give a good chance for imaginative play. The site of the swimming pool is gradually being turned into a safely cordoned off nature and pond area. The school community is eagerly awaiting the much-needed new extension so that it can provide vital space and bring the curriculum up to standard.
56. Given all that has been done recently, and all that the staff and pupils have had to tolerate with the accommodation, it is clear that, although a long way from perfect, the school is moving forward. Given the commitment of governors, staff and parents, it is well placed to move on faster.

⁹ This is now in hand, as noted before.

¹⁰ This issue has now been addressed, with the employment of extra staff and changing round the classrooms

Despite the relatively high cost of educating each pupil, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to continue the improvements already made, the governors, headteacher and staff must now:

1. Improve pupils' standards of attainment in physical education* across the school, in information and communication technology in Years 1 and 2*, and in history, geography and music in Years 3 and 4 by:
 - improving the schemes of work;
 - giving these subjects more emphasis;
 - devising and using appropriate assessment procedures;
 - preparing more challenging work for more able pupils;
 - acquiring further resources, as soon as storage facilities are available.*

It is accepted that the improvements in physical education, particularly gymnastics, are not possible until the building work is complete.

(paragraph numbers: 97. 107)

2. Get started on improvements to the accommodation already planned without delay.*
(paragraph numbers: 6. 23. 54. 55. 69. 72. 72. 78. 87. 91. 103. 111)

3. Improve the planning of the curriculum by:
 - planning the timetable more efficiently so that all subjects have sufficient time for teaching;**
 - increasing the time available for teaching over the school week;**
 - appointing a member of staff to co-ordinate the overall planning of the curriculum;
 - improved liaison with middle-school staff to ensure that all the programmes of study are covered over the four years of Key Stage 2 and that nothing is unnecessarily repeated;**
 - planning more effectively for pupils' multi-cultural development;
 - providing pupils with some activities outside the normal school day;**
 - giving training to the curriculum co-ordinators in the monitoring of curriculum planning.**(paragraph numbers: 2. 6. 22. 23. 26. 30. 47. 49. 53. 91. 97. 98. 100. 102. 107. 109. 111)*

4. Improve the assessment in many subjects* by:
 - devising sound procedures to assess pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in non-core subjects;
 - using this information to plan work that is at a suitable level for pupils to make progress in their learning;
 - appointing a member of staff to be responsible for assessment;
 - ensuring that the progress of pupils using English as an additional language is properly evaluated;**
 - making pupils' individual education plans more specific so that their progress is measurable.***(paragraph numbers: 38. 39. 49. 92. 102)*

5. Improve the monitoring of teaching by giving staff training in the methods of evaluating lessons*
(paragraph numbers: 47. 49)

6. Improve the procedures to ensure pupils' care by:
 - improving aspects of the building to ensure safety (a particular aspect has been brought to the attention of the governing body);**
 - up-dating the behaviour policy;*
 - devising a policy for restraint;**
 - acquiring an extra member of staff to help at lunchtimes;**
 - devising a policy and procedures to counter bullying, should it ever arise;
 - ensuring that there is total compliance with appropriate procedures.

(paragraph numbers: 33. 35. 36. 53)

In addition to these main issues, the governing body should ensure that all statutory requirements are met, and they should improve procedures to monitor the success of their planned improvements.

Note

The governors already have detailed plans well in hand to act on the issues concerned with the accommodation. The building work is planned to start in June of the current year.

A number of the other aspects of these key issues for action were also known to the school. These are marked*

Since the inspection team left the school, and before the publication of this report, issues marked with ** have been addressed, or partially addressed.

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	44

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	8	8	0	0	0
Percentage	0	20	40	40	0	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 five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	61
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002			14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
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	100 (100)	93 (100)	100 (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	13	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

The separate totals for boys and girls have been omitted as the numbers are so small.

*Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	58	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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**Financial information****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	191001
Total expenditure	167491
Expenditure per pupil	3160
Balance brought forward from previous year	22043
Balance carried forward to next year	45553

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	48
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	41	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	44	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	32	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	56	3	0	0
The teaching is good.	56	44	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	56	12	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	29	12	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	26	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	50	12	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	44	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	41	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	32	26	21	6

Other issues raised by parents

- benefits of a small school
- improvements over last 2 years

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE¹¹

57. Children start in the reception class in the September of the school year in which they are five. They all attend for the mornings only for the first term, and then full time in the spring term. Fourteen children are currently in the reception class; most were still four at the time of the inspection. Attainment on entry to the class varies, especially from year to year, as the groups are so small. Mostly it is at least as expected, and often above in key areas, such as personal, social and emotional development.
58. Children in this class make at least good progress, but the extent of the progress through the year cannot be evaluated in full at present, as they have, in reality, only been in school a few weeks. However, it is clear from the records that the pace is hotting up, and so nearly all children will be well on the way to working within the programmes of study for Key Stage 1 by the time they leave this class, even those who were not so well up when they first joined. The new Foundation Stage co-ordinator (the reception class teacher) is an experienced professional in this field, and in the relatively short time that she has been in the school has produced systems and structures to ensure a very good education for children of all abilities. The provision for children in this class, including the teaching, the curriculum and the general ethos is of high quality, and so there is a guarantee for parents that their child will settle in well and make at least good progress.
59. There are good records of children's attainment on entry to reception, including useful records from playgroups and nurseries. Very detailed records are kept on children's ongoing progress, based on the early learning goals for young children and on the government's new practice for assessing the attainment of children in the Foundation Stage. Children have records of achievement and targets for improvement including details of the support necessary. The curriculum provided is very broad and includes an imaginative and highly effective range of activities that cover all the areas of learning. All the work is planned using the 'stepping stones' towards the early learning goals, with objectives, details of strategies and resources and evaluation criteria. Work is presented to children according to their needs and is constructively assessed. The children's work seen was evidence of good progress in a short time. This is because the practice is very good.
60. The classroom is adequate in size and is well organised. There is not a lot of space for practical or messy activities, but staff and children cope well. Children's work and items to stimulate their interest are well displayed. There is good outside provision to develop children's physical and social skills. The reception class teacher has support from an effective learning support assistant for part of the day, and sometimes has help from parents, and students. These extra adults are well briefed and make a good contribution to the provision. The adults know the children very well and so all children get the individual attention they need. Relationships are good and children settle into school well. Parents are right to be happy with what is provided.
61. Some parents would wish that their children had the benefit of full-time placement in this class earlier in the school year. The governors have not explained well enough why they will not do this, or why they will not take in children on a staggered basis, so that children who are five early in the year have a full year in the reception class. As parents have a point, this is something that the school should be able to explain better, or accede to parents' wishes. Apart from this aspect, the partnership with parents of children in the reception class is good and does much to ensure that the children settle well into school life. The only area of concern is the arrangement for lunchtime. The time taken for the children to be served their meal and then to be taken out of the classroom is too long, and curtails the valuable time for rest and play.

¹¹ The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Teaching in this area underpins all that is done in reception. It is very good and so children are becoming confident individuals, who are ready for formal learning. Children are expected to be self-reliant, and, although staff are on hand to help, children usually try to do things for themselves before asking for help. Mostly children can cope with their own dressing needs and are aware of the needs of others. Due to the ethos of the classroom, they are excited about learning and show confidence when trying new things. Nearly all concentrate for long periods of time, and do not flit from one activity to the other. For many children this is very good progress. They are learning about the culture of this country, and can talk about why pancakes are made before Lent. However, in the past the children have looked at the festival of Sukkot and this is good, given that few have experiences of other religions.
63. Children tackle all tasks with enthusiasm and know the routines of the class well. They are very well behaved. They sit quietly and listen well to instructions and get on with the activities with no fuss. This is due to the very good relationships that they have with staff and each other. All children are well on the way to exceed this early learning goal before they start in Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

64. The high quality teaching and curriculum ensure that children of all abilities make good progress in all aspects of this goal for young children. Children listen very well and have speaking skills that are above those expected. They are eager to discuss their latest projects, such as the postal system and have a good range of vocabulary to support their conversation. They listen with rapt concentration to stories and music and do not shout out, even when they are captivated by the activities.
65. Children's reading skills are developing well. More able pupils read quite fluently and talk about the story with confidence at the sort of level usually expected for a child of about six. Children who were not so advanced as they joined the school are making good progress in learning words, and in using clues about the text from the pictures and the context. Children love listening to stories as the teacher tells them so well; they were gripped by the current story about Cinderella and keen to talk about the plot. They enjoy looking at books concerned with their current topics. Most know the names and sounds of letters and the most able read many words that are used in their project.
66. Children are taught to write with a joined script as soon as they join the school. They are at differing levels of success with writing, but most write their name with confidence. Most are beginning to form letters correctly. The most able can write simple sentences. In this area of learning children are likely to attain all aspects of the goal before they leave reception.

Mathematical development

67. The quality of teaching in this subject is very good. It is designed to complement the number work that children may have learned at home, and consolidate understanding before children move on to formal recorded mathematics. Much effective practical work is done and children of all abilities make good progress towards the targets set for them. Children are secure in the development of their numbers; most can count to 20, many in two's. Most can count to 100 in tens and the more able can state one more than a given number up to 20. Few can write the numbers properly up to ten, without help, but they do recognise the numbers. More able pupils can write up to 12 with accuracy and know about zero. Children are likely to attain the expected level before they leave reception.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. The teaching of all aspects in this area is very good and ensures that all children make at least good progress. A very good range of practical activities is provided in which the children have fun while learning the skills and concepts required for further progress. Much work has been done in

the scientific aspects of this goal, including looking at tortoises, measuring the height of their runner beans, and helping visiting firemen. Children have visited farms and made flower shops, and last year's children talk about this with pleasure. The current topic on the postal system is valuable in introducing geography. The teacher uses photographs to very good effect when presenting work in this area. More able children know that the earth is a planet and also that it is a globe. Children are used to the computer and those seen have adequate 'mouse' skills. They acquire sound concepts of the passing of time by discussing yesterday's and last week's activities and celebrating national events, including religious festivals. The progress of children's personal and social development is enhanced by their work learning about the world.

Physical development

69. No teaching of some skills was observed for this aspect, but the evidence shows that it is very thorough and the children are developing secure skills in delicate operations and in controlling their bodies. Children are likely to reach the expected levels of attainment before the end of the reception year. Children have good control of scissors when cutting out their shapes and use paint-brushes well. They play well outside, having good co-ordination. They move around the rather crowded classroom sensibly, making sound use of space. As there is little space to practise balancing, climbing and jumping when the weather precludes working outside, this is another example of how the accommodation is restricting the curriculum for young children, and hence the further development of their skills. However, their social skills are promoted well as they have to be careful when moving around, and take turns in activities, as the classroom space is restricted.

Creative development

70. The teaching of creative activities is very good and so children develop well in all aspects of this aspect of the curriculum. There are many examples of activities that are fun, and designed to promote imaginative play and to inculcate creativity and an individual approach to their work. Children have enjoyed making plays about 'Jack Frost' and Harvest Time, and taking part in pancake races. Many activities in reception incorporate music and the teacher encourages the singing of songs at every opportunity. Children make music and sing simple songs from memory very sweetly. They are very careful when painting and have a pronounced view on colours, two disputing whether a colour was gold, or really just yellow. The play-house is transformed into other buildings by careful staff and children play in there with conviction. Given the programme on offer, all children are likely to reach the early learning goal by the time they move into Year 1.

ENGLISH

71. In the 2002 national tests the pupils in Year 2 attained standards in reading and writing that were above those expected nationally. Their results were in line with those of pupils at similar schools. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils with English an additional language make good progress. The pupils' achievement remains the same in Years 3 and 4 so they attain above average standards, overall, when they leave the school. Boys make similar progress to girls.
72. Pupils' standards of speaking and listening are above those expected. In lessons nearly all pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to other pupils. In a lesson in Years 3 and 4 in which games are used as an example of instructional texts, the pupils give detailed explanations. Pupils have wide vocabularies. When comparing two old games they refer to the way they 'resemble' each other and speak of 'opponents'. The theme contributes well to their cultural development. The poor accommodation in the hall hinders the development of speaking and listening, but staff and pupils cope well. Both teachers and all the pupils are very considerate of the needs of others but it is still sometimes difficult for pupils to hear one another speak.
73. Standards in reading are above average. The pupils are encouraged to read at home as well as in school. Parents come into school to hear pupils read. This strengthens the school's links with parents and is an indication of the good parental support the school receives. The pupils do not

usually make a written comment about the book they are reading, which is a missed opportunity for them to evaluate their own work. There is a satisfactory stock of fiction and non-fiction books in the school library. The poor accommodation means that it is not as easy for the pupils to access books as it should be. This reduces the pupils' opportunities to extend their reading skills. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils are encouraged to explore books by a display captioned '*our star author is*'.

74. In Year 2 more able pupils read fluently, accurately and with understanding. They have very positive attitudes to reading, belong to a local library and talk about Roald Dahl as their favourite author. They use their knowledge of the alphabet to locate information in a non-fiction book. Average readers read generally accurately and can say what the passage is about. Less able readers read accurately at their own level and observe sentence punctuation. All are at least in line with the standards expected for their age. In Year 1 the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of letter-sounds to support their reading. This is reinforced with practise on the computer. More able readers in Year 4 read fluently, accurately, confidently and with expression. They talk in detail about the book they are reading and are beginning to infer what may happen next in the story. They use the internet to obtain information. Neither more able nor average readers read widely to take in non-fiction or poetry.
75. Most pupils have standards in writing that are average. Pupils are taught to join their letters from the time they enter the school. Although not all form their letters correctly, the good standard of presentation of their written work reflects their very good attitudes and behaviour. Those with a mature style could be encouraged to write in ink. At its best the writing that the pupils undertake extends their thinking and learning for a range of purposes. For example an average attaining pupil in Year 4 strikes the right tone when writing a letter. A higher attaining pupil uses some adventurous vocabulary when describing a '*shadowy, misty figure*'. This pupil handles direct speech well, writes in paragraphs and the spelling of common polysyllabic words is usually accurate. In Year 2 an average attaining pupil writes a poem about Bonfire Night. A more able pupil has a good sense of sentence structure and writes a story with a clear beginning, middle and ending. The school has identified a problem with spelling and is working to raise standards. Pupils do not write in a wide enough range of genres.
76. The quality of teaching seen ranges from very good to satisfactory and is good overall. The teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously and often add encouraging comments. However, the marking is not linked to National Curriculum targets and pupils are unaware of the level at which they are working and what they need to do to progress further. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy, although some lessons are overlong. In a very good lesson in Year 1, the pupils made very good progress because of good assessment. The lesson plan was amended because of work learned in the previous lesson. In a good lesson in Year 3/4 a brisk pace as the subject of homophones was introduced encouraged learning. The pupils responded well as they put the words into sentences. The teaching assistant supports the teaching of literacy well. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development.
77. Some good cross-curricular links are evident as when younger pupils write about Shabbat and older ones about Diwali which they study in religious education. Pupils in Year 1 practise their reading when they work from a cook book in a science lesson. However, not enough is planned to give pupils the opportunity to practise their writing for a wide range of different contexts while giving greater depth to their learning in subjects other than English, and helping to develop a wider cultural awareness. There is equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils.
78. The management of the subject is good. The reading link between home and school is of benefit to the pupils. A good range of data is available to monitor the pupils' progress and the use of this is satisfactory. There is not enough planned use of multi-cultural literature. Information and communication technology is used but there are few examples of pupils drafting, correcting and

printing their own work. Resources are generally satisfactory, but the lack of a library is holding back some development of literacy.

MATHEMATICS

79. Pupils' standards of attainment are average by the end of Year 2. In the 2002 national tests the pupils in Year 2 attained standards that were in line with those expected nationally, but results were below those of pupils in similar schools. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in learning, but those using English as an additional language often make good progress as they have grasped the mathematical language. Boys make similar progress to girls. In the past pupils have left the school with above average standards in many aspects of mathematics, but those currently in Years 3 and 4 are attaining at an average level and their progress has been satisfactory in number work and in work based on shape, space and measures. Caution must be exercised when interpreting trends, as the numbers of pupils are so small.
80. The pupils' attainment in number work is above expectation. In Year 2 evidence from the pupils' books indicates that nearly all are secure at the expected level in number work and are beginning to work towards the higher level as they count in 3s, 4s and 5s. In one lesson observed more able pupils showed their understanding of number by estimating with some accuracy where to place a given figure on a line between 360 and 370. Less able pupils access the lesson with the support of the teacher and need a number line to be sure of the sequence between 20 and 30. In Year 3/4 more able pupils know that multiplication is repeated addition and the work is pitched at a higher level when considering division as the inverse of multiplication. In short sessions of mental arithmetic the pupils are eager to respond to the challenge and answer quickly with an acceptable degree of accuracy. In Year 1 the pupils work at a higher level when they count confidently from 10 to 29 with more able pupils working well with numbers as high as 80.
81. The pupils' attainment in work based on shape, space and measures is above expectations. Pupils in Year 4 calculated area in a lesson seen and there is work in their books showing measuring in metres and centimetres and kilograms and grams. A particular challenge, which they cope with well, is measuring angles. In Year 2, the pupils record time in digital and analogue form and learn about the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. Work in Year 1 includes using non-standard measures, work on the recognition of three dimensional shapes and learning about time. Much of this work is above the expected level and demonstrates good learning.
82. Attainment in data handling and using and applying mathematics is not as well developed but is as expected overall. Pupils in all classes are able to explain their thinking. Open-ended questions for Years 3 and 4, in a plenary session, encourage the pupils' learning. A more able pupil in Year 4 explained very clearly how he has multiplied 24×8 by partitioning. Evidence of work on data handling is limited in Years 1 and 2, although in Years 3 and 4 information has been presented using Venn and Carroll diagrams. The pupils' behaviour and concentration in lessons and the neat presentation of work in their books indicates very good attitudes to the subject and this is of great help to their learning.
83. In lessons seen the teaching ranged from good to satisfactory; it was good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. When analysis of the pupils' books is taken into account then teaching overall is satisfactory. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and question pupils well, so targeting their individual level of understanding; this was seen in a good lesson in Year 2. Effective ongoing assessment is seen in a good lesson in Year 1 through the comments that are made about answers given by particular pupils. In a satisfactory lesson two pupils used the computer to reinforce their learning of multiplication tables but the task was not well matched to their needs. Pupils were observed working well together in groups and this makes a positive contribution to their social development. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced effectively. Scrutiny of the pupils' work shows little evidence of the use of information and communication technology. The pupils' work is marked conscientiously with encouraging comments but work is not levelled to National Curriculum targets. Some more able pupils are not well enough challenged, but overall there is equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils.

84. The management of the subject is good. The decision to teach separately the two year-groups in the youngest class (Years 1 and 2) is starting to reap the benefit and to raise standards. The school has a satisfactory range of assessment information from optional as well as statutory tests and this is used to set challenging targets. Some cross-curricular links are evident but these are under-developed, especially in science, and opportunities are missed for pupils to practise their numeracy skills in other subjects. Resources are satisfactory, including computers. More effective use could be made of information and communication technology but there is insufficient software for this, and the restrictions of the accommodation make the use of computers difficult for pupils in Year 2.

SCIENCE

85. Few lessons were observed, but other evidence points to the fact that pupils attain standards that are as expected by the end of Year 2 and also by the time they leave the school in Year 4. All pupils in the Year 2 group last year attained the required grade in the teachers' assessment for the National Curriculum tests, but only a third reached the higher level, which is average. Current pupils in Year 2 are working at higher levels than was the case last year. Pupils with special educational needs make particularly good progress, owing to the careful management of their needs. Most pupils in Year 4 are working at the expected level, and, similarly, few attain higher levels. The current group in Year 4 have not had consistently challenging work given to them, over their school careers, and so are still catching up on the acquisition of some essential concepts. The situation, however, looks better for the future as there has been a good emphasis on scientific enquiry recently and pupils' skills in this important area are improving.
86. The curriculum for science, based on a nationally recognised scheme of work and one suggested by the local education authority, is satisfactory. It gives pupils lots of opportunities to carry out their own investigations, and so their attainment in this aspect is at least as expected. However, in other programmes of study, work is not always presented at a high enough level to challenge the most able in Years 3 and 4, and so their achievement is restricted. The two year-groups in each class cover the required programmes of study in a rolling programme, and the Year 1 and 2 group have learned most of the necessary elements this year. They have understood the difference between living and non-living things and know about some properties of materials, such as magnetism. The lesson seen was well taught with several imaginative features, which gripped pupils' interest and made them want to learn more. As a result of the work on possible changes to materials, pupils can explain what happens when ingredients are mixed and dough is baked. Due to the careful support pupils of all abilities made good progress in the lesson. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 understand that some solids dissolve in water and that some do not. They use appropriate scientific vocabulary and older and more able pupils know how to devise a fair test and can explain why prediction is used. However, few are able to extrapolate from this and not all have sufficient understanding of concepts such as evaporation.
87. The teaching is satisfactory overall; it is better in Years 1 and 2 as it is based on a detailed analysis of individual pupils' attainment, and the lessons are planned in more detail. In both classes most work is properly marked and staff try to devise activities that will lead to pupils' involvement in their own learning. Pupils enjoy their science work and concentrate well on the practical tasks. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 worked well together in the lesson observed, which benefits their personal development as well as their scientific understanding. However, the teaching, and hence pupils' learning, is constrained by the accommodation; during practical activities, there is little space for pupils to move, and it is a good thing that pupils are so well behaved. Although satisfactory, the teaching could be better with more imagination, especially in Years 3 and 4. There is little in the way of information and communication technology planned to support the learning, and this is a weakness that could be easily addressed, given that the equipment is available. Little consideration has been given as to how pupils could use computers to record their experiments and as to how outside resources can be used. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development, but little to their spiritual or cultural development

as opportunities are missed, in this respect, to broaden the subject to include many interesting snippets of information which bring science to life.

88. The co-ordination of science is satisfactory, as the subject manager has observed the other teacher and knows what is going on. Assessment in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, with some strong features; in Years 3 and 4 it is satisfactory overall, but too little is done after the 'end of topic' evaluation to consider how the teaching could be improved next time. This leads to the lack of challenge for more able pupils and lack of detailed knowledge about how those using English as an additional language might, possibly, need more help with vocabulary.

ART AND DESIGN

89. Only one lesson was observed, as the inspectors were not in school all week; in this pupils' attainment was in line with national expectations. Other evidence shows that, at least in the practical aspects of the subject, pupils' attainment is as expected by the end of Year 2 and also by the end of Year 4. Pupils enjoy art and design and, in the lesson seen, worked purposefully in an atmosphere of quiet creativity. They appreciate the fact that, as one pupil said, *'There are no mistakes in art.'* Even with the restrictions of the accommodation pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of practical work and the achievement of pupils of all abilities is satisfactory. The lack of storage, and space to move, does restrict pupils ability to be as independent as they could be, but the staff's careful questioning helps them to think about what they are doing, and to respond to the tasks set in their own way. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and the good relationship between staff and pupils is of great benefit in their art lessons. As pupils are all treated as individuals, those of different backgrounds and abilities are helped to do their best.
90. The wall space to display pupils' work is very restricted, but there is a small range of work on show. Some good pictures in the style of Rousseau is on the wall of the Year 1 and 2 class, and pupils were clearly very taken with his work, and their efforts to produce pictures in his style. Some careful work using paint and charcoal is on display in the Year 3 and 4 class, but little evidence of the use of textiles or three-dimensional materials. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are currently making prints using collage and they produced some interesting work based on machine parts. A good feature in this work is that all the pupils had different ideas and nobody copied from anyone else. This is the result of sensitive teaching by the teacher, who encouraged pupils to think for themselves. A good range of materials was supplied, but too little use of information and communication technology is in evidence in the planning of lessons, and this is a weakness. Too little teaching was observed to be able to make a definite judgement on teaching and learning, but evidence of work produced indicates that they are satisfactory.
91. A further restriction brought about by the lack of space is the inadequate work done in the critical studies of the work of an appropriate range of artists and designers. The school has very few books, pictures, posters or software in this field, as there is too little storage space; this lack of resources has constrained pupils' attainment in the study and appreciation of art, and their attainment in this aspect of the subject is below that expected. This is particularly in evidence in the lack of work with reference to cultures and traditions other than the western Christian tradition, and as such the subject makes too little a contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is very little work of significant artists on display to interest and stimulate pupils, as there is little space to put it.
92. The management of the subject has been unsatisfactory, but is improving with the appointment of a new co-ordinator, who is aware of the difficulties that need to be overcome. It is now satisfactory. There is a very brief policy for art and design, which is of little help to staff. The curriculum is based on a nationally recommended scheme of work, but this has not yet been sufficiently customised for the school. The new co-ordinator is aware of this difficulty and has appropriate plans to address this issue. At the same time she will instigate proper assessment procedures linked to the curriculum planning. At present there is no real assessment of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills and no portfolios of pupils' work. The co-ordinator keeps a

check on what is happening by looking at the artwork produced. The subject co-ordinator has a realistic view of what is needed and knows that much more could be done to use art and design to extend pupils' multi-cultural understanding. Some work using a visiting artist has been carried out and appropriate visits to galleries are planned.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. By the end of Years 2 and 4 pupils have standards of attainment that are in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Boys make similar progress to girls. One lesson was seen during the inspection so the judgement is based mainly on analysis of the pupils' work and on discussion with them.
94. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 follow the whole sequence of learning by designing, making and then evaluating the puppet that is their finished article. In a lesson seen they sorted different fruit and vegetables with the teacher before observing closely one fruit that has been cut up, and drawing it and labelling what they saw. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have very positive attitudes to the subject and have a clear understanding of the different aspects of design and technology. They talk about the different materials they have used which include wood, material they have sewn, electrical equipment and food when they made sandwich fillings.
95. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in both classes. In the lesson seen planning was detailed and suitably matched to the needs of the two year-groups. Resources are well prepared and well organised and this helps the pupils' learning. A link is made to information and communication technology but this does not significantly increase the learning in the lesson. Analysis of work in Years 3 and 4 shows evidence of systematic teaching with marking that encourages the pupils.
96. The subject management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a policy that has been ratified by the governing body. The scheme of work is based on national guidelines and is satisfactory. The pupils' work is evaluated but this assessment is informal and not linked to National Curriculum attainment targets. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social development. Resources are satisfactory and have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

HUMANITIES – HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

97. No lessons were seen in history or geography but evidence of the scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils and co-ordinators, shows that pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 but below those expected by the end of Year 4. The problem lies in the curriculum for both subjects; there has not been sufficient teaching in order for pupils to acquire the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have been disadvantaged by the cursory approach to the humanities over the last four years, including the lack of planned provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development using history and geography. Pupils of all abilities have made similarly unsatisfactory progress. No evidence was seen of teaching to a higher level, which would challenge more able pupils, nor of work given that is appropriate to the needs of lower attaining pupils and those using English as an additional language. The situation is more positive now, with a new co-ordinator, but the school is not aware of the low level of pupils' attainment in the older class.
98. The school teaches history and geography alternately in half term blocks. This is fine in theory, but the lack of work produced by pupils in Year 4 in their books, and the lack of evidence of their learning in the teachers' files, shows that the time has not been sufficient, and has not been used efficiently. Part of the difficulty is that there has been insufficient liaison over the years, between the middle school to which most pupils transfer, and this lower school, to ensure a coherent delivery of the agreed curriculum. Some aspects of the subjects are, therefore missed, for example a local study, and others repeated, for example the ancient Egyptians. In history there is

a heavy emphasis on the period from the Romans until the Vikings in Years 3 and 4 and only minimal coverage of ancient Egypt, Tudor explorers and life in World War Two. One geography topic that is covered contains significantly more history than geography. This problem is long-standing and is inherited from the previous staff. The recommended time to teach these units of study to the required depth is longer than the school has allowed. The school is aware of the need to address these issues.

GEOGRAPHY

99. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils look at aspects of the local community. They discuss the journey to school and think about what transport would be needed for journeys farther afield. They go out to look at the village and develop their skills by drawing individual maps on their return. Their sequencing skills are furthered by putting in order the walk of an animal in a story. This makes a good link to literacy. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a sound recall of work done on the environment. They talk confidently and with understanding about deforestation causing floods, about pollution from acid rain killing trees and about the effect of sewage being discharged into a river. They have used a globe and atlases and have a satisfactory general understanding, but their map skills are less well developed. However, pupils in Year 4 do not have secure knowledge and understanding of the physical and human features of different localities, nor can they explain the characteristics of different places.
100. The presentation of the work in pupils' books shows good attitudes and behaviour. The teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. A useful link is made to mathematics when the pupils tally the street furniture in the locality. They take work home when they find out where some food comes from. In Years 3 and 4 the learning overall is unsatisfactory because of unsatisfactory curriculum planning. In the work on the environment the pupils' research skills are encouraged when they use reference books and the internet for information. A visiting speaker from the local authority enhances the pupils' interest and understanding.

HISTORY

101. Satisfactory work has been presented to pupils in Years 1 and 2 and they have a sound grasp of historical concepts such as old and new. The work of pupils in Years 3 and 4 is sketchy; very little has been produced over the last two years. Some satisfactory work that would lead to sound learning has been done; examples include a visit to an air museum and a visit from former airmen from the United States in World War Two, but these have not been properly written up or recorded. No teaching was seen but evidence suggests that learning is unsatisfactory. The teaching has been constrained by the curriculum and this means that pupils have learned too little. Although some interesting worksheets have been produced by the teacher, work is not differentiated according to pupils' ability. There is virtually no evidence of the use of information and communication technology and pupils have not been required to use their literacy skills well. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 show interest in history but know very little about key people in the periods that they have studied. More able pupils can put key periods of history in order, but generally, pupils' knowledge of historical skills, such as source material, is below expectations.
102. History and geography have not been managed well, and this unsatisfactory co-ordination is key to pupils' lack of progress. The teaching has not been monitored. There are no effective formal assessment procedures and so the staff do not know how little the pupils know and understand. The co-ordinator is relatively new to the post and has not had the opportunity to develop the role. This leads to unsatisfactory learning in Years 3 and 4 because of the school's curriculum planning. Resources are satisfactory for geography but unsatisfactory for history, especially of artefacts, as there is nowhere to store them. The subjects make some contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development, but not enough.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103. By the end of Year 2 the pupils attain standards that are below those expected nationally but by the end of Year 4 they are in line with national expectations. In Years 1 and 2, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make unsatisfactory progress. In Years 3 and 4 all pupils make good progress. There is no significant difference between the progress of boys and girls. The poor accommodation is the reason for attainment that is below that expected and the unsatisfactory progress of the pupils through Key Stage 1, especially in Year 2. The pupils in Year 2 have no access to computers for the whole of each morning when they work in the hall and so do not have sufficient opportunity to practise their skills, or to use them in English and mathematics. No lessons were seen and the judgement is based on discussions with the pupils and analysis of the files of pupils in Years 3 and 4.
104. The pupils in Year 1 use the computer to write letters to Farmer Brown and a large majority can print their work independently. They have appropriate control of the mouse. Discussion with pupils in Year 2 indicates that they have not retained what they have learned although they are aware of the use of computers in places like banks, supermarkets and libraries. Their skills in entering, saving and retrieving work are below those expected. They are very slow when using the keyboard, and need lots of help. Discussion with pupils in Year 4 reveals very positive attitudes when they talk about work they have done. They know how to combine text and graphics, have sent and received e-mails and used a program to control and draw a shape on the screen. They have used an art package, designed a poster and used the internet to support and enhance their work in history and geography. They have used a special microscope so that they can study an object on the screen.
105. No judgement is possible on teaching in Years 1 and 2, as none was seen, but the school knows that little is done. In Years 3 and 4 the teaching and practise of key skills takes place in small groups during the lunch break. The results the pupils obtain, and the careful assessment that is linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study, indicate that teaching is good, and so pupils' achieve well and know what they are doing. There is equality of access for all pupils in Years 3 and 4 but pupils in Year 2 have too limited access to the subject; the school is aware of this, and has appropriate plans to rectify this issue.
106. The subject management is satisfactory. There is a policy that has yet to be ratified by the governing body. For a scheme of work the school has not adopted national guidelines but has produced its own material. There is no internet access policy but a secure site is used, and so pupils are safe as they have restricted access to the internet. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Resources are satisfactory in number but their arrangement does not help the direct teaching of skills.

MUSIC

107. Very little music was seen, and only singing for pupils in Years 3 and 4, but these observations, and other evidence, suggests that pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 but below those expected by the end of Year 4. This is because pupils have had too little teaching in all the programmes of study for quite a time. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 only do 40 minutes class music a week, and this is not enough. Music is insufficiently used at other times, for instance to discuss a piece of music and write about it, which could extend their literacy skills. Neither is sufficient music used across the curriculum for pupils' effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An African group has visited the school but, on the whole, very little is done to introduce pupils to a satisfactory range of non-western music. The new co-ordinator is aware that music has had too low a profile recently and that it has deteriorated from the time when it was traditionally a strong aspect of the school.

108. Pupils' singing, in lessons and assemblies is satisfactory overall, but rather lack-lustre and lacking in expression. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy playing untuned percussion instruments and can identify different groups of instruments. They understand how symbols can be used to represent different sounds. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 attempt to sing in two parts but need the support of the teacher's strong voice. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as other pupils, which is unsatisfactory overall, but those who are may have talents are seriously deprived of music teaching, and this is poor. The aspect of music of most concern is that concerned with listening and appraising music. Very little is done and the result is that, in discussion, pupils in Year 4 could not name one composer.
109. No definite judgement can be given about the teaching of music, as so little was seen, but the teachers have sufficient musical skills to teach what is required. That said, opportunities are missed to extend pupils' musical knowledge and understanding by using appropriate musical terminology, as the case arises. Mostly pupils' unsatisfactory achievements are due to the unsatisfactory curriculum. Not enough has been taught, especially about composing and appraising music, for pupils to be able to achieve satisfactory standards, and this is due to unsatisfactory planning and lack of time.
110. The leadership and management of the subject have just started to improve with the appointment of a keen teacher who is aware of what needs to be done. When she took over there were no records of what had been planned or done, and there was no policy for music. A useful new policy for music has been devised by the co-ordinator, but not yet agreed by the governors. The curriculum is planned using the nationally recommended guidelines but it has not yet customised for the needs of the pupils. At present the curriculum is not well enough planned to ensure that pupils have a satisfactory progression of activities to develop good knowledge, understanding and skills. Teachers make their own assessments of pupils' skills but these are not consistently used or the format agreed. There is a satisfactory range of resources, except for recorded music for pupils to listen to. A few pupils learn to play the violin with the help of a member of the peripatetic teaching service, but more would like to learn. No pupil now learns the recorder, which used to be done after school, and some parents are disappointed about this.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. At the end of Years 2 and 4 the pupils attain standards that are below those expected nationally for their age. The progress in learning of all pupils is unsatisfactory. This is because of the poor standard of accommodation. The small hall is used as a classroom and when it is cleared for physical education the work the pupils do on the floor in gymnastics cannot be safely transferred to the wall bars and other large equipment because of the fixed furniture. Pupils are taken swimming, and the field is used when the weather is good, but as the whole curriculum cannot be taught effectively, standards achieved are not as they should be.
112. In a dance lesson in Key Stage 1, the pupils moved well to the music as they pretended to be snakes. They were aware, when the music changed, of the sort of movement that is needed if they are to represent an elephant. Their response shows an awareness of rhythm with one pupil commenting, '*We must be marching*'. The lesson contributed to their social development as they showed good awareness of the needs of others in the confined spaces. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils warmed up with curling and stretching movements as they performed a movement sequence. As the lesson continued the pupils worked well in groups and this helps their social development. Pupils are aware of the need for a good starting position and the need to link different movements together as the speed of the music changes.
113. In the dance lessons seen the teaching and learning were good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. In the good lesson an effective link was made to the art of Henri Rousseau and the pupils were encouraged to reflect and learn as they watch short examples of the work of others. The teacher and the teaching assistant worked well as a team to enhance the pupils'

learning. In the satisfactory lesson the resources were well organised and health and safety issues are properly addressed, but there was not enough encouragement for the pupils to raise their standards. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the teaching of physical education overall.

114. The subject management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked hard to produce detailed termly plans that are based on national guidelines and other material. A sound policy document has been ratified by the governing body. There is a private football coaching club, but there are currently no extra-curricular activities to enrich the curriculum. Assessment is informal. The co-ordinator has identified some deficiencies in resources and has firm plans to address these. She has organised a mini-marathon to raise money for leukaemia research, so making a good contribution to the pupils' social development.