

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **BARWICK & STOFORD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Barwick, Yeovil

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123718

Headteacher: Mrs S Coleman

Lead inspector: Mr M S Burghart

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> September 2003

Inspection number: 255444

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant & junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	73
School address:	South View Barwick Yeovil Somerset
Postcode:	BA22 9TH
Telephone number:	01935 476736
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Wilson
Date of previous inspection:	September 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Barwick and Stoford Community Primary is in a rural setting near Yeovil in Somerset. The school mostly draws pupils from the two villages of the same names. Overall pupils' social and economic circumstances are about average. There are 73 pupils on roll, all of whom are of British origin. Pupils' attainment on entry to reception represents a wide range but overall is below average for Somerset. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs list is above average, but no pupils receive extra help as a result of formal statements. The percentage of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the start of reception and the end of Year 6 is about average. No pupils receive extra support due to having English as an additional language. The school is part of the SHARE project which is a family learning programme. Staff turnover in the last four years has been high and there have been two headteachers. Presently two out of the three class teachers are in their first year of teaching and the other teacher has just returned from leave of absence. Many initiatives are new and have yet to be worked through with a stable staff.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20865	Mr M S Burghart	Lead inspector	Mathematics, Information & communication technology, Creative, aesthetic, practical & physical subjects, Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage.
9644	Mr M Whitaker	Lay inspector	
22578	Mr D G Jones	Team inspector	English, Science, Humanities.

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The school provides pupils with an overall satisfactory education.** Pupils and staff get on very well together in a strong family atmosphere. Recent changes in staff have led to good teaching. Under the effective leadership of the head, teachers and support staff perform as a good team. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children are achieving well in reception because teaching is very good, but there is still a need to improve resources for outdoor activities;
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well because they are well supported;
- The effective leadership of the head results in staff forming a good team and teaching well;
- Standards in writing and using and applying mathematics (maths), though improved, are still below average, with girls doing less well than boys aged eleven;
- Older pupils do not achieve as well as they could in information and communication technology (ICT) because they have not covered all elements of the curriculum in sufficient depth;
- There is a strong family atmosphere and pupils' attitudes are good. Behaviour and attendance are very good. However, some aspects of communication need improving.
- Whilst pupils' social development is very good their spiritual awareness is less strongly promoted than it should be;
- The head carries too much curriculum responsibility and the management roles of staff are underdeveloped.

Since the last inspection the school has made satisfactory progress against issues raised and new initiatives. Recent improvements with greater stability of staff have been good and these are bringing about progress in planning, standards, teaching, and raising pupils' achievement. The most obvious improvements have been in matters of health and safety; and in provision for reception (Foundation Stage), although the development of outdoor facilities has been too slow.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	E	E	E*
Mathematics	B	E	E*	E*
Science	C	E*	E*	E*

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

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

*E\* grading would appear to put the school in the bottom 5% of primaries nationally, but with only 9 pupils in the year group statistics can be misleading.*

**Pupils now achieve satisfactorily with strengths in the performance of pupils with SEN who usually do well for their ability and experience.** Children generally start school with below average levels of attainment, but now make good progress in reception and nearly all reach the goals children are expected to reach by age six. This represents good achievement and is a positive sign for the future. Although below average in English and science, and average in mathematics, results of 2003 tests showed marked improvement in all three subjects with much higher proportions of pupils achieving above average levels at the end of Year 6. The school is aware of weaknesses in writing and some elements of maths, and the slightly lower than average performance of girls. It already has these as priorities for improvement.

**Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are judged as good with very good features.** Social development is very good with moral good. There is more to do to improve spiritual awareness. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to take responsibility. Relationships throughout are very good and this contributes to the good ethos. Attendance is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a satisfactory quality of education.**

**Teaching is now good with very good features in reception.** Literacy and numeracy are well taught. Gaps in marking last year are being put right. Learning support assistants (LSAs) make a good contribution. Pupils with SEN are well supported. Teachers manage mixed-age classes effectively. The curriculum provided is satisfactory, although there is a need to raise the emphasis on some elements of maths, ICT, art and geography. Significant improvements to the curriculum for the Foundation Stage mean children are achieving well. The school takes good care of pupils. Consideration of health and safety is good, but the quality of the temporary classroom gives cause for concern. Assessment procedures are now good in English, maths, science, reception and SEN. Identifying specific targets in literacy is proving effective in raising standards. There is a good partnership with parents and the community, notwithstanding some disagreement over induction arrangements.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership of the headteacher is good. Whilst day to day management is good the overall management of the school is satisfactory.** The head has held the school together and maintained educational direction during significant staff change. She is well supported by the senior teacher. Currently because the head is responsible for all but two curriculum areas this makes monitoring difficult. The management of SEN and behaviour are strengths of the school. Governors are supportive and make a satisfactory contribution to management, especially to staffing, SEN and building initiatives.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents express support for the school. They are particularly pleased with the family ethos, good teaching and the quality of care. They show least confidence in arrangements for induction and homework and would welcome improvements to communication. Pupils clearly like the school and speak with enthusiasm about the friendliness of staff and how they are listened to. Some older pupils would appreciate more opportunities to use computers.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards still further especially by providing more opportunities for writing, mathematical problem solving and data handling; ICT (making more use of it to support the curriculum); and geography;
- Develop the management roles of teachers, delegating more responsibility to staff as they become more experienced;
- Improve opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual awareness;
- Continue to improve outdoor provision for children in reception, notably with regard to climbing and ride-on equipment;
- Develop communication further with parents over the induction process.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Achievement for pupils across the school was satisfactory last year and standards were broadly what is expected from pupils at seven and eleven. For the above average proportion of pupils with SEN this means that their achievement was good. The school knows that girls performed less well than boys, and that standards in writing and some aspects of mathematics were below average for both. After only two weeks of the new school year although satisfactory there are indications that pupils' achievement and standards are being improved through consistently good teaching and support.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in reading are average throughout the school and above average for higher attainers;
- Standards are below average in problem solving and data handling in maths because these elements have been underemphasised;
- ICT standards for older pupils are below what is expected because not all required elements have been covered in sufficient depth;
- Children now do well in reception because of improved planning and very good teaching and support. Nearly all children reach the expected goals for this age by the time they are six;
- In 2003 National Curriculum tests (SATs) for eleven year olds, although results were still below average, higher proportions of pupils achieved above average levels;
- In half the lessons seen pupils' achievement was judged as good, being satisfactory in the remainder, because teaching is good;
- From a below average start rising to an average level by the time pupils leave, the school can show it adds value to what pupils achieve;
- School records show standards of swimming continue to be good;
- Standards for older pupils in geography are below expectations due to a lack of emphasis on the subject.

#### **Commentary**

##### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002***

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.9 (13.7)	15.8 ( 15.7)
writing	13.4 (11.5)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	16.8 (15.8)	16.5 (16.2)

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

##### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002***

*As there were less than 10 pupils in the year group the table is omitted.*

1. Because of small numbers in each year group and above average levels of SEN, statistics can be misleading. A review of samples of pupils' work from the previous year and teachers' records confirm that most pupils achieved satisfactorily. This seems to be the same judgement as the last inspection, and reflects the school's own evaluation of the interim years. However, two significant improvements have been made. Children in reception now achieve well to reach standards which are average at age six, and higher attaining pupils are more likely to fulfil their potential and reach



above average levels. This is because of developments to teaching with a more stable staff and better management of the curriculum through improved planning and assessment.

2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are consolidating the good progress made in reception. Their achievement is satisfactory. Standards of reading and maths are as expected nationally by aged seven with strengths in numeracy. The school sees writing as an area for development and this is being improved by good use of individual targets for each pupil.

3. Pupils' performance in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall with indications of recent progress. Reading and numeracy standards are at least as good as they should be, but there has been too little work in problem solving and data handling where standards are below expectations. Writing remains an area for improvement with a lack of opportunities for pupils to extend writing skills in other subjects.

4. In the Foundation Stage children achieve well and make good progress especially in communication, language and literacy. Children's achievement is very good in personal, social and emotional development where learning to work and play with others is a priority. The success of children in reception reflects much improved provision.

5. Standards are not high enough in ICT and geography partly because the headteacher has had to take responsibility for ten subjects. Understandably this has negatively affected the monitoring of some elements. As new staff gain experience there is a need to delegate management of some curriculum areas, and to support teachers in developing skills as co-ordinators to guarantee standards and ensure appropriate emphasis and coverage.

6. The school successfully sets out to be fully inclusive and involve all pupils regardless of gender or ability in all activities. In the last two years whilst the performance of those with SEN and more able pupils has improved, girls have achieved less well than boys in writing and mental mathematics. The school has made a good analysis of possible reasons and can show that disproportionate numbers of special needs between girls and boys appears to explain results. Work is in hand to redress the balance, involving better assessment and target setting.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Attendance and punctuality are very good. Pupils demonstrate good, positive attitudes in lessons and are enthusiastic about taking up opportunities offered by the school. Behaviour is very good. There have been no exclusions over the last year. The school makes at least satisfactory provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development with more to do to raise spiritual awareness.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' attendance, and support provided by parents to ensure good attendance, are very good;
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, at play and in moving about the school is very good;
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour;
- Relationships at all levels throughout the school are at least good;
- The personal, social and emotional development of children in reception is very good.
- Pupils' social awareness is very good as a result of provision for their social development;
- Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence	
School data	3.7

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0

National data	5.4
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National data	0.5
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The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### **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	72	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	1	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	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

7. Pupils' attendance, at 96.3%, is very good and well above the national average for primary schools, with no unauthorised absence. Pupils enjoy attending school - a fact confirmed by their responses to the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire - and the school has the support of parents and the community. In lessons, pupils are interested, enthusiastic and keen to participate, as was seen in a Years 2 and 3 music lesson in which pupils were considering how music could be used to represent animals. Pupil behaviour in school is of a very high standard. The school makes its expectations of behaviour clear from the outset when children join the reception class. All staff are skilled in classroom management. The school is inclusive - all pupils are involved in all activities - and there is no evidence of harassment towards any group of pupils. Neither parents nor children regard bullying as a problem.

8. Relationships at all levels are very good. Adults in school work together co-operatively and provide good role models for pupils. Teachers treat children with respect, value their views and readily give credit for positive contributions. Pupils work co-operatively in pairs and groups and in the school's mixed-year classes. Older pupils support younger ones well. The school council provides a number of pupils with additional opportunities to take on responsibilities within their school community. The very positive relationships between LSAs and the children they support contribute significantly to pupils' progress.

9. Spiritual development has not been a priority over the recent past, although it was a minor issue at the last inspection. As a result it is the weakest element of pupils' personal development.

The school has not yet made sufficient progress in highlighting elements of the curriculum in which spiritual development might be planned. Subjects such as art, music and science have insufficient reference to pupils' spiritual development in their planning. However, aspects of religious education (RE) and collective worship provide satisfactory opportunities for spiritual development, which teachers utilise.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection major staff change and two different headteachers have had significant unsettling effects and this has restricted the school's development. Presently the school has done well to return to a satisfactory position, and now continues to improve.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching is good. This represents improvement from the last report. Much of this is very recent considering two of the three class teachers were not in the school last term and that the other only began her career at Christmas. Evidence from samples of pupils' work from the last school year points to teaching having been broadly satisfactory with strengths in renewed provision for more able pupils in English, maths and science. However, there were some weaknesses in marking and record keeping for older pupils.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff make a good team;
- Teaching for children in reception is very good;
- Literacy, numeracy and science are well taught;
- Pupils with SEN are taught well;
- Staff manage mixed-age classes effectively;
- A minority of lessons lack pace;
- Homework is used satisfactorily to support the curriculum.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7	16	4	0	0	0

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

10. Pupils' learning is closely associated with the quality of teaching. Currently it is good in reception after only two weeks part time attendance as a result of very good teaching and support. Across the rest of the school learning is now good because teaching is good.

11. During the inspection all of the 27 lessons seen (unannounced) were at least satisfactory, seven in every ten were good or better, and one in four sessions was very good. All teachers had some good lessons and the quality of support teaching from LSAs was consistently good.

12. Highlights common to most lessons are in: questioning which prompts pupils to think and answer on the basis of reasoning and opinions; very good relationships; pupil management; and a very good commitment to raising standards. The best lessons provide work at different age and ability levels and this helps pupils, especially with SEN and the more able, to achieve well. Good examples of such effective challenge were in reception and Year 1 literacy and Years 2 and 3

English where in both sessions expectations were very high and contact with staff markedly improved pupils' performance.

13. Relative weaknesses in teaching are in a lack of pace in a few lessons and pupils not being active enough: for example in a physical education (PE) lesson on the field pupils were not sufficiently physically extended.

14. Teaching and support for pupils identified as having SEN are strengths of the school. These bring together very good relationships and levels of care with good (and much improved) assessment which clearly shows what pupils need to do in order to improve. As a result pupils respond very well to work targeted at their needs and achieve well, some reaching national average levels. The school's recently developed daily 'intervention time', when all Year 4 to Year 6 pupils are grouped by ability and taught in small groups, is very successful.

15. Assessment is used effectively in the core subjects of English, maths and science. Literacy targets mounted on cards in pupils' books serve as very good reminders of what everyone is aiming at. ICT log books are used to record coverage and progress. Until now these have not been completed well enough in Years 4 to 6 but do show that standards and achievement for younger pupils are satisfactory. The school intends to introduce assessment to gauge progress in other subjects but this is in development planning and will follow the settling-in period for new staff.

16. The quality of mixed-age and ability class teaching was a focus for the inspection. Inspectors find that despite the relative inexperience of teachers this is proving effective. Good planning, better assessment, renewed record keeping and very good communication between staff are all having positive impacts on what pupils can do, know and understand. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that improvements will result in raised standards and higher achievement.

## **The curriculum**

The school provides its pupils with a satisfactory curriculum.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision for pupils with SEN is good and as a result pupils make good progress and achieve well;
- The curriculum for swimming is good and as a result pupils make good progress;
- The support for learning in extracurricular activities is good;
- 'Intervention time' provides good opportunities for pupils of all abilities in Years 4 to 6 to receive support for their learning in small groups;
- The recently developed scheme of work for personal, social and health education is good, although it has not yet had time to be implemented fully;
- There are weaknesses in the curriculum for maths, English, ICT and geography.

## **Commentary**

17. The provision, planning and teaching for SEN pupils are good. As a result, pupils make good progress and achieve well in relation to their previous standards. Some make such good progress that they obtain the same standards as those expected of all pupils nationally. However, the school's policy on 'Gifted and talented' pupils is in need of review to clarify expectations.

18. Provision for swimming is good, and by the time pupils leave the school, virtually all can swim 25 metres unaided.

19. Through the good use of teachers and LSAs, regular 'intervention time' gives all older pupils the opportunity to have specific support in smaller groups formed on the basis of assessment. As a result, standards in both literacy and numeracy have improved and results of national tests, although still below average, were more positive this year.

20. All teachers take after school clubs, which extend learning outside the school day. Sporting activities such as athletics, football, netball and fun sports for the younger pupils, run alongside craft, keyboard and French club, giving a good range. These are attended by the majority of pupils. The school organises cultural visits to support areas of the curriculum such as history.

21. The relatively new scheme of work for personal, social and health education is well written. However, as it has only recently been put in place there has not yet been enough time for it to be seen completely in practice.

22. There are weaknesses in the curriculum in mathematics in the way pupils are taught to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding and to handle data. At the same time, in ICT, too little time is spent on developing pupils' ability to use information technology in controlling activities and to sense physical data. In English, opportunities for writing, noted in the work completed by the pupils in the top class last year, were not sufficient to raise standards to the expected level. In geography, whilst work is broadly related to the nationally recommended guidance, too little note is taken of the development of skills. A lack of emphasis on some aspects of art, music and science has led to pupils' spiritual awareness being underdeveloped.

### **Care, guidance and support**

This is a school that cares for its pupils well. There are good provisions for child protection, and ensuring pupils' well-being, health and safety - provision in the Foundation Stage is especially good. Adults in school know children well, ensuring that support, advice and guidance is readily available. Pupils' views on school are consulted to a satisfactory extent.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The care of children in the Foundation Stage is a strength;
- The quality of relationships between children and adults, ensuring that all children know that there is an adult to turn to should they need to do so, is good;
- The promotion of a safe and healthy environment is good;
- There are weaknesses in the arrangements for the induction of children into the Foundation Stage.

### **Commentary**

23. The previous inspection report, whilst concluding that staff were very caring, found that some aspects of the school's care for pupils were unsatisfactory. There were inadequate arrangements for first aid, the governing body had no health and safety policy, and staff did not understand child protection matters. In addition, arrangements for monitoring personal development were limited by weaknesses in assessment procedures. These deficiencies have been addressed. A governor has responsibility for the health and safety policy, and the premises are regularly inspected. All the necessary procedures are now in place. Health and safety is thoroughly addressed in lessons, such as PE and art. Children are encouraged to adopt a healthy diet by the promotion of fruit and vegetables for mid-morning snacks. Minor injuries are dealt with by lunchtime supervisors but it is a fact that the headteacher is the only staff member holding a first aid certificate. Training for other staff members is presently being arranged. All staff, including support staff and voluntary helpers, are aware of the school's child protection procedures. Arrangements are being made for the senior teacher to be trained in child protection in addition to the head.

24. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are still largely informal and reliant upon staff knowledge of pupils and the positive relationships between adults and children. Nonetheless, children have considerable confidence in the adults in school; in the pre-inspection questionnaire, 91% said that there was an adult they could go to with any worries.

25. Arrangements for induction into school have been criticised by a number of parents. For the first five weeks of the new academic year reception children attend, in alternating groups, for half days only. Parents report that many of their children wish to attend school full time from the outset and do not understand why they are unable so to do. Parents are concerned about the effect upon friendship groups and the lack of advance notice given to parents. The headteacher and governors are aware of parental concerns in this regard.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has good links with the majority of its parents, although a significant minority complain of inadequate communications. There are sound links with the community and with other schools; links with the pre-school group could be more effective.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of end of year reports for pupils is very good;
- Staff are very approachable;
- Links with the secondary school are good;
- Stronger links with the pre-school group would be helpful;
- Improved arrangements are needed for seeking parents' views.

### **Commentary**

26. The school works hard to create effective links with parents and, for the majority of parents, these arrangements work well. There is, however, a significant minority of parents who do not feel that they are kept well informed about their children's progress. In the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire, 26% of respondents were unable to agree that they were kept well informed. The school provides regular newsletters throughout the term, written in parent-friendly language, and two written reports a year. The end of year report is particularly good - each subject of the National Curriculum is addressed individually and the child's effort and attainment in English, maths and science are objectively rated. Comment on the child's personal development is provided, as are targets for future endeavour. Parents are given an interim report in the spring term - this is presented as a series of symbols showing whether the child's attainment in each subject is good, average or below average. A brief note on behaviour is included. Parents appear to ascribe little value to these interim reports. Although some parents are dissatisfied with communications between home and school, all of the respondents to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem. A number of parents spoken to during the inspection commented upon the ready accessibility of staff. The school has, however, little history of seeking parents' views.

27. Links with parents contribute well to supporting children's learning. Parents support the school through home reading and other homework. The school aids parental involvement by providing each child with a planner, which includes an overview of the year's curriculum, homework, the child's targets and records of merits and detentions. Fortnightly SHARE sessions are provided to enable parents and children to work together on areas of learning. A number of parents volunteer to assist in school.

28. Links with partner institutions are of variable quality. There is good liaison with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer. A science teacher from the secondary school visits, and Year 6 pupils use the laboratories there. A French teacher helps to support the after-school French club. A Year 11 student was in school at the time of the inspection as part of her work experience. Transition arrangements are thoughtful and effective and parents are happy with them. Liaison with the pre-school group in the village is, however, less effective. A few parents complained that the pre-school group was unaware of this year's induction arrangements before parents told them. Some feel that there are insufficient opportunities for pre-school children to visit the school before joining.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher is good; day to day management is good, and the overall management of the school is satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head has led the school through a period of substantial staff change whilst successfully maintaining educational focus in a good development plan;
- New staff are well supported and inducted into the school;
- Leadership of provision for the Foundation Stage is good;
- Because the head has had to take responsibility for nearly all subjects some aspects of monitoring have suffered;
- The management of SEN is good and one of the school's strengths;
- Governors give positive support, particularly in staffing, SEN and issues concerning the buildings. Their contribution to managing the school is sound;
- Communication with parents over arrangements for children to begin school needs improving.

### Commentary

#### *Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	214834	Balance from previous year	12172
Total expenditure	190409	Balance carried forward to the next	24425
Expenditure per pupil	2759		

29. Following an unsettled period since the last inspection the school now has a stable staff. The head has managed to keep the school moving forward by maintaining a good development plan which has raising standards as its central aim. This resulted in improvements in SATs in 2003 with more pupils achieving above average levels. However with few other staff to delegate to and no other co-ordinators except the senior teacher, who herself was on leave of absence last term, the head continues to carry a large level of responsibility for the curriculum. The lack of a job description for her is a weakness which fails to appreciate that there is insufficient time for one person to monitor ten subjects effectively. This has, for example, left some aspects of maths, geography and art underemphasised, and too little use of ICT being made across the curriculum.

30. A positive feature of management is the significant improvement in provision for the reception. Children now have good, well structured opportunities to be involved in all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum and are very well supported. As a result children achieve well.

31. With much improved management of assessment procedures and use of information collected, provision for pupils with SEN is now good. The above average proportion of such pupils is well supported with good individual education plans that make targets clear to all concerned. The school's intention to be fully inclusive with all pupils having equal opportunities is well met. Good analysis of how well different groups and abilities of pupils are doing is beginning to identify areas for further attention: for example the school has targeted boys' reading, and girls' writing, as priorities.

32. Governors, some of whom are new to the governing body and some to their particular roles, have a sound and improving understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They support the school enthusiastically and regularly come into school. There is good co-operation with the head in constructing and managing the school's strategic plan. All statutory requirements are met and governors play a good part in monitoring SEN, the effects of decisions made about staffing, and in moves to develop accommodation. Areas for development (which governors are already aware of) are in evaluating the success of curriculum management and in further monitoring of the budget. The school has an above average contingency fund at present, but some of this money is earmarked for building improvements and maintaining staffing levels.

33. A management issue raised by parents and explored during the inspection concerned arrangements for children joining reception part time at the start of the school year. Some parents are unhappy about the principle. Others are concerned about misunderstandings arising from late notification in terms of how this would affect their particular child. Inspectors find that children are supported well and that induction procedures are effective. They enable children to settle quickly and staff to carry out assessment on individuals in order to set targets and measure progress. Additionally the process allows those already in the class who are in Year 1 to adjust to new children and their own older status. However it is clear that some parents were not made aware of arrangements early enough and that there were some misunderstandings about organisation. There is a need to review the management of future practice and how this is communicated to avoid confusion.



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** overall, much improved, and still improving.

This inspection was in the second week of the autumn term when the eleven reception children had been in school for mornings only for part of the week. Consequently six children had attended for three half days and five for two. Judgements have been made on the basis of the performance of pupils now in Year 1, school planning and records, as well as observation of lessons involving the class teacher, learning support assistants and volunteers.

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development;
- Learning and progress in communication, language and literacy are good;
- Opportunities for children to experience first hand and learn through play are good;
- Although there have been recent improvements to the outside area for children in reception these have been too slow in coming since the last inspection;
- The absence of climb-on and ride-on equipment restricts opportunities to extend children's physical and social development;
- Some parents are unhappy about arrangements for children's part time attendance at the start of the year.

### **Commentary**

34. Assessments being made as children enter the school (and those made in previous years) show that as a year group children are below average. Consistently good teaching from all concerned (and very good from the actual teacher) helps children to achieve well. Last year virtually all children reached all the goals expected of their age by the time they finished the reception year. This represents good achievement and for those with special educational needs this constitutes very good achievement. This is a credit to the school and a substantial improvement since the last inspection found the Foundation Stage to be unsatisfactory and progress, in a variety of areas of learning, 'slow'. Children are beginning to read and write and develop counting and sorting skills.

35. Since the reception teacher was appointed and formed a very good partnership with the head and support assistants there have been very good improvements to leadership of planning and provision. The school now shows a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, the value of structured play, and the need to foster children's choice making and independence in order to plan accordingly.

36. There is particular, and appropriate, emphasis on personal development and communication skills with the very positive results that children, many of whom lack social experience when they arrive, soon play and work together, readily taking turns, sharing and showing consideration. Particularly good progress in the ability to listen is a considerable achievement for many children.

37. The school can demonstrate that children do have the opportunity to be involved in PE activities as part of lessons in the hall and on the field. However, notwithstanding recent improvements, the development of the 'outdoor classroom' where children can explore space and their own physical potential in less formal activities with other children as required by the last inspection, has yet to be completed. The lack of large apparatus for climbing, and ride-on wheeled toys, limits children's progress.

38. Those parents who have concerns over how children are inducted into the school can be assured that arrangements are effective in settling their children, giving the school the opportunity to assess needs and potential. Children are given a very good and very caring start to their formal schooling and make rapid progress. However, there is a need to improve how well such arrangements are communicated to parents, as it is clear this was less than successful whilst the reception teacher took leave of absence in the summer term 2003.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Phonics (sounding out letters and blends) are well taught and result in the standard of reading being at least satisfactory, and for higher attaining pupils good;
- The teaching of literacy is good;
- Good opportunities are given to pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills through discussion;
- Recent improvements have been noted in the results of national tests for Years 2 and 6;
- Assessment strategies in English lead to helpful targets being set for pupils;
- Too few pupils reach above average levels in SATs for eleven year olds;
- Presentation of work last year, particularly for older pupils, was not at the expected level, and too little use was made of ICT to promote literacy;
- The library is not an effective part of the school's accommodation.

#### **Commentary**

39. Over recent years, the standard of work, as seen in SATs for both seven and eleven year olds, has been well below the national average. Especially weak was the percentage of pupils achieving the higher than average level 3 and level 5 scores. The results of the most recent tests, in 2003, show that there were big improvements in Year 2 in both reading and writing, with a third of pupils gaining the higher level 3 score in reading. This is closely related to the good teaching of phonics, not only in the class of the youngest pupils, but equally for pupils with SEN.

40. At Year 6 almost all pupils reached the expected level for their age in 2002. However, no pupils achieved a higher level than this. Although there were improvements in 2003 the provision for pupils who are likely to have higher levels of skills and understanding in English, as noted through their assessments, needs to be focused more clearly on helping them make progress and achieve higher levels. This is beginning to happen through 'intervention time', but needs to be a continuing focus in literacy lessons. The school recognised that girls were falling behind boys in their writing skills and has begun to put strategies in place to improve this.

41. The targets, which arise from assessments in English, are beginning to involve pupils more in supporting their own progress, and parents in providing more focused help for their children through homework. Equally, class teachers should be able to plan more clearly work which is directed at raising standards for individual pupils. This was not clearly noted in some of the work completed last year, but is already evident in the three classes this term.

42. All three literacy lessons observed showed the subject to be well taught. Particularly noteworthy in the lessons, was the success of questioning, which not only gave pupils good opportunities for speaking and listening, but allowed teachers to guide learning positively. Relationships were very good as was the management of lessons. No time was wasted in any classes and the mixed-age groups were well considered by teachers and their support staff.

43. Opportunities for pupils to write in different ways were not as clearly noted last year as they already are this year. As a result, pupils had fewer opportunities to make use of new knowledge, skills and understanding. At the same time, opportunities for writing in other subjects were somewhat restricted by the overuse of worksheets. For example in both geography and history, too often pupils were asked to fill in missing words, make notes or complete sentences, rather than formulate complete ideas and write them in full sentences. This lack of opportunity to write fully means that when faced with a chance of writing at length, pupils are not used to it and often their work lacks skills of compilation and presentation.

44. The library shares a space with the SEN room. As a result, all users suffer through lack of accessibility. Whilst there are sufficient books, many are outdated and no longer provide accurate enough information. There is a classification system in place, but older pupils explain that they rarely have the opportunity to make use of the library for study or research. The school has ideas for extending this space and should see this as a priority.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

45. The use of language and literacy to support other subjects is satisfactory overall.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of numeracy is good;
- Pupils achieve well in numeracy from a below average start;
- Standards as shown by SATs were below average in 2002 for seven year olds and apparently very low for eleven year olds. Because of small year groups and above average SEN, statistics are unreliable. The overall profile of results for eleven year olds has improved and is likely to be about average in 2003 with a greater proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving the higher level 5 than in previous years;
- There is too little evidence of work on investigative work, problem solving and data handling especially in Years 4 to 6;

#### **Commentary**

46. Improvements in planning derived from the National Numeracy Strategy, and the quality of teaching since the last inspection, have improved pupils' knowledge and understanding of number work and raised basic standards. Compared with pupils' below average attainment as measured when they first start reception, for the majority this represents good achievement. For example: by the end of Year 2 most pupils are able to count reliably, have a sound understanding of place value and can add and subtract two digit numbers. Most Year 6 pupils can use the basic four rules to work out calculations and are beginning to estimate to check the logic of their answers. Throughout the school pupils are interested and enjoy maths.

47. In the most recent (2003) tests for eleven year olds the school missed the target set by the local education authority (LEA) for pupils to reach the average level 4 or above by the equivalent of one pupil. However, nearly one in three pupils achieved the higher level 5 compared with none at all

in 2002. The school's revised policy and planning geared to raising the performance of potentially higher attainers is proving effective. It is clear that the practice of dividing Years 4 to 6 into small ability groups (selected on the basis of the school's careful assessment), each working with a teacher or LSA for half an hour's intensive maths one week and English the next, is effectively improving standards. This is a time when basic skills are consolidated and pupils are challenged at their own levels to extend work begun in daily numeracy sessions. Staff use good questioning techniques and successfully encourage pupils to explain their chosen strategies for working out problems. This has very good effects on pupils' understanding as well as providing valuable practice for literacy skills of speaking and listening.

48. Sampling of work from Years 1 to 6 from the whole of the previous school year confirms that increased emphasis on numeracy has raised standards. However, particularly for pupils in Years 4 to 6 this has resulted in too little work in investigations to use and apply mathematics: for example to search for, and interpret, patterns of results, or explore probability. There is too little evidence of older pupils collecting, recording and interpreting data: such as using graphs and pie charts to predict and draw conclusions.

49. Because of the small size of the school and the newness and lack of experience of two out of the three class teachers maths is led and monitored by the head together with most other subjects. This restricts time available for monitoring coverage and standards and has led to some aspects being underemphasised. All teachers plan maths together and this has a positive impact on communication and continuity. Learning support staff are a part of this process and this enhances their work with pupils both as a part of the class and in small groups. This corporate approach to the subject is a good sign for the future.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

50. There is evidence that maths is used to support other subjects: for example in measuring to design and make models in design and technology (DT). However, there are too few examples of data handling such as graphs and surveys in humanities or science and this is an area for development.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Improvements were made in the most recent tests (SATs);
- Teaching of science is good;
- Recently developed assessments in science are useful;
- Few opportunities to link science with ICT have been made;
- There are no writing frames in use in aspects of investigational science which would improve the subject's links with literacy;
- More use should be made of the outside environment of the school to support learning in science.

### **Commentary**

51. In previous years, standards in science at the end of Year 6 have been poor. The most recent results showed an improvement, with all pupils reaching the nationally expected level. However, as only one pupil scored above that level it gives rise to some concern about the provision for more able pupils in this subject.

52. Although only two science lessons were seen during the inspection, teaching of science is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to ask questions effectively. They

motivate their pupils through setting challenging work and as a result, most pupils are now achieving well.

53. The subject co-ordinator has built upon the previously drafted scheme of work, by adding a useful assessment programme, which is put into effect at the end of each module or topic. Although only recently developed, this will, in time, provide much useful information for teachers.

54. In looking back at work previously completed by pupils, there is little evidence of ICT being utilised in science. Books contained no examples of data, tables or charts being devised to support learning. Equally, opportunities for pupils to make use of their information technology skills were not available. As the policy and scheme for ICT is in need of review, it is an opportune time to look again at the use pupils make of their skills across the science curriculum.

55. In order to make stronger links between pupils' use of literacy skills within science work, the school should seek to develop writing frames for experimental and investigative science. These frames are already in use in aspects of literacy and would support pupils' writing in science.

56. Although pupils in Years 2 and 3 have an opportunity to carry out a survey of flowers and search for minibeasts around the school grounds, not enough use is made of the school environment to support work in science. The grounds lend themselves to more use for environmental science, with the use of wild areas, gardens and a wider variety of habitats. This would provide more opportunities for first hand experience at all ages.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory** for Years 1, 2 and 3 but **unsatisfactory** for Years 4, 5 and 6.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Older children have not covered all required elements in sufficient depth to reach what is expected of eleven year olds;
- Improvements to planning and resources following the last report have led to pupils reaching expected levels for their age at seven;
- There is too little evidence of ICT being used in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

57. By the time they are seven pupils are proficient in the basic computer skills of entering, saving and retrieving work as well as having started to use ICT for basic research. This is consistent with what is expected for this age and builds well on the good introduction given to children in reception. Since many children start school with limited experience of ICT this means they are achieving well. There is evidence of continued progress in Year 3, but less so for Years 4 to 6 where records for 2002 – 3 were poorly kept for what pupils did or achieved.

58. A review of pupils' work from the whole of the previous year and discussions with pupils show that pupils had too little opportunity of hands-on experience with computers. Pupils' awareness and understanding of the potential of ICT and the way in which it affects everyday life is not secure.

59. A good feature of Years 4 to 6 work was in helping to set up the good school website. However, not all the required elements of the curriculum were covered last year in sufficient depth, leaving pupils short of experience: for example in communicating through multimedia presentations. Standards for eleven year olds in 2003 were below national expectations.

60. Pupils who have just begun Year 6 can describe how to use the Internet and CD ROM for research and are enthusiastic about the class's interactive whiteboard, but opportunities have been

missed to extend their skills and understanding. Improved planning suggests these will be addressed this year.

61. There was little chance to see ICT taught during the inspection, but it is clear that new staff are committed to promoting it as a subject in its own right, and are keen to make use of the resources (improved in number and quality in the last two years).

62. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed in Year 1 was very good with pupils of all abilities well challenged. Questioning was very good and basic skills were thoroughly reinforced. As a result pupils achieved well, their learning was very good and attitudes to ICT were very positive.

63. Due to the size of this school and staff changes the head is now responsible for ICT along with nine other subjects. This has a restricting effect on monitoring due to lack of time, and partly explains how it was that Years 4 to 6 records were lacking last year. Closer scrutiny is needed to avoid a repetition and make full use of the very good initiative of all pupils having their own ICT log which can be used to track standards and assess how well pupils are achieving.

64. Raising standards in ICT was a key issue of the last report and whilst recognising that improvements have been made as a result of much better resources and planning, this still remains an area for development especially for older pupils.

65. The appointment of an ICT technician has been a very positive step in overcoming hardware problems which in the past made teaching difficult.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

66. There is too little evidence of ICT being used to support other subjects. Areas to further develop are:

- More opportunities for pupils to write and edit directly on screen;
- Data handling; producing graphs and pie charts in maths and science;
- Yet more use of ICT for research.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography, History, Religious Education (RE)**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory** and provision in history is **satisfactory**. No lessons in geography were seen, although work from the previous year, together with planning, shows that provision at that time was **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Religious education is taught satisfactorily, with good support given by the local incumbent;
- Pupils' spiritual and multicultural development are given good support in RE. However, pupils spiritual awareness is still below what is expected;
- Some individual history topics are well planned and well taught;
- Although the geography scheme of work is based on national recommendations, there is too little attempt to develop a range of appropriate geographical skills over time.

### **Commentary**

67. Work in religious education is based largely on the locally agreed syllabus, with pupils producing satisfactory and sometimes good quality work on the life of Jesus and his teachings. Pupils in Year 2 recount the stories of the Prodigal Son and were seen, in a good lesson with the local vicar, gaining good understanding of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

68. Pupils' spiritual development is supported in religious education by work carried out on beliefs and worship. For example cultural development is helped through studies of other religions and cultures such as Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. Older pupils were seen discussing sacred books, not only talking about the Bible, but at the same time comparing it with the Torah and Qu'ran.

69. Work in history is better planned than geography. As a result there are a number of class topics in history which give good support to pupils' knowledge and understanding and begin to provide pupils with a range of skills appropriate to the subject. For example, work on the Victorians in the class of the oldest pupils, although heavily dependent upon work sheets, gave pupils good insight into life in that period. Pupils are able to compare working conditions, artefacts, school life and home life with current times. They have begun to gain skills of interpreting information from different sources and of placing events in a time scale.

70. Work in geography is not as plentiful nor as well developed as in history. It is not possible to see how skills of mapping, using symbols or following directions, for example, are ensured through the current topics. Whilst the topic on an Indian village gives pupils an insight into life in a distant place, it does not act as a vehicle for promoting geographical skills. Currently the subject appears underemphasised with a negative effect on pupils' achievement.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

This curriculum area was not a main focus for the inspection. No design and technology (DT) lessons were observed and only one art lesson. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to pupils about what they had done. Two lessons were seen in both music and PE, but because of the nature of these subjects no work samples were available.

From the limited evidence it is not possible to report on standards and the quality of teaching in detail in this area. However, it is clear that planning for each subject has been improved since the last inspection and that provision for DT is **satisfactory** and provision for PE is **satisfactory**. Provision for art is **satisfactory**, but this represents strengths and some weaknesses in the subject. There was insufficient evidence to judge provision for music.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' recording of designs before making and testing them makes a strong contribution to their understanding in DT;
- Whilst art skills are used to support other subjects there is too little evidence of opportunities for pupils to appreciate the work of recognised artists;
- A good range of extracurricular activities complement the weekly PE lessons;
- Standards in swimming continue to be good;
- Pupils sing with enthusiasm in assemblies.

### **Commentary**

71. There are appropriate links between art and DT with observational drawings and sketches used in the designing process. Throughout the school making skills such as cutting and using tools are suitably developed in both subjects such as in models made of houses in Years R and 1, wheeled vehicles in Years 2 and 3, and pop up books and money containers in Years 4, 5 and 6. However not enough three-dimensional art work was available this early in the term to judge standards in this aspect.

72. Limited evidence points to standards being as expected for pupils' ages in DT and in two-dimensional art work. However, pupils can remember little about the work and styles of famous artists and have not had enough opportunity to study and experiment by trying out styles for themselves. Consequently pupils are not achieving well enough in this aspect of art. The school does not appear sufficiently well resourced with examples of art, and opportunities have been

missed to promote literacy and appreciation skills in getting pupils to express their preferences and opinions. This has a negative effect on pupils' spiritual development.

73. Very good teaching was seen in the one art lesson observed in Year 1 where pupils were very skilfully taught to use a variety of folding, pleating and scrunching techniques to make teddy bear collages. Questioning and prompting from the teacher and support staff was first rate and the way the lesson was managed promoted personal and social development as well as art. This lesson and discussions with pupils show that they like being involved in art and design and enjoy practical work.

74. Overall standards in PE are as expected for pupils' ages. For a small school there is a good range of things for pupils to do at break and after school which enhance their physical skills. Such activities as football, netball, rounders and fun sports are available as clubs, and a variety of equipment including skipping ropes, hoops and balls is available at playtimes. The school makes good use of very good hall and field facilities to promote PE.

75. Records show that virtually all pupils can swim the minimum required 25 metres before they leave the school. A generous amount of time is devoted to swimming with all pupils from Years 2 to 6 going every week for two of the three terms. As this reduces the time available for other elements of PE the school is urged to review the situation regularly to monitor the effect on pupils' achievement.

76. In the two PE lessons observed the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall with strengths in relationships and in making pupils aware of why they were doing what they had to do. There was good reference to previous work and good class control. Weaknesses in one lesson were that pupils were not physically active enough, long hair was not tied back, and pupils with reasons for not doing PE had nothing to do. In both lessons pupils were made very aware of changes to heart rate during exercise.

77. Both music lessons seen were well taught with pupils well managed and learning objectives clear. The teacher used correct vocabulary and successfully encouraged pupils to explore tempo and pitch. She used a commercial, taped teaching programme effectively and got pupils to join in singing and try composing. Pupils enjoyed the activities and made good progress in the sessions. Their enthusiasm for singing was clear in assembly where on all three occasions observed pupils from all years joined in with considerable gusto.

78. A disadvantage for all for aspects of this curriculum area is that the headteacher has, because of staff change and inexperience, had to be responsible for each of these subjects alongside six others. This makes monitoring standards and pupils' achievement difficult and has held back the introduction of assessment. The school is aware of the need to review how curriculum areas are managed and develop the role of subject co-ordinators.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

This aspect did not form part of a major focus for the inspection. However it is clear that the relatively new scheme of work for personal, social and health education is well written. As it has only recently been put in place there has not yet been enough time for it to be seen completely in practice.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

