

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **BUCKLAND CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Buckland, Faringdon

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123145

Headteacher: Mrs Cara Lynch Blossie

Lead inspector: Ms Margaret Dickinson

Dates of inspection: 13 – 15 October 2003

Inspection number: 255648

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	58
School address:	Buckland Faringdon
Postcode:	SN7 8RB
Telephone number:	(01367) 870236
Fax number:	(01367) 870437
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Charles Parker
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very small voluntary controlled school situated at the heart of the village community. The school has 58 pupils, all of white British origin. Many pupils come from socially advantaged backgrounds and no pupils are eligible for free school meals. Numbers joining each year are often very low and at the time of the inspection only one pupil was registered in the reception year. Attainment on entry is above average overall though some start school with well above average skills and knowledge. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below average. The few pupils who do receive additional support have communication, social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. There are no pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The number of pupils leaving school before the end of Year 6 has been much higher than is normally the case over the last two years. This is partly due to a number of parents opting to move their children to the independent sector at the end of Years 2, 3 or 4. A further reason is that, two years ago, the school went through an unsettled period when the previous headteacher left the school. This resulted in some parents moving their children to other schools. The school is now in a much more stable position and parents have trust and confidence in their village school. The school was granted a School Achievement Award in 2001 and an International Schools Award in 2000.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12373	Margaret Dickinson	Lead inspector	English, Science, Art and Design, Geography, History, Music
9756	Ken Parsons	Lay inspector	
7336	Lindsay Howard	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology, Design and Technology, German, Physical Education, Religious Education, the Foundation Stage curriculum, special educational needs.

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**The school's effectiveness is satisfactory** and it gives satisfactory value for money. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and there is some good and occasionally very good teaching. The school has a caring and positive ethos and is effective in providing for pupils' personal development. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall and those with special educational needs do well. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has achieved a great deal in her first two terms. She has focused firmly and effectively on improving the school, though it is too soon for this to have had a clear effect upon pupils' achievement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in reading are well above average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6 and pupils achieve well. Speaking skills are also above average across the school;
- The headteacher's leadership is very good and, together with the support and guidance of a very effective governing body, she is guiding the school forward in a clear and determined way;
- The very good attention to social and moral development is reflected in the pupils' good attitudes, good relationships and positive approach to school life;
- The school has very good links with the community and good links with its partner schools. Parents are very satisfied with the school;
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average by Year 6. The school has, until fairly recently, had limited resources so pupils have gaps in their learning;
- Whilst some teaching is good or better, the quality of teaching could be improved further, including lessons in English and mathematics;
- The way the school assesses pupils and records and tracks their progress is not as organised and coherent as it should be. It is hard to check that all pupils make sufficient headway from when they first enter the school to when they leave.

The improvement since the last inspection is good, particularly in relation to the weaknesses in leadership and management, the curriculum and the overall provision between Years 3 and 6. Teaching was unsatisfactory between Years 3 and 6 and is now satisfactory. Standards in science have improved. The school was slow to respond to the findings of the last inspection but, over the last two years, progress has been rapid because the governing body, headteacher and acting headteacher before her were determined to address the key issues successfully.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

Children start school with above average standards overall. Year groups are often small so standards do vary from year to year and results have to be interpreted carefully. Over the last few years, standards have been well above average by Year 2 and generally well above average at Year 6, though performance has fluctuated more at Year 6 in English and science. Performance in mathematics has been consistently well above average at Year 6. Only ten pupils took the Year 6 tests in 2003. Their attainment was very high but as the year group was very small, it is not statistically reliable to compare their performance with the national picture.

**Achievement is satisfactory** between Years 1 and 6. Whilst there is a difference in standards between Year 2 and 6, which might suggest unsatisfactory achievement, this is not the case and pupils do build appropriately upon their prior attainment. Currently, standards in Year 2 are well above average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. There are currently six pupils in Year 6, whose overall standards are above average in English and science, average in mathematics and religious education but below average in ICT. Inspectors did not judge standards at the end of the Foundation Stage as there was only one pupil on roll. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because teaching assistants support them well.

**Pupils' personal qualities are good.** Their attitudes are good. Attendance and punctuality are very good. Behaviour is satisfactory. Many pupils are well behaved but in some classes and assemblies, a small number are restless and interrupt unnecessarily. The provision for pupils' **spiritual and cultural development** is **satisfactory** and **moral and social development** are **very good**.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school, including teaching, is satisfactory overall.** In the best lessons, teachers probe pupils' thinking and deepen their learning through asking good questions and checking they understand. Pupils work hard and understand why they are doing the tasks and what they are learning from them. Teaching does not always draw upon a wide enough range of strategies and methods to encourage all pupils to retain their enthusiasm and motivation. Work is frequently adapted well for lower attaining pupils, but higher attaining pupils are sometimes capable of more demanding and open-ended work.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and the quality of care, advice and support for pupils are good. This helps pupils to feel safe and happy in school and to do their best. The school offers pupils a very good range of opportunities to broaden their experiences, through visits, for example, or through inviting visitors into the school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The headteacher and governors provide very good leadership. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and has already gained a very thorough understanding of the school's strengths and the areas where further improvement is required, particularly in relation to teaching. She has introduced and managed changes in a considered and well-paced way. These have improved the school's effectiveness. The quality of leadership of subjects is satisfactory but co-ordinators do not always have a clear enough understanding of what is going well in their subjects and what needs to be done to improve further. The budget is well managed and monitored.

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

Parents: The level of satisfaction is good. They feel comfortable about approaching the school with a query or problem and find the school is well led and managed. Their children are encouraged to be mature and responsible. The inspection team fully agrees with these points. Some have concerns about homework and would like more information on how well their children are doing. No evidence was found to support the concerns over homework but annual reports could include more information on how well pupils are doing in relation to the national expectations.

Pupils: They are very happy in school and enjoy coming. They find teachers are fair and they know there is always an adult they can consult if they feel worried. Some feel that other children do not always behave well and the inspection team agrees.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in ICT by Year 6 and give pupils more opportunities to use computers across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is good or better and ensure all teachers give higher attaining pupils work that helps them to move on in their learning.
- Improve the arrangements for marking pupils' work, assessing their attainment levels and tracking their ongoing progress, to ensure all pupils build steadily upon their prior attainment levels.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is satisfactory. The few pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. The small year groups mean that standards vary considerably from year to year and numbers are too small to make valid comparisons, including the relative achievements of boys and girls. Standards by Year 2 are currently well above average in reading and writing and are above average in mathematics and science. By Year 6, standards are above average in English and science, average in mathematics and religious education but below average in ICT. The overall attainment of the six pupils in Year 6 is average, which is not as good as in previous years. Nevertheless, these pupils are attaining appropriately and working to their capabilities, based on their previous standards.

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

- Over the last few years, pupils' performance in the English and mathematics national tests has been well above average overall at Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well in their reading, due to good teaching.
- Pupils' speaking skills are above average by Years 2 and 6. They are articulate and confident when speaking and convey their thoughts and ideas well.
- The school has improved its results in writing because there has been a determined effort to improve pupils' writing, which has led to better standards.
- Pupils with special educational needs do well in the school because they are encouraged and well supported.
- Standards are below average in ICT. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should between Years 3 and 6 because they have not had enough experience of using computers over recent years.
- Higher attaining pupils achieve satisfactorily but, on occasions, they are given work or tasks that are quite easy for them.

#### **Commentary**

1. In the National Curriculum tests for 2003, standards at Year 2 were in the top five per cent of schools nationally in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. Many reached the higher Level 3, especially in reading. At Year 6, pupils' performance in all three subjects was very high when compared to all schools nationally, again with a good proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5. When compared to similar schools, performance at Year 6 was in the top five per cent nationally in English and mathematics and well above average in science. The pupils in Year 6 in 2003 did far better than those in 2002 because they were a more capable year group. However, this comparative data must be treated with great caution as the number of pupils in each year group is small and one pupil performing better or worse than expected can affect the results significantly.
2. As year groups are so small, it is more helpful to analyse results across more than a single year. Over the last three years, at Year 2, when compared with the national picture, pupils have been over two terms ahead in reading and mathematics and about one and half terms ahead in writing. At Year 6, pupils have been over a year ahead in mathematics and two terms ahead in English. Science results have tended to fluctuate more than other subjects. Even so, pupils have been about a term ahead. Attainment in mathematics has been a particular strength over the years. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 have benefited from additional teaching from the Chair of Governors, who is a mathematics specialist, to help challenge them and extend their mathematical knowledge and this has helped their performance in the tests.



3. The school teaches reading effectively. There are specific reading sessions in which the teachers work in depth with different groups of pupils, with additional support from the teaching assistants. Pupils enjoy reading and many were seen engrossed in their books. The school has expanded its resources and the reading material is stimulating and relevant. The interaction between teachers and pupils was often effective, helping them to 'read between the lines' and gain a better understanding of what the author was attempting to convey.
4. Many pupils speak well. They have a wide vocabulary and express themselves fluently. Some teachers and teaching assistants are particularly adept at asking open-ended questions to help pupils explore their thoughts and ask good follow-up questions to draw out their thinking further. Pupils are confident to hold extended conversations and to outline their thoughts, ideas and views. In many cases, the small class sizes allow all pupils who want to the opportunity to speak and most teachers encourage pupils to contribute a good deal during lessons. On occasions, some take advantage of this situation though and try to monopolise the teachers' attention when it is more appropriate to move on and learn.
5. A main focus for the school over the last year has been improving literacy, particularly writing. The school has received a full programme of support from the local education authority and has developed its resources. The headteacher sensibly decided to continue with literacy as a focus in order to consolidate the improvements that have occurred in the last year in pupils' writing.
6. The evidence from pupils' books and discussions with groups of pupils shows that they achieve satisfactorily. They build appropriately upon their skills from when they first enter the school, as a result of the satisfactory teaching. There are occasions when achievement is better than this. In writing, for instance, there were examples of pupils making good strides in developing their writing skills over a term. The pupils have opportunities to write long pieces of work over several lessons. Pupils say they enjoy doing this because it gives them a chance to develop their ideas and come to their work fresh the next time they take it on further. One Year 5 pupil was particularly proud that she had written a play, last year, with five scenes. The school has a system for collecting data on each pupil's attainment from year to year but this is not organised well enough. It is therefore difficult for the school to check which pupils are making good progress and which are not doing as well as they move from the reception class through to Year 6.
7. Pupils with special educational needs do well because they receive good levels of support, mainly from teaching assistants. The work is often adapted for them and they receive good one-to-one attention when they need it. This helps them to learn effectively.
8. The higher attaining pupils between Years 1 and 6 achieve satisfactorily but there are times when they could be working at a faster pace, on activities that require more intellectual effort. Pupils' books show that they are sometimes set work that is the same as the average attaining pupils in the class. Higher attaining pupils say they often find work hard and they feel they are stretched most of the time. They find some aspects of mathematics challenging and one or two worry about this and sometimes feel under pressure. However, in some subjects, they find there are occasions when they have quite easy worksheets to fill in and colour when they would find it more interesting to make their own decisions how to present their work, allowing them more independence.
9. The school has until recently had limited resources for ICT. Pupils are having greater access to the school's computers but they are behind where they should be in their skills and understanding. Pupils do not use computers enough to support their learning in the different curriculum subjects. This is an aspect that has already been highlighted by the school and is a current priority area for development.

## Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are good and their behaviour is satisfactory. The provision for pupils' personal development is good. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and spiritual development is good overall and social and moral provision are both very good. Attendance is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils have positive attitudes to school life and this helps them to get the most out of what is offered.
- The pupils have good relationships with each other and with adults. This is the result of the caring ethos of the school and the good example set by staff.
- The school fosters pupils' social and moral development very effectively which is one reason why the school has such a strong sense of community.
- Some pupils are over-eager to gain attention and this sometimes wastes time in lessons.
- The pupils' attendance is very good.
- Pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of a broad range of other cultures because insufficient opportunities arise in different subject in order for this to happen.

### *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	75	0	0

### Commentary

10. Pupils like school. They have good attitudes to learning, wanting to complete tasks set and to be successful. Their attitudes are an important factor in how the pupils approach their learning. In discussions, older pupils listen carefully to each other, taking note of what is said. If they do not agree with opinions stated they say so politely and give reasons for the disagreement. These attitudes lead to harmonious relationships at all levels throughout the school. They care for each other well, and discussions with pupils show they clearly appreciate the family atmosphere of the school. On many occasions, pupils described the school as 'friendly' and 'caring'.
11. All pupils are taught, and understand, the difference between right and wrong. They know the school rules and understand why they need to follow them. Pupils are aware of how their behaviour affects others and they show developing self-discipline, though this is an area that the school intends to develop further. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and their memory of the very few occasions when they think they were not fairly treated rankles. Behaviour out of lessons is often very good. Pupils play happily together and there are no signs of bullying or harassment.
12. Pupils know who to go to if they are unhappy, they feel confident and this supports their self-esteem. The friendship bench, which was bought as a result of the School Council's deliberations, works well. Pupils sit on the bench if they need a friend to play with. Several pupils were seen to be sitting on it for only a short time before other pupils came along and asked them to play. At times pupils' behaviour shows a lack of consideration for others, when pupils continue talking while adults are waiting to talk to them in assemblies and at the beginning of lessons. Inspectors talked to many pupils during the inspection and found them very pleasant and personable. The school has a strong sense of community. All pupils know each other well and they play and work together happily. Pupils say that they find the school

friendly. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they have developed confidence and maturity during their time in the school and they are good 'ambassadors' for their school.

13. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to learn about their own culture and traditions through their links with the local church and participation in village activities. Their visits to the church also support their spiritual development. They also have opportunities to learn about European culture through the school's links with a Polish school and their German lessons. Pupils learn about Judaism, Hinduism and Islam in religious education lessons but there are limited opportunities for them to gain a deeper understanding of the diverse range of cultures represented in this country in other subjects.
14. Pupils' attendance rate is consistently well above the national average. The school has good procedures to monitor pupils' absences and parents usually co-operate well by contacting the school when their child is absent. In the morning, many pupils arrive at school before the bell and go to their classrooms exceptionally quickly; their punctuality is very good.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.7	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is satisfactory. The satisfactory teaching enables pupils to learn and achieve steadily as they move through the school. Pupils are well cared for and supported and the school has good links with parents.

**Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. This applies to all subjects where a judgement could be made. There is some good teaching and occasionally it is very good. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. The assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory but there are aspects that could be further improved.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There were instances of good teaching in all year groups though there is some way to go before teaching is consistently good across the school.
- There was some effective science teaching seen during the inspection.
- Some of the teaching assistants provide very effective support for pupils and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- In successful lessons, pupils are motivated and interested because the teachers are very clear about how much they want the pupils to achieve in the lesson.
- More teaching should be good or better, particularly in English and mathematics, so that pupils' achievement becomes good.
- Teachers do not always use a broad range of teaching strategies and methods to enliven pupils and maintain their interest and involvement.
- On occasions, teachers are too accepting of a small number of pupils calling out and disturbing the flow of their teaching.
- Teachers' assessments could give pupils more advice on what they need to do to improve further, and pupils could be told how well they are doing in relation to the expected standards for their age.

## Commentary

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	7	14	1	0	0

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

15. There are strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching. Teaching is satisfactory across all subjects where there was sufficient evidence to make a judgement. Where teaching is good or very good, the teachers challenge pupils to work hard, through moving learning on at a fast pace or asking good questions to make pupils think hard. This was seen in a Year 3 mathematics lesson during the mental starter sessions and in a science lesson with Years 5 and 6, when quick-fire questions meant all pupils soon recalled what they already knew about microbes from the previous lesson. Another strength in the best lessons is that teachers plan imaginative activities. In a Year 3 science lesson, when pupils were investigating the effect of various liquids on teeth, using eggshells, the pupils were fascinated by the experiment that they carried out. All were fully engaged in the learning as a result of the teacher constantly fuelling their curiosity. In a successful history lesson, pupils' learning was enhanced because the teacher had organised a good range of resources, including books, pictures and the Internet, for pupils to research facts about Tudor monarchs. They were interested in finding out more and were eager to share what they had discovered. Again, in a Year 1 religious education lesson, the pupils learned a good deal about some of the traditions associated with Jewish festivals due to a good range of resources and the teacher's very good subject knowledge.
16. The school has some talented teaching assistants who are valued members of the team. Many examples were seen where they were providing very effective support, working with groups of pupils or individuals. In one lesson, for example, the teaching assistant was leading a reading group, asking very pertinent questions about the text, to check pupils understood, and helping them to predict what might happen and to empathise with the characters. Pupils with special educational needs are provided for well in lessons. This is because the teaching assistants are well briefed and give good support. This helps these pupils to achieve well over time.
17. When lessons are satisfactory rather than good, some of the following characteristics are often evident:
- Tasks are easy for higher attaining pupils. In a Year 3 English lesson, for example, all pupils had to find synonyms for 'nice', using thesauri. Higher attaining pupils were set the same task as the others and were working well within their capabilities.
  - Sometimes, lessons are slow to get under way and pupils become restless but work productively once they get under way.
  - The planned activities restrict pupils because they are not open-ended enough, or do not allow scope for pupils to make decisions independently. Scrutiny of books and discussions with pupils shows they are sometimes given worksheets to fill in that have limited possibilities. For example, they only allow a certain amount of space for answers when many pupils are capable of writing at greater length.
  - The teacher directs too many questions generally to the whole class. Some pupils then call out and others remain quiet and are not involved. On occasions, this leads to unsettled behaviour because the calling out goes unchecked and the pace of learning slows down.
18. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher's explanations were confusing and some questions were unclear, so that pupils were not sure exactly what they had to do. Once the task was explained, many found it very easy. There was a poor degree of challenge in this lesson for pupils with above average levels of attainment.

19. Pupils know their targets for English and mathematics. They find these useful and achievable. The targets in some classes, however, are more related to pupils' attitudes than how they can improve their standards. Teachers' marking often encourages pupils to think about other ideas but they would benefit from more specific feedback on how they can improve. Older pupils say they would like to know how well they are doing in relation to National Curriculum levels to find out if they are working at the right level or beyond this.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school ensures pupils have an adequate range of learning opportunities and works hard to broaden the curriculum as much as possible. Resources are satisfactory but accommodation is unsatisfactory. The school makes the best use of the accommodation it has, despite space being at a premium and the limitations of working within a listed building.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school organises a very good range of opportunities to enrich pupils' learning through visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs. This enhances pupils' personal development.
  - The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and this means they achieve well.
  - The limitations in ICT have affected pupils' standards by Year 6 but, now that the school has adequate resources, they are beginning to catch up.
  - The spacious and attractive school grounds are much appreciated by pupils during playtimes.
  - The indoor accommodation has many limitations.
20. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. All six areas for learning are taught, but the lack of equipment such as wheeled toys and climbing apparatus restricts the opportunities for promoting children's physical development. It was not possible to judge the impact of this on children's standards as there was only one child on roll. In Years 1 to 6, there are schemes of work for all subjects to support teachers' planning and provide continuity as pupils move from year to year. The headteacher and, previously, acting headteacher, have ensured that the weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been rectified. There are appropriate plans in place for developing the curriculum further, for example, through developing the provision for ICT so that the school has a greater number of computers. The curriculum plans for ICT are satisfactory and the subject meets the statutory requirements. This has not been the case in the past, which is why the oldest pupils have some gaps in their learning.
21. The curriculum is enriched in very many ways. Visits to the theatre to see drama and ballet, and to museums for exhibitions encourage pupils' interests in the arts as well as their cultural development. Visits to historic places such as Bowood House, Hampton Court Palace, the Rainbow Forest and Swindon Railway Museum bring the history and geography curriculum alive. Visitors come into the school to talk about their work in the community, their beliefs, or to teach the pupils new skills. They bring a wealth of knowledge of the wider world to the pupils and support their personal development very well. The school has good links with other partner and Beacon schools. For example, pupils benefit from arts days, visits and artists in residence. A very high proportion of pupils learn musical instruments through the school and many play in ensembles that enrich their own lives as well as the cultural life of the school.
22. The school works closely with other schools to organise sports meetings, matches and tournaments. Pupils greatly appreciate these occasions and say they not only like the sport but enjoy making new friends. A very wide variety of sports, arts, music and other clubs are run at lunchtimes and after school by staff, parents and other members of the village community. Many pupils told inspectors how much they enjoyed these. The oldest pupils run clubs, such as small games, for the younger children. This provides good opportunities for the pupils to

develop responsible attitudes and social skills. There is a good attendance at all clubs by pupils of all ages.

23. The school has attractive grounds and pupils enjoy using these at the beginning of the day and at playtimes. Though the school has been ingenious in its use of indoor space, and everyone speaks highly of the improvements in the tidiness and décor, indoor accommodation is inadequate. The school hall is very small and is used as a library and computer suite. This places restrictions on how much it can be used for both purposes during lesson times. When the hall is used for physical education lessons, clubs or assemblies, it is very cramped. Some classrooms are small and the school does not have additional spaces outside classrooms, which hinders opportunities for small group work, for example. The school has very limited resources for music but the teaching assistant who teaches music supplements them with her own instruments, so that pupils' learning is not affected. Without these, the school would find it very difficult to cover the requirements for composing and performing in music.
24. The planning for pupils with special educational needs is good and tasks are related to their individual targets. This enables them to make good progress in most lessons. Pupils are involved in setting their targets and this helps them to understand the progress they are making towards them.

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

The school cares for pupils well and offers good guidance and support. The school involves pupils well. Their views are welcomed and taken into account.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for the care and welfare of pupils is good.
- Staff in this small school know the pupils well and work hard to develop supportive relationships with them.
- Pupils know there is an adult they can approach with problems.
- The school seeks and values pupils' views.
- Induction procedures help new children well when they join the school.
- Toilet facilities lack sufficient privacy for older pupils.

### **Commentary**

25. There were major health and safety concerns that used to affect the school site. With the change of senior management these issues have all been dealt with. Steps have now been taken, in liaison with the local authority, to ensure that the school provides a safe working environment for pupils and staff. Necessary routine procedures to provide for the health and safety of all pupils, including those with particular medical needs, are in place. The school building provides one specific problem: the toilet facilities for upper juniors are totally inappropriate for young people of this age, having been designed for infants, but there are plans to remedy this soon. The school works well with other agencies, such as social services, to ensure that pupils get specific additional help when they need it. The school has effective procedures in place for child protection and staff are aware of their responsibilities in this respect.
26. The school establishes good relationships and promotes pupils' personal development well. Some parents have specifically chosen to send their children to the school because of its caring ethos and they believe that the school sets high expectations for their children's personal development. There is a friendly and welcoming atmosphere in this small school, where everybody knows everybody else and all are included, valued and cared for. The headteacher is very accessible and staff are available for pupils if they have any problems they wish to discuss. They genuinely care about their pupils and work well as a team to respond appropriately if an individual is having problems. Staff monitor pupils' personal development

informally and involve parents as necessary. Pupils like their school and nearly all pupils feel that there is an adult they could go to if they had worries at school.

27. Most parents believe that the staff encourage pupils to become mature and independent. This was very evident during the inspection. It is part of the school's ethos to involve pupils in their own learning and the work of the school. Pupils can put forward suggestions to the School Council, through a suggestion box, and all submissions are considered seriously. The Friendship Bench was a good example of pupils' views being taken on board. Pupils believe that most teachers listen to their ideas and value their views. Pupils with special educational needs are very well known to staff and they receive good support and guidance.
28. Induction arrangements for new pupils are satisfactory. The children spend a day a week in school for the half term before they join, ensuring that they are totally familiar with the people and the environment before they start their formal education.

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

The partnership with parents is good. They are supportive of the school. There are good links with the local pre-school and partner schools. The school is an integral part of its local village community and there are very good community links.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are pleased with what the school has to offer.
- Weekly newsletters are much appreciated by parents.
- The school has very close links with its partner schools and the local community.
- Parents support the school well and many help on a voluntary basis.
- Parents' reports could include more information on pupils' progress and how they are attaining in relation to National Curriculum levels.

### **Commentary**

29. The school is aware that some parents found it hard to adjust to recent changes in the senior management of the school. The governing body and the headteacher have worked hard to regain the trust of parents and have in most cases succeeded, although some pupils were removed from the school during this period of crisis. Parents are now very appreciative of the school's strong ethos and think that their children make good progress with their work and in their personal development. Most find the staff approachable and feel well informed, although about a fifth of them would like more information on how their child is getting on and how they themselves can help with homework.
30. Annual reports for children in the Foundation Stage are good, providing a good guide on what they can do and with comments personal to the individual. For older pupils, there is not enough information on how they are achieving against National Curriculum levels, information that some parents and some pupils say they would appreciate. There are very good weekly newsletters to keep parents informed about the life of the school. Parents appreciate the steps the school takes to keep them in touch with what is going on, through the newsletters and notice-board. They find the school much more open and approachable than it used to be. The school benefits from very loyal support from its parent body. Many parents, and other members of the local community, volunteer to help in school with tasks such as hearing pupils read; their support is welcomed and valued by staff. Other parents make equally valuable contributions by assisting with extra-curricular activities and school trips. The Friends of Buckland School is active in organising social and fundraising events, whilst in the summer parents helped to redecorate the school. Pupils spoke warmly of how much they appreciated the improved decoration.

31. Buckland School is an important feature of this small village. The school draws a great deal of support from local residents and in turn it plays a positive part in the life of the community it serves. There are positive links with the local church. A wide variety of local people share their skills with pupils, ranging from a vet taking part in science lessons, the minister talking about buying a goat in Africa, to the local policeman teaching football as well as supporting personal, social and health education topics such as personal safety and drugs. Various local people invite pupils to their homes, for example, to see chickens, walk around their lake or to hear about old Buckland. The school is active in taking pupils further afield to places of interest in the area. There is an active partnership with other local schools and appropriate links with secondary schools to help ease the transfer of Year 6 pupils into secondary education.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and governors provide very good leadership. The leadership and management of subject co-ordinators are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher gives clear and determined leadership and is firmly committed to continual improvement though she has not been in post long enough for this to be reflected in how well pupils achieve.
- The governing body is very effective and they have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The school monitors and deploys its budget effectively.
- There are some weaknesses in the quality and effectiveness of how subjects are led and managed.

### **Commentary**

32. Although the headteacher has only been in the school two terms, she has built effectively upon the momentum started by the acting headteacher over the previous fifteen months. After the previous headteacher left the school, the parent community became totally divided. Evidence from the local education authority and the governors shows that both the acting headteacher and current headteacher worked very hard to move the school forward and gain the confidence of parents.
33. The headteacher gives a very strong lead to the work of the school. She has a clear vision for where she wants the school to be and is pacing developments very well in this small school. Staff know the direction the school is taking and they are supported well. As a result, there is a strong sense of teamwork in the school where all adults, including the teaching assistants and administrator, work together very well. Parents value this quality, and the pupils themselves appreciate the special atmosphere that being in a small school brings, where each pupil is well known to everyone and is included in the life of the school.
34. The headteacher's own evaluation of the school is very astute considering the short period of time she has been in the post. She quickly identified that not all teachers had benefited from the national training that took place several years ago for literacy and numeracy. As a result, the school has received an extended programme of support via the local education authority, which has had a positive impact on the pupils' learning. The self-evaluation carried out by the headteacher prior to the inspection correlates closely with inspection findings. She had already identified, for example, the three main areas that inspectors found required improvement. This shows the headteacher monitors the school effectively.
35. She has also used the evidence from her monitoring well. There are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, which means pupils do not achieve well in all lessons. The headteacher has made some wise decisions and begun to address this. For example, she has re-organised classes and re-deployed teaching assistants, so that the best use can be made of the staffing



available to her and so that staff are working to their strengths. She has set up support where this has been needed, both from within the school and through securing the expertise of the local education authority's School Development Service and other partner schools. A notable success has been the programme of support for literacy, which has been an important factor in standards improving, especially in writing.

36. Annual Year 2 and Year 6 test results are analysed well but the school lacks a coherent and efficient system for collating data and using it to ensure all pupils are making enough progress, based on the skills they have when they first enter the school. At present, it would be difficult to be absolutely sure that a pupil starting school with well above average skills built successfully upon these as they moved from year to year until Year 6.
37. The headteacher gives good support to subject co-ordinators and much is done as a team. They have carried out some monitoring of their subjects and some have given presentations to the governors. However, they do not have a rigorous enough overview of standards in their subjects and a clear understanding of the strengths and weaker aspects. This aspect of their role has improved over recent years but it is under-developed in comparison with many schools.
38. The governors are very effective and they provide a firm steer to the work of the school. They are fully involved in its strategic direction and acutely aware, for instance, that the school needs to work on its systems for checking that all pupils achieve well from when they first come to the school. It is very clear that, like the headteacher, the governors have the education of the pupils at the heart of all they do. There are very good levels of expertise on the governing body and the pupils benefit from this. Many governors come into school regularly to help with particular subjects such as mathematics, ICT and science. Through their skills and expertise, they make a valuable contribution to pupils' achievements.
39. The budget is monitored and controlled well. The financial arrangements are efficient and the administrator plays an important role in this. Spending decisions focus on raising standards and improving the quality of education for the pupils. The recent expenditure on computers has started to raise standards in ICT, though these are not yet as they should be by Year 6. The larger than usual underspend has been appropriately allocated to improving the school's facilities as the school has recently been granted planning permission to replace the outside toilet block with an ICT suite and to refurbish the inside toilets.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	239,777
Total expenditure	214,712
Expenditure per pupil	2753

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	8255
Balance carried forward to the next	25,065

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

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

40. There was only one child on the roll in the reception year at the time of the inspection. In these cases, inspectors do not report on standards and achievement in the Foundation Stage. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, as it was at the last inspection. Induction arrangements for new children are appropriate, with a series of visits in the term before their fifth birthday. The teacher plans a satisfactory curriculum for these children, which follows the national requirements for children in the Foundation Stage. There are suitable arrangements for teaching these children in a separate group or with the older children, as appropriate. The indoor accommodation is sufficiently spacious and this allows the children to have constant access to play equipment. The outdoor area is secure with space to run and play and is well used as an outdoor classroom.
41. The small classes, and the even smaller year groups within the class, allow children to form good relationships with people. They feel secure in the family-like atmosphere of the school where all those they meet know them well. This supports their **personal, social and emotional development** well. In **communication, language and literacy**, children have an appropriate range of opportunities to make a good start on reading and writing, although records show that many children enter the school with well developed literacy skills for their age. There are resources around the room to help them extend their knowledge of sounds and to recognise simple words. Their speaking skills are developed well, though there is less emphasis on the importance of listening. Children's **mathematical development** is encouraged through a range of activities. They learn the names of two-dimensional shapes and have regular opportunities to develop their understanding of number in everyday contexts. Children benefit from a good range of experiences that enrich and broaden their learning. These include visits out, as well as visitors coming into the school. This, together with the good general knowledge that many of them already have through experiences within their families, supports their **knowledge and understanding of the world** well. Provision for children's **creative** and **physical development** is satisfactory. The children have regular opportunities to use paints and crayons and use utensils such as scissors. Through indoor gymnastics and dance lessons, they learn co-ordination and develop an awareness of the space around them. There are no wheeled toys or large equipment such as climbing frames to support children's physical development. This is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. There are plans to provide this equipment in the near future as the school is shortly to open a Foundation Stage unit at the school. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear idea of how she sees the provision in the Foundation Stage developing so that children have a good start to their school life.

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

#### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

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

- Reading is taught well and pupils' reading skills are therefore developed well.
- Pupils speak fluently and confidently and many use a good range of vocabulary but their listening skills are not as good.
- Standards in writing have improved over the last year or so and are continuing to improve.
- The quality of teaching in English should be better, with more consistently good teaching.
- The quality of assessment and target-setting varies. Some teachers do not provide enough guidance on how pupils can improve their standards further.

- The subject co-ordinator has had limited experience of monitoring the subject and establishing what needs to be done to improve standards further though there has been a team approach to developments in English.

## Commentary

- Standards at Year 2 are well above average in reading and writing. By Year 6, standards are above average in English. This suggests that pupils do not achieve as well as they should, as standards appear to have dropped between Year 2 and Year 6, but this is not the case. The year groups are small, with only six pupils currently in Year 6, so standards vary considerably from year to year. Pupils achieve satisfactorily between Years 1 and 6. Standards and achievement are broadly the same as they were at the last inspection. The school's planning for English has improved, though teaching remains satisfactory.
- Over recent years, standards in reading at Year 2 have been consistently well above average and sometimes very high. In 2003, for example, two thirds of the year group attained the higher Level 3 which is much higher than the national picture. Reading skills are developed well in English and through other lessons, such as history and religious education. Guided reading sessions are effective and many pupils are engrossed in their books. Parents support reading well, by reading with their children regularly and encouraging them. Older pupils talk about using reference books at home, to help them with their homework, or to find out more about things that interest them. By Year 2, many read with good levels of fluency, they understand what they are reading and have developed a good familiarity with non-fiction texts. By Year 6, pupils' reading standards are above average. Many pupils read widely and many tackle substantial texts. They adopt a more analytical approach when reading fiction and can read 'between the lines'. Pupils show good understanding of texts and express opinions about the effectiveness of various sections or the type of characters that authors are portraying.
- Pupils' speaking skills are above average at Year 2 and 6. Pupils are articulate and often use vocabulary beyond their years. This even applies to many lower attaining pupils. Many pupils have a good general knowledge and therefore a good grasp of vocabulary and terms associated with various subjects. Teachers and teaching assistants are generally careful to develop pupils' vocabulary further in lessons and check they understand. Listening skills are not quite as good, being average. In several classes, some pupils are very keen to express opinions but are not so adept at listening attentively to those of others.
- In Year 2, a good proportion of pupils are well ahead of where they normally would be by this time in the year. The support from the School Development Service, and the additional focus on writing over the last year or so, has led to standards improving across the school in writing. Writing skills, including handwriting and spelling, are developed appropriately across the school. Pupils have good opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes, including poems, diaries, instructions, stories and letters, so that they learn about the characteristics and styles of different types of writing. Older pupils enjoy it when they are given the chance to write more extended pieces of work. They draw on their rich vocabulary and use words effectively to build tension. One pupil wrote, for example, "The smell, sight, and lack of sound stunned me for a moment." One of the ways writing can be further developed is to give pupils more guidance on how to plan and organise their writing. This applies particularly when pupils are writing longer pieces. As they develop ideas, their stories sometimes tend to ramble and lose impact.
- Discussions with pupils show that they know what their targets are for writing and reading. The quality of the targets varies from class to class. In some, pupils are given very clear, specific targets that are likely to help them raise their standards. In other cases, the targets are too general and not necessarily related to English. Teachers add comments when they mark pupils' work, which encourages pupils to respond but marking could be used more effectively to point out the weaker aspects and tell pupils how they can improve their writing further.

47. In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory and on one occasion good. Teachers generally plan appropriate tasks for the attainment range in their class and there is clear emphasis on developing literacy skills. Lower attaining pupils are given easier work and are supported effectively by teaching assistants. Not all take on board the attainment levels the pupils have already reached. On one occasion, for instance, pupils in Year 3 were doing a task that was very easy for them and, until they received additional input from the teaching assistant, their learning was limited. Teachers use a satisfactory range of teaching strategies but these could be broadened to enliven learning. The pace of lessons is sound but better use could be made of the plenary part of the literacy lesson to reinforce and extend learning.
48. The subject is led satisfactorily overall. The headteacher, and acting headteacher before her, arranged a programme of ongoing support for literacy and this has been successful in improving provision and raising standards in writing. The test results are carefully analysed to find out what could be improved. The co-ordinator lacks experience in leading and managing the subject, and establishing what needs to be done to improve pupils' achievement further.

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

49. The provision for promoting literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. There are some good examples of other subjects helping to support pupils' literacy skills. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils plan, draft, and re-draft when writing about the Tudor Dynasty. In science in Year 2, pupils write their own instructions for making a fruit drink. This made a good contribution because it was an open-ended task that allowed higher attaining pupils to write as much as they wanted. On the whole, however, other subjects could be making a stronger contribution to developing pupils' writing skills, particularly science, geography and religious education.

### **Modern Foreign Languages**

During the inspection, only one lesson was seen and another one visited for a short period. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision. Each class has one **German** language lesson per week taken by the visiting specialist teacher and one lesson about the German culture taken by the class teacher. This work links well with the school's involvement with European schools and supports pupils' cultural development. In the lesson seen, pupils were confident to speak in front of others and they built up a good vocabulary of common words. They were keen to answer and use their newly acquired skills. The teacher modelled a very good accent and the pupils were benefiting from copying this. However, too much of the lesson was taught in English and this limited the pupils' opportunities to hear spoken German.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils' numeracy skills are good and they use these well when solving problems.
  - The teachers and teaching assistants often promote pupils' mathematical thinking well by asking good questions.
  - The subject is well led.
  - There are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, which ranges from good to unsatisfactory.
  - The higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged when they and the average pupils are given the same work.
  - Better use could be made of the information from assessments and teachers' marking, to make sure tasks are helping pupils to move on in their learning.
50. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is above average. The very small numbers in the present Year 6 are reaching standards in line with expectations. Fewer pupils are likely to

attain the higher levels than in previous years because the year group is not quite as capable as those in the past. Standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. Achievement is satisfactory for all pupils between Years 1 and 6.

51. Year 2 pupils have a secure knowledge of number bonds and use this to advantage in their work. This means they can work quickly and make good progress. Higher attaining pupils work confidently with numbers to 1000 when adding on 10 or 100. Year 6 pupils are also secure in their number work and apply their numeracy skills well when tackling problems.
52. Teaching for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Planning takes account of the different levels of ability within the class and all the tasks are well matched. This, together with the focused support from the teacher and the teaching assistant, enables all pupils to complete their tasks. Adults are good at questioning the pupils' thinking and asking 'how' and 'why?' This enables higher attaining pupils to explain how they arrived at an answer using mathematical terms.
53. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 ranges from good to unsatisfactory, but is satisfactory overall. In two of the lessons seen, teachers were clear about what they wanted the pupils to learn. They explained new concepts and tasks carefully and so pupils were able to make good progress. The tasks interested the pupils and they were keen to get on with them. The higher attaining pupils enjoyed the challenge of hard work but admitted that they sometimes found new vocabulary hard to remember. Lower attaining pupils, who are very well supported by the teaching assistant, are pleased to learn new things but like to start from something they already know. The unsatisfactory teaching in Year 3 was due to the teacher's incomplete understanding of the subject matter. Consequently pupils were not sure of what they were learning or what they had to do. Therefore they did not learn as much as they should. In Years 3 to 6, the work for the average and above average pupils is often the same. This means that the higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and could sometimes be tackling harder work.
54. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is aware of the weaknesses in the subject and has taken steps towards dealing with them. She has arranged support for teachers in their planning and their teaching but this has not been in place for sufficient time to have had an impact upon pupils' achievement. The information from assessments is collated by teachers but not used sufficiently well to plan subsequent lessons. In some classes, teachers' marking comprises almost wholly just ticks and there is very little information for the pupil on what they are doing particularly well and what they need to work on to improve. In other classes, the teachers insist pupils correct inaccurate work and they give specific examples to show how pupils how to do something, which helps them to improve.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. Provision across the curriculum is satisfactory. There are opportunities for pupils to use mathematical facts, number patterns and tally charts in investigative work in science and in work about climate and travel in geography.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching was good overall during the inspection, and there was some very good teaching and learning taking place.
- Pupils enjoy science, particularly the practical aspects.
- Work in pupils' books shows that higher attaining pupils often do the same work as other pupils when they could be tackling work in more depth, or presenting their findings differently.

- The arrangements for assessing pupils and tracking their progress are not developed sufficiently well.

## Commentary

56. Pupils have good levels of general knowledge and a natural curiosity. During the inspection, many pupils talked about their interest in science and how they read reference books or use the Internet at home to find out things. The pupils' own thirst for knowledge is having a positive effect upon standards in science and this is one reason why they enjoy the subject, particularly when they do experiments and investigations. Achievement between Years 1 and 6 is satisfactory. When pupils repeat topics, such as teeth, these are covered in more depth higher up the school than they are in Year 3. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they have a good basic knowledge and understanding of science and have gained a wide scientific vocabulary.
57. Standards have improved at Year 6 since the last inspection and are broadly the same at Year 2. The school has made very good progress in improving the provision in science following the judgement of poor leadership and unsatisfactory teaching at that time. The curriculum is now planned well. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has analysed the results from the national tests and identified which elements need more attention. This was a factor in the greatly improved results at Year 6, in the 2003 national tests. This comparison needs to be treated with some caution though as year groups are small and the pupils in 2003 were more capable than those in the previous year. The co-ordinator has clear ideas about how she wants to see the subject improve further and is providing appropriate support.
58. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' books shows that teaching is satisfactory overall, though teaching during the inspection was better than this. Two of the lessons seen were very good, as a result of the teachers' very good subject knowledge, the very appropriate activities, and the good gains the pupils made in their knowledge and understanding. In one, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were very motivated and had clearly gained a lot of knowledge through a series of lessons on good and bad microbes. A governor who is also a vet had visited the school and brought additional resources to help demonstrate the effect of substances such as earwax, dirt from shoes and sticky fingers on agar jelly. This lesson built very effectively upon what pupils already knew and pupils made good strides in learning through investigating how yeast reacts in different conditions and its use in food production. In a science lesson for Years 3 and 4, pupils were highly motivated when investigating the effect of different liquids on eggshells. Pupils had a well developed awareness of scientific methods and made plausible suggestions why some things had not worked out as they expected and what they might do if they tried them again. Teaching was particularly effective in this lesson because the teacher constantly challenged the pupils, through perceptive questioning, and all pupils, irrespective of their capabilities, were motivated and engrossed. In the one satisfactory lesson, pupils in Year 1 and 2 took a while to settle down and the teacher was having to work hard to maintain a productive working atmosphere. There was plenty of additional adult help and, when pupils moved into groups to explore the senses of touch and sight through a range of tasks, they started to work hard and learning was better.
59. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that teaching does not always cater effectively for the range of attainment within a class, because pupils often do the same work and fill in the same worksheets when some are capable of more. With the small classes, teachers tend to rely on their personal knowledge of each pupil. In order to improve further, the school needs to ensure more thorough ongoing assessment takes place that is related to National Curriculum levels. In this way, teachers can build upon what pupils already know and establish what they need to learn next so that all pupils achieve well as they move through the school.

## Information and communication technology

It was not possible to see enough teaching during the inspection to make a secure judgement on provision.

60. Until recently there was only one computer in each classroom. Now there are five up-to-date networked computers in a communal area and one or two in each classroom. This new hardware has improved provision for pupils and there are plans to open a separate ICT suite and extend resources in the near future.
61. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is average. This is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. No lessons were seen in these classes but pupils' work shows that they have used a variety of programs for writing and drawing as well as playing number and spelling games. Their mouse and keyboard skills are satisfactory and they can log in and access programs independently. They can save, retrieve and print their own work. Examples of work show that they use a variety of fonts, colours and sizes. Achievement is satisfactory.
62. Former lack of provision means that, by Year 6, pupils have not covered all the National Curriculum for ICT, which is why standards are below average. Achievement is unsatisfactory between Years 3 and 6. This is not as good as at the time of the previous inspection but the requirements for this subject have expanded significantly since that time. Many pupils are unfamiliar with the keyboard and screen icons. This slows the progress they make during lessons, especially when word-processing. While they can enter, save and open their work and use a variety of fonts, size and colour they cannot use spreadsheets or simulations. They do not have the required knowledge or experience of some aspects of word processing, graphics, and presenting and interpreting data. Control technology is poorly developed. The school ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the Internet. Many pupils who were interviewed said how much they enjoyed their ICT lessons. They would like to be able to use the computers more often for personal research.
63. In the one lesson seen, the teacher and the teaching assistant had good subject knowledge and taught new skills well. By the end of the lesson, many pupils had produced a satisfactory leaflet on The Tudors. The pupils were clear what they had to achieve as the main learning focus was shared with them all at the start of the lesson. However, they were working at a lower standard than they should have been for Year 6.
64. The leadership of ICT is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has good subject knowledge that she shares with her colleagues. She is beginning to have an impact upon standards in the school. All staff have taken part in training and feel more confident to teach the curriculum. Assessment procedures have not been developed fully and so do not provide an ongoing record of pupils' work that can be used to plan future work.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. The use of ICT in other subjects is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not always identify where it can be used to support learning. Pupils cannot have access to the computers during much of the day because the hall where they are sited is used for so many other activities.

## HUMANITIES

Religious Education was inspected in full and is reported in detail below. Work was sampled in **history** and **geography** with only one lesson seen in each subject. A secure judgement cannot therefore be made about provision in these subjects.

66. The school organises a good range of visits to support pupils' learning in these two subjects. During the inspection, the younger pupils walked through the village to look at the different types of housing and identified various features of the roads around their school to support their **geography** work. In the lesson, pupils learned to draw maps, helped by photographs and their own knowledge of their locality. Most pupils were able to relate what was represented on

the map with what they knew about the different routes. The **history** lesson that was seen was part of the preparatory work for the pupils' visit to Hampton Court, as part of the topic being studied by Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils enjoyed looking very carefully at a portrait of Queen Elizabeth I and making assumptions about her power as monarch, the court life and even her personality.

67. Parents and pupils spoke of the good range of opportunities they have, through visitors coming into school and through pupils going on visits, including residential stays. Pupils particularly appreciate these occasions. They cited recent trips to Kilvrough Manor, the Railway Museum and the New Forest among many opportunities. The school organises days with a special focus, such as the Victorian Day and the Greek Day.

### Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of members of a variety of faiths to talk to the pupils.
  - Pupils find it difficult to recall what they have learned about faiths other than Christianity.
68. Pupils throughout the school have a sound understanding of traditions, symbols and customs associated with Christianity. They have some understanding of other faiths. Older pupils recall two visits by members of the Jehovah's Witnesses and Methodists. They were able to list similarities between these sects and Christianity. Younger pupils discussed photographs of articles associated with Judaism and Christianity and remembered their Jewish visitor.
69. Standards are average by Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. Year 6 pupils write about things that are important to them. They are familiar with the main features of the Church and understand their symbolism. The curriculum planning is satisfactory because teachers follow the locally agreed syllabus closely. The work is interesting and good use is made of visitors who talk with enthusiasm about their beliefs. Pupils remember these visits and recall the content well. Clearly, these visitors enhance the learning for all pupils and make a positive contribution to their overall achievement and personal development.
70. The teaching is satisfactory. For older pupils the tasks usually involve writing about what they can recall in response to the teachers' written questions. These questions inhibit pupils' responses because they have no choice in the way they present their information and no way of deciding what is important for them to record. Younger pupils record their experiences in a variety of ways. Year 1 pupils had made a book of drawings following the Jewish lady's visit. This was used as a point of reference during the lesson seen. One boy looked carefully through the book to identify the object in his photograph, put the book aside and placed the photograph in the 'Jewish' hoop with a sigh of satisfaction. Learning was good in this lesson.
71. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

### CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. Only one lesson was seen in both **physical education** and **music**. It is therefore not possible to make a secure judgement about provision in either. In addition to these lessons, inspectors spoke to pupils to gauge their opinions about these areas of the curriculum. **Design and technology** and **art and design** were not a focus of the inspection.
73. One **physical education** lesson was seen in the village hall involving all the pupils in reception, Year 1 and Year 2. The teaching was good because it concentrated on improving the quality of movement. The planning ensured that the tasks set challenged the older pupils



while allowing younger ones to make good progress through their own choice of apparatus and movement. Movement around the apparatus, however, was restricted through lack of space and this cut down the options for the teacher and pupils.

74. Provision for outdoor games is satisfactory. Pupils use the playground and the school field for games and athletics. Older pupils join with those from other schools for matches and tournaments. Younger children have swimming lessons in the pool attached to the village hall, while older ones travel to the nearby leisure centre. Pupils say they would like better facilities for physical education and more opportunities to take part in competitive sports. They like the range of clubs that are on offer and the fact that both boys and girls are encouraged to play netball and football. Pupils know that they are unable to have gymnastics lessons like their friends in larger schools. They are unhappy about this and talk longingly of climbing ropes and wall bars, swinging from beams and vaulting.
75. **Music** lessons are taken by a teaching assistant who has musical expertise. She also sometimes plays the guitar to accompany the pupils' singing during assemblies apart from when the vicar, who is an accomplished pianist, takes weekly assemblies. Pupils know a number of songs and hymns and sing these with appropriate attention to melody and rhythm. Discussions with pupils show that they would like to sing what they describe as 'more exciting' songs, rather than just hymns. The pupils learn to play percussion instruments, albeit a restricted range. They know most of their names and how to hold and play them. The school owns a limited number and range of instruments but these are supplemented by the teaching assistant's own resources, which means all pupils have access to a percussion instrument, when needed. A strength in the music provision is the opportunity for pupils to learn an instrument. Lessons are available on a good range of instruments, for this small school and a high proportion of pupils learn to play instruments. A substantial proportion of pupils play in the school orchestra and make a positive contribution to the cultural life of the school.

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

76. Provision for PSHE is satisfactory. The school gives pupils opportunities to discuss issues of relevance to them, and helps them to develop into sensible and mature individuals. The programme is supported through the school arranging visits from organisations such as the police and fire brigade. In the lesson observed, teaching was good. The teacher encouraged the pupils to talk about people or things that were special for them. She was patient and allowed them time to think and time for the less confident pupils to express their thoughts. The newly-formed School Council is encouraging pupils to look at things from different viewpoints, work as a team and come to a balanced view. They have their own budget and take this responsibility very seriously. One pupil said, for example, "We'd like to get a new climbing frame but we can't afford it." They are very proud of their first purchase, a Friendship Bench, and feel that this is working very well because pupils often use it but do not have to sit there for very long before someone comes and asks them to play.

## **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	3
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	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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