

INSPECTION REPORT

BURTON BRADSTOCK C of E VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Burton Bradstock, Bridport

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113758

Headteacher: Mr M Stratta

Lead inspector: Mr M S Burghart

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 26th February 2004

Inspection number: 255684

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:	113

School address:	Church Street Burton Bradstock Bridport Dorset
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Postcode:	DT6 4QS
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Telephone number:	01308 897369
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
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Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Southgate
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Date of previous inspection:	July 1998
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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a smaller than average sized Church of England voluntary controlled school. It has a below average proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) but there are marked differences between year groups with no one on the SEN register in Years 5 and 6, but 26 per cent in Year 3. The school is currently full. It has four classes, all of which contain more than one age group. The headteacher shares the Years 5 and 6 class, teaching each afternoon session, with a part time teacher. Staff turnover has been high in the last eighteen months, including the appointment of the headteacher and more recently the assistant head. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at times other than in reception or from Year 6 is below average. No pupil requires extra help for having English as an additional language. The attainment of children when first entering reception is usually above average

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20865	Mr M S Burghart	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, English, Information and communication technology, Humanities, Personal, social and health education, Special educational needs.
9030	Mr R Love	Lay inspector	
20671	Mr J E Palethorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics, Science, Creative, aesthetic, practical and physical subjects.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school where good standards both academic and in terms of care and pupils' personal development have been maintained during a difficult period of staff change over the last year. It gives sound value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good and as a result standards are well above average in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- This is a very caring school and pupils respond with very positive attitudes, and usually very good behaviour.
- Support for special educational needs (SEN) is good and much improved.
- There are very good links with the local community.
- Opportunities to enrich the curriculum are very good.
- The monitoring role of subject leaders is underdeveloped.
- Outside provision for the Foundation Stage (reception) is not good enough.

The school's progress since the last inspection is satisfactory overall, but included a period of uncertainty resulting from a variety of staff changes which included the head and assistant head. Recent progress has been good. Most obvious improvements are in better teaching, financial management, resources for information and communication technology (ICT) and SEN provision.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	A	A*	A
Mathematics	B	C	A	A
Science	D	C	A*	A

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.

The table shows the school is doing well particularly in Years 3 to 6. A* performance puts the school in the top five per cent of all primaries. Across the school pupils' ability (generally above average when they arrive) is made the most of and pupils achieve well, with the school adding value to their performance. Results of seven year olds are not so positive. Having been about average for the three years 2000 – 2002, they were well below average in 2003. This is partly explained by over a quarter of pupils in the year group tested having SEN. However, improvements still require attention with subject leaders developing a clearer understanding of reasons behind weaker scores. Improvements to provision for the Foundation Stage ensure that all children in reception meet the early learning goals before Year 1 with particular success in communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development. There was insufficient evidence to make detailed judgements in every other subject but strengths in some aspects of music, history, games and art were observed. **Pupils' personal development is good** with clear strengths in moral and social elements making very positive contributions to the school's good, family ethos. Notwithstanding a few pupils who could, and occasionally do, present problems, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum very effectively enriched by extracurricular activities, visits and visitors. **Teaching is good**, and frequently very good, and this leads to good learning overall. Learning objectives are clear, relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Very good questioning challenges pupils, and support for SEN is consistently good. Teaching is strong in literacy and numeracy and in the Foundation Stage. Aspects that could still be better include: developing assessment to help track what individual pupils know, understand and can do, and improving levels of challenge in some lessons in the Years 1 and 2 class. Mixed age classes are well managed. The school takes very good care of pupils and maintains very good links with the community. Barriers to learning include a lack of resources for the Foundation Stage outside, aspects of staff directed time not well used, and ICT not always used to the full to support other subjects.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are satisfactory with strengths in the commitment of the head and assistant head to making improvements. This is inhibited by a lack of time, and roles and responsibilities of subject leaders not being clearly defined. Currently performance management of staff is not used effectively enough, job descriptions are weak, and the absence of effective monitoring of teaching and learning in some curriculum areas has a negative impact. Day to day management is good and financial control (a weakness in 1998) is now good. Governors give positive support. The governance of the school is sound. Working effectively with the head, governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think well of the school and its reputation is good. They particularly like the family atmosphere and approachability. Some parents expressed concerns about behaviour and bullying, and over Year 1 pupils split into two classes. Inspectors find little evidence of bullying and that behaviour is very good with appropriate management procedures in place. Provision for Year 1 is good overall; pupils are equally well supported but procedures to notify parents about arrangements need improving. Most pupils like coming to school and especially enjoy extracurricular activities.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards as measured by national tests for seven year olds.
- Develop further the leadership and management of subject leaders, improving their job descriptions, and making more efficient use of time to improve monitoring of teaching, learning and standards.
- Introduce outdoor resources for the Foundation Stage;

and, to meet statutory requirements for:

- Implementing a policy for pupils' safe use of the Internet.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards in **English** at the end of Year 2 are **above average** and **achievement is good**. In **mathematics** and **science**, **standards and achievement are satisfactory**. At the end of Year 6, standards in **English** and **mathematics** are **well above average**, and in **science** standards are **above average**. **Achievement is good** in all core subjects. Judgements on achievement at the end of Year 2 take into account the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A new induction policy for the Foundation Stage gives pupils a good start at school.
- The organisation of pupils in Years R, 1 and 2 has been improved.
- The number element of mathematics and the speaking and listening elements of English are strong throughout the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.
- A very large proportion of pupils reached the higher level 5 in the end of Year 6 tests.

Commentary

1. Home visits to children and their parents before children start school are a recent addition to the school's induction arrangements. This creates a good partnership between school and home, and assists in enabling children to settle quickly into school life and therefore make a quick start towards achieving their early learning goals.

2. The small numbers on roll in each year group mean that mixed age classes are necessary. Neither the school, nor the parents, have been happy with past arrangements which, together with the high number of pupils with special educational needs, may have contributed to a decline in standards in Years 1 and 2, especially in reading and writing. The present arrangements for English and mathematics are an improvement, although it is too early to show a substantial impact on standards.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.2 (16.7)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.7 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.4 (15.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 19 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 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.2 (29.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.8 (27.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.6 (29.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Within mathematics a strong emphasis is placed on number work. This is having an impact on standards. For example, many of the youngest pupils can count to 100, whilst older pupils can multiply three sets of numbers in their head with a product of several hundred. Pupils are given plenty of opportunity to practise their speaking and listening skills, not only in English, but in all other subjects. This helps pupils to be very articulate in class discussions, and speaking in front of the whole school.

4. Good teaching, with challenging work, particularly for the higher attaining pupils, enabled the school to have a very high percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 5 in the Year 6 national tests. This meant that the school had very high average point scores in English, mathematics and science in 2003. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, with some of the support for small groups being very good. Individual education plans set clear short-term targets, and pupils make good progress towards them.

5. In information and communication technology (ICT) and geography, standards meet the nationally expected levels, and achievement is sound. However, there are some weaknesses in the use of ICT in other subjects. In religious education (RE), standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, and achievement is sound. In music, standards are in line with national expectations for pupils in Years 3 to 6, and achievement is sound. However, in Years 1 and 2, standards and achievement are both good. Singing throughout the school is a strength. In art, design and technology, history and physical education, there was insufficient evidence to make judgements on standards or achievement. Good provision throughout the school in pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is developing these skills well to a higher standard than expected nationally.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to the school and their work are very good. Pupils behave very well and enjoy coming to school. Relationships between pupils and adults and between pupils themselves are very good. Overall pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is good compared with the national average. Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour make a positive contribution to learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave very well in classes and around the school.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work.
- Relationships are very good.
- Pupils' moral and social development are both very good.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.4	School data	0
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.

6. Attendance levels are now good compared with the national average and the level of unauthorised absence is below the national average for primary schools. Whilst most absence is due to medical or other acceptable reasons there is a small minority of parents who take their children on holidays in term time.

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	108	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0

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

7. There is only a very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds in the school and these children are very well integrated into school life and there is no evidence of any racism in the school.

8. Pupils' attitudes to learning and to behaviour were described in the previous report as being strengths of the school. They remain so. Pupils enjoy coming to school and show positive attitudes to their work. They work and play well together.

9. Behaviour overall is very good but there are variations. The youngest pupils' behaviour is outstandingly good but the behaviour of a very few of the older boys is sometimes unacceptable. On the few occasions that behaviour is unacceptable effective measures are taken to correct it. There has been no need to exclude any pupil. Bullying is not seen as a significant problem by pupils, parents or staff, but should it occur there are adequate procedures for dealing with it.

10. There are very good relationships throughout the school and these are built on mutual trust and respect with the adults being good role models. Staff know pupils very well and value them as individuals. The quality of relationships, trust, mutual respect and the overarching ethos of the school contribute greatly to pupils' social development, which is very good. This produces an orderly and very social community in which pupils are prepared to take on responsibilities, such as returning registers to the office and setting up the hall for assemblies. The residential school journeys, which pupils in Year 2 and above undertake, make valuable contributions to their social development.

11. The spiritual development of pupils is good and promoted through a variety of means including assemblies, circle time and discussions in lessons. However, it is sometimes not sufficiently planned for and often opportunities for it arise by chance. Pupils' moral development is very good and is fostered by similar means to their spiritual development. Pupils do know the difference between right and wrong and their very good behaviour bears witness to this. Pupils' cultural development is good and is encouraged by several means including the celebration of religious festivals, learning about various religions, listening to stories and poems from around the world and visits to museums. Various artists and theatre groups come into school to perform for pupils and these contribute to cultural development. The school is beginning to take more account of the fact that Britain is a multicultural society and is raising pupils' awareness of this so that children are better prepared for life in the wider community.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides pupils with a **good overall standard of education**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good overall. This results in good learning and pupils achieving successfully especially by the time they leave the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage mixed age classes well.
- Teaching for the Foundation Stage (reception) is a strength.
- Literacy and numeracy are usually well taught.
- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 helps pupils to reach above average standards before they leave.
- More use of assessment is needed to track pupils' progress in subjects other than English, maths and science.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	9 (26%)	19 (56%)	6 (18%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. Some parents expressed concerns over mixed age classes, especially where Year 1 is involved. Inspection evidence shows these worries are ill-founded. Teaching is good across the school with staff coping well with mixed ages and ability groups. A strength of the school is that because teaching assistants and volunteers are used well pupils are often taught in groups much smaller than the class, and benefit from close contact with adults. Year 1 pupils usually receive good support wherever they are, in work appropriately matched to their ability and maturity.

13. All teachers were observed unannounced by a variety of inspectors on several occasions. All lessons were at least satisfactory and all teachers had lessons judged good. Four staff delivered some very good lessons. Just over a quarter of all lessons were very good with a high proportion being in Years 3 to 6.

14. Very good lessons for the youngest children make the most of opportunities very well planned against the Foundation Stage curriculum. There is a strong commitment to structured play. With the exception of opportunities outdoors where there is a lack of equipment, this has very positive effects on children's learning, especially communication skills.

15. Literacy and numeracy are usually well taught because planning is good and assessment clearly identifies what pupils know, understand and can do. Regular testing makes it possible to set targets, modify the curriculum and teach to different levels within the same class. For example in a very good Years 3 and 4 lesson on Caribbean poetry, because the teacher knew exactly what pupils were capable of, she set work which challenged each group to the full and ensured that more able pupils in particular achieved well. Most science teaching is good.

16. Results which are consistently improving and are now well above average in English and maths, and above average in science, are a testament to successful teaching in Years 3 to 6. Weaker results in Year 2 indicate less successful teaching over time, but inspection evidence shows improvement, albeit that there was a lack of challenge in some maths activity observed.

17. Teaching and support for pupils with SEN found lacking in the last report is now good and the quality of individual education plans is judged very good. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to teaching in general and in particular to special needs and in work targeted at getting pupils to higher levels.

18. Strengths in teaching are in:

- Very good questioning which seeks to involve all pupils and gets them to answer on the basis of deliberation;
- Good relationships which mean pupils are not afraid to make mistakes and learn from them;
- Learning objectives made clear at the start of lessons and referred back to at the end.

19. Aspects of teaching which could be improved are in:

- More use of assessment to understand how pupils are doing in subjects other than English, maths and science;
- Better use of time at the end of the day in Years R to 2 (where children were observed getting ready to go home well before the end of school);
- Improving levels of challenge for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

The curriculum

The **curriculum is satisfactory** and enriched by a **very good range of activities outside the classroom**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and mostly balanced.
- Visitors and visits, particularly residential ones, considerably enhance the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education needs a cohesive programme, but is considered good.
- Not enough use is made of information and communication technology in other subjects.
- Outside facilities for pupils in the Foundation Stage are inadequate.
- The library contains too many out-dated books.

Commentary

20. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and all pupils have equal access. The Foundation Stage curriculum is much improved and is now based on structured play. As a result of previous test results, there has been a focus throughout the school on reading, which is already showing positive results. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented well, as has the locally agreed syllabus for RE. Schemes of work for all other subjects are based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance. These are sound, but do sometimes need adapting to suit the needs of the children. Basic skills in information and communication technology are being taught appropriately, but they are not used adequately to support learning in other subjects. The curriculum does not always benefit from the best use of time, particularly for the youngest pupils at the end of the day, or for pupils in Year 6 for their music. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good, as are the outcomes. However, there is no common approach to the overall provision, nor is there curriculum guidance. There is insufficient monitoring by subject leaders of a variety of subjects which enables many of the above issues to continue.

21. The curriculum is considerably enriched by a variety of visits, visitors and extracurricular activities. Clubs cover a good range of musical and sporting activities, whilst English and

mathematics have been helped by the visit of a clown and a children's author. Residential visits for pupils in Years 2 to 6 have a positive effect on pupils' enthusiasm for the school and for the creation of good social skills and relationships. French is taught to pupils in Years 5 and 6 as part of a very good partnership with the secondary school. This is beneficial for pupils' language and cultural development.

22. The school complies fully with the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. Individual education plans have improved a great deal since the last inspection, and are used well by teachers and teaching assistants to support pupils' learning, enabling pupils to make good progress.

23. Accommodation is satisfactory and is used well. Good use is made of a nearby field and a leisure centre to make up for the school hall and outside deficiencies for physical education. However, facilities for outside play for pupils in reception are inadequate, thus limiting the possibilities for physical development. The library is a useful area and is used well, although there are too many very old books, which do not appeal to present day pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides **good care for all its pupils**. The school is a safe, very caring and supportive place, where all pupils receive good support and guidance and this helps them to make progress in their learning. The school could take more account of the views of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a safe environment.
- Staff know pupils very well and care about them.
- Relationships are very good.

Commentary

24. One of the school's published aims is to be 'a caring family, building on the love and values that a good home provides'. The school succeeds in meeting this aim in full. The general welcoming ethos of the school underpins the provision of the safe and caring environment in which every pupil is well supported and valued. There are very good relationships between pupils and staff and the staff are good role models. The staff, both teaching and support, know pupils well and work well as a team to promote pupils' personal welfare and to make children feel safe and secure. Monitoring of pupils' personal development although often informal is nevertheless effective.

25. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the school, have very good individual education plans, and receive the same level of care and support as everyone else. Although the school does not have a formal programme for personal, social and health education, these aspects are dealt with in other curriculum areas and activities, and help raise pupils' awareness of healthy and safe living.

26. The school's good health and safety policy and practices ensure the safety and welfare of pupils, staff and visitors. However, the absence of a policy to ensure safe use of the Internet is a weakness. The governing body takes an active interest in monitoring health and safety matters. Regular risk assessments are carried out for school based activities and for off site visits and school journeys. There are good procedures for fire safety and regular fire drills are held. All staff have recently received first aid training and there are scheduled drop-in sessions with the school nurse.

27. The child protection practices are good and based on the locally agreed procedures. Training is provided to ensure staff are aware of the procedures and new members of staff are made aware of these procedures as part of their induction.

28. There are good arrangements for ensuring that pupils new to the school settle in, and home visits are made by staff prior to children starting school. Parents were very satisfied with these new arrangements.

29. The views of pupils are considered through such means as circle times. These means are satisfactory but there is scope for taking more account of pupils' views and the proposed setting up of a school council will enable this to be done.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good partnership with parents** and has been successful in involving them in the education of their children. There are very good links with other schools and good links with the wider community that benefit all pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents think highly of the school.
- Parents are provided with good quality information.
- Links with the community are very good.
- There are very good links with other schools.

Commentary

30. Parents spoken to, those who returned the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaires, or attended the pre-inspection meeting, were very supportive of the school. A few however had concerns about the organisation of the classes for Year 1 pupils, behaviour, homework, and the information they receive about their children.

31. The inspection team carefully considered the way classes were organised and in particular the effect of splitting the Year 1 pupils into two unequal groups - one group being taught with reception children, and the other with Year 2 pupils. The team concluded that none of the pupils were being adversely affected by the split. However, the team did think that the rationale for the split could have been explained earlier and better to all the parents, not just to those directly affected.

32. Inspectors do not share the concerns of the few parents about homework, which was found to be good, nor about behaviour which was found to be very good.

33. Parents are provided with good information in the form of regular newsletters, the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. There is a very good school web site, which contains amongst other things, details of the school policies. Parents are invited to meetings to discuss their children and these meetings are well attended. Parents receive annual reports on their children and while these do give some information about their children's attainments there is a tendency for them to concentrate too much on subject coverage rather than what the child can do or has achieved. There is a home/school agreement in place.

34. A small number of parents help out in the school. There is a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) that raises considerable funds for the school, which have been spent, for example, on library books, recorder lessons, computers and subsidising school trips. Although the PTA is run by a small group of parents many more help out at functions arranged such as the Summer Fair.

35. The school, in its published aims, recognises the value of a partnership with parents and it has been successful in creating one.

36. Pupils make visits to the neighbouring church, the local library, the post office and other places in the community to support their curriculum work. Members of the community are invited into school to talk to pupils. Villagers support school events such as the Summer Fair and pupils support village activities such as the art competition at the flower and vegetable show.

37. There are very good links with a cluster of local primary schools and a wider grouping of schools which includes a secondary school to which most pupils transfer. These links have brought many benefits including the provision of a teacher to teach French at the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall **leadership and management of the school are satisfactory**. There are strengths in the commitment of the head and assistant head to raise and maintain standards. The governance of the school is sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- As a result of recent improvements the school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
- Day to day management is good.
- Financial control is much improved and is now good.
- Job descriptions are weak and staff time is not directed effectively. Consequently the monitoring roles of subject leaders are underdeveloped.
- There is no policy to keep pupils safe whilst using the Internet, and a variety of school policies are in need of review.

Commentary

38. Improvements over the last year, and more particularly since the head and his assistant came together as a team in September 2003, are having positive effects on the school's leadership and management. Good analysis of standards and procedures mean the school has clear educational direction and senior staff keep the governors informed about strengths and weaknesses. That issues raised by this inspection are nearly all features of the current school improvement plan is a testament to the success of this process. However, because of the very recent nature of some initiatives it is too soon for them to have had full effect. For example a detailed analysis of reasons for weak results for seven year olds in national tests in 2003 is leading to improvements, but as tests for 2004 have yet to be undertaken there is no measure of raised standards.

39. The school is well run on a day to day basis, with established routines for timetabling and procedures. Support staff make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school: for example in efficiently preparing resources and managing the home/school reading programme. An exception to this is the arrangement for the end of the day in reception and more particularly Years 1 and 2. Frequently the last fifteen to twenty minutes of the day are spent preparing to go home and are not used to the full in educational terms.

40. A major improvement since the last inspection has been in managing finance from the school's budget to provide for educational priorities: for example in developing resources for ICT. The head, supported by the governors, make efficient use of funds and the school is well resourced. The main exception being in terms of the lack of outdoor equipment to support the Foundation Stage curriculum. This has negative effects on children's learning and achievement in reception. That the school is judged as giving sound value for money as opposed to 'good' in the last inspection is a reflection on pupils' weaker performance aged seven, rather than as a result of weaknesses in financial management.

41. There are weaknesses in the management of staff and how formal procedures are used to make improvements. These have negative impacts on the effectiveness of subject leaders and feature:

- Job descriptions which are not school specific in terms of what is expected of teachers in their management roles. This results in teachers not being fully aware of what they need to do in

monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects, and not being held as accountable;

- No account kept of how teachers are to use time as directed in their conditions of service;
- Staff non contact time (which at half a day per week is generous for such a school) being used for class preparation and marking rather than for subject leadership and development.

42. This situation is not helped by the practice of the head teaching every afternoon in the same class and being unable to release staff for monitoring at times when they could see their subjects taught in other classes. Governors do have a review of the head's teaching role and routines as a part of the school improvement plan and have set aside some of the above average carry forward of the budget to support this. However, there is no timescale for the process and changes, sooner rather than later, are required to improve these aspects of management.

43. Good features of management include the introduction of structured play to deliver the Foundation Stage curriculum; and how special educational needs are supported. The quality of individual education plans which was a key issue of the last report is now considered very good resulting in good and still improving provision.

44. Although there is no evidence of pupils misusing or being negatively affected by the Internet the absence of a formal school specific policy puts children at risk. Governors have a programme for revisiting policies in general but nevertheless some policies are ageing and most are not specific to the school. There is a need to improve the process with governors who are keen to support the school taking the initiative.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	307430
Total expenditure	290123
Expenditure per pupil	2545

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	17751
Balance carried forward to the next	17307

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good** and much improved. Children get off to a very good start and build successfully on generally above average attainment when they enter school to reach expected goals often well before the end of reception.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently good and frequently very good.
- The curriculum is well planned the school's commitment to learning through structured play is very good.
- Children achieve well to reach virtually all the learning goals expected by the time they complete the Foundation Stage.
- The lack of climbing and ride on equipment outdoors restricts children's physical development.

Commentary

45. Provision for children's **personal, social and emotional development** is very good. As a result children are confident, willing to have a go and relate very well to each other. They soon adapt to school life and learn that taking turns and sharing are fundamental to living in a community. Children's response to school in terms of attitudes and behaviour is always very good and frequently excellent. Children are encouraged to show initiative, and learn to work independently. Relationships are very good with lots of consideration and tolerance demonstrated from a very early age. For example children whose remote controlled car would not work and were clearly frustrated, waited patiently for a solution, and by watching others still learnt a lot about directions.

46. Children achieve well in **communication, language and literacy** with the more able doing very well and the least able often achieving extremely well. Very good use of above average speaking and listening skills makes a significant contribution to all aspects of learning. For example in role play in the class construction site; and in discussions about how sounds make up words in early work on phonics demonstrating the difference between b and d. Children are well ahead of expectations in reading skills and are emerging as writers often spontaneously trying things out on paper to record their thoughts and write 'stories' of their own. Teaching in this element is very good with both class teacher and teaching assistants making very good use of questioning to prompt children to hypothesise and express themselves. There is much good learning in communication skills in all other aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is very good preparation for literacy work in the National Curriculum.

47. Provision for **mathematical development** is good with plenty of opportunities to explore numbers and counting in games and activities. These are designed to encourage children to match and sort and appreciate differences and what may be missing. Shopping role play develops children's awareness of money and estimation skills are prompted by comparing distances. Simple weighing and measuring when making things with playdough help children to understand terms such as heavier and lighter than, and work on identifying shapes such as squares and triangles gives children the right kind of vocabulary to discuss properties.

48. Children's achievement in terms of **knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development** is good, much enhanced by the variety of activities on offer, some to be directed by the teacher and some to be chosen by the child. Opportunities to explore materials and handle tools, use computers, paint and build with construction sets have good impacts on learning. The emphasis on hands on learning helps children to move forward through the stepping stones identified in the Foundation Stage curriculum confidently forming concepts which are then used to test out simple hypotheses. For example investigating and playing with historical toys, drawing, and

using the digital camera to record them, whilst trying to guess something about those who owned them makes very good use of a whole range of skills as well as being fun!

49. The main barrier to children's progress which was identified in the last report and is well known to the school is the absence of equipment outdoors for children to climb on, and balance on whilst using ride on toys. This severely restricts physical development and denies opportunities for children to play together, whilst relating to each other in a wider space than the classroom. Staff do make use of the outside area: for example to develop throwing and catching, and children do benefit from more formal PE lessons in the hall, but overall this is the weakest aspect of provision.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by the time pupils leave Year 6.
- Results of end of Year 2 national tests were well below average in 2003.
- Very good speaking and listening skills are well used to enable pupils to express themselves.
- Although the subject is well planned, the subject leader does not know enough about how well pupils are doing in classes other than her own.

Commentary

50. Pupils are well above average when they leave the school and this shows that the school has made good use of children's above average attainment when they first joined reception to add value to their education. Although statistics based on small year groups can be misleading the school's performance in tests for eleven year olds in 2003 put the school in the top five per cent of all primaries for English with particular success in reading and the quality of pupils' writing. Inspection evidence for those currently in Year 6 shows standards are still very good, being well above average. Prime examples are in:

- Pupils' reading, where a high proportion of pupils are working at an above average level in drawing inferences and making deductions;
- High quality speaking and listening skills used very effectively in discussions designed to persuade an audience of different points of view;
- Very good writing in the style of myths, and in free verse about animals, especially the cat.

51. Standards in Year 2 have not matched the success of higher year groups and evidence indicates that in the past and over a period of years some pupils have underachieved. From this it is possible to conclude that teaching has been less successful in Years 1 and 2 than in other year groups. However it should be noted that the year group tested in 2003 had over a quarter of pupils on the special educational needs register and many of the least able pupils achieved well to get near to national expectations. Following new initiatives in the past year and, especially in the last term, Year 2 pupils are now performing above what is expected of them in reading and writing.

52. Big progress has been made by introducing structured daily reading workshop sessions which give effective support to pupils of all abilities in the same class. There are good examples of writing on the theme of mountain rescues which show Year 2 pupils are already using complex sentences and that the more able are making good use of connectives and speech marks.

53. Teaching observed during the inspection was consistently at least good with a high proportion of very good teaching and this is having very good effects on pupils' learning. Features of very good lessons include:

- Very good questioning involving all pupils and requiring reasoned answers;
- Good management of different ages and abilities in the same class;
- Very good planning and clarity of learning objectives;
- Good use of assessment to set targets and gauge progress;
- Good support for pupils with SEN and strong contributions from teaching assistants, with pupils often taught in much smaller than class groups.

54. From the points of view of planning and resources the subject is well managed. However, the subject leader has not monitored the quality of teaching and learning at first hand in other classes and knows too little about how pupils are doing to make predictions about success and possible weaknesses. In part this may explain lower results for seven year olds where expectations may not have been rigorous enough.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. Very good use is made of the key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing to support other subjects. For example good discussions are features of a variety of lessons especially in Years 5 and 6 religious education work on the martyrdom of St Stephen; and very perceptive writing based on Years 3 and 4 research about World War II. Pupils are confident to write directly onto screen making good use of computers as word processors.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving.
- Teaching is good throughout the school.
- The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented effectively.
- Analysis of test results guides future planning and target setting.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Presentation of pupils' work is not always given sufficient priority.
- Information and communication technology is used inconsistently to support pupils' learning in mathematics.
- Although the subject is well led, there is insufficient monitoring of mathematics across the school.

Commentary

56. The 2003 national tests (SATs) at the end of Year 2 showed an improvement on 2002. Whilst all pupils reached the expected level 2, compared with schools nationally, fewer pupils reached the higher level 3. However, a high percentage of this year group were on the register for special educational needs, so achievement was good. The end of Year 6 test results showed a sharp increase from 2002, with 57 per cent of pupils reaching the higher level 5, which is a very high proportion. Test results are analysed well, showing teachers where pupils' weakness lie. Work is then planned to eradicate these weaknesses.

57. Only one observed lesson was judged as satisfactory, with all others being good or very good. The particular strengths in teaching are:

- Thorough planning, with clear lesson objectives made known to pupils;
- Clear teaching with good explanations and demonstrations;
- Different challenges set for different ability pupils;
- Good support for pupils with special educational needs by the teacher and teaching assistant;

- Good classroom organisation, with pupils well managed and motivated.

These factors lead to enthusiastic pupils who work hard and make good progress.

58. In some lessons, even those judged as good overall, there were factors which could be improved, and had a negative effect on pupils' progress. They included:

- Not involving many pupils in lesson introductions;
- Not challenging pupils sufficiently, particularly the more able in Years 1 and 2;
- Marking not always being helpful and showing pupils how they can improve, especially with their presentation. Pupils have squared mathematics books, but many pupils ignore these and therefore do not put their digits in the right columns.

59. Information and communication technology is being used to support learning in mathematics. However, there are missed opportunities, as the use of information and communication technology is not yet an integral part of planning, and teachers are not aware of all the programs available.

60. The subject leader has a good overview of mathematics in Years 3 to 6, but less so for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Improvement has been made since the last inspection in attainment in Years 3 to 6, and in continuity across the school. However, more still needs to be done to improve attainment at the end of Year 2, and monitoring of the subject by the leader.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. The basic skills of numeracy are taught well in all classes. Pupils use their mathematical skills in their work in other subjects. For example, in history, pupils construct a timeline for their World War II studies. They collect data and present it in graphs in geography and science. Pupils are encouraged to apply their mathematical skills during scientific experiments.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 6.
- There is good coverage of most of the National Curriculum requirements.
- Assessment procedures are developing well.
- There are good links with other subjects.
- Most teaching is good.
- Test results are not analysed.
- There is insufficient monitoring of science by the subject leader.

Commentary

62. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average, but there are fewer pupils reaching the higher levels than would be expected nationally. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average, in this case with about half the pupils reaching the higher levels. Recent National Curriculum test results have shown good improvements over the last two years. Science has been identified as an area for improvement in the school improvement plan. Part of this has been to review the curriculum. There is now good coverage throughout the school, with the exception of the use of sensory ICT equipment.

63. There are assessments made at the end of each unit of work, which are effective in finding out what pupils know and can do. However, the results of these tests are not used sufficiently to guide

future planning. Similarly, there is no analysis of National Curriculum test results, making it difficult to ensure that work is suited to pupils' needs.

64. Most teaching is good. Teacher training on scientific enquiry has had a positive effect, and good attention is paid to this in lessons. Pupils have a good idea of how to conduct an experiment, making predictions first, knowing how to make it a fair test, and recording their results. This could be improved even further with pupils being more involved in doing the experiments themselves, rather than the teaching assistant or the class teacher. Planning is good, with clear lesson objectives, and explicit demonstrations and explanations. Good links are made with other subjects, such as mathematics for measuring and recording the results of experiments, and in physical education with work on heart rate after exercise.

65. The subject was taken over by a new leader in September. She has a good knowledge and understanding of science, and has some appropriate plans to introduce in an attempt to raise standards, although these have yet to be implemented fully. Missing from the action plan is to monitor science lessons throughout the school. At the moment, the leader does not have sufficient knowledge of how the subject is being taught, and where improvements could be made.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources, planning and teachers' expertise have been improved from unsatisfactory to satisfactory since the last inspection.
- Interactive whiteboards are used well in the two classes where they have been sited.

Commentary

66. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are sound for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Work in hand in Years 3 to 6 meets what is expected nationally. However, gaps left in work over time, relatively infrequent opportunities for pupils to work with computers in ICT lessons and as support for other subjects, means some aspects are unsatisfactory. For example there is too little work on multimedia presentations and no use of sensors to support work in science. Basic keyboard skills and mouse control are good throughout the school. By the time they leave, pupils in Year 6 are able to access the Internet and use CD-ROMs for research. Throughout the school word processing is used appropriately for pupils to record and draft their work.

67. There is now sufficient equipment including a digital camera and two interactive whiteboards, and improved resources are having positive effects on pupils' learning. Teachers and support staff are better trained and this has improved the effectiveness of provision: for example in developing the use of spreadsheets in Years 5 and 6 mathematics.

68. No direct teaching of ICT was observable during the inspection so no judgements are made about quality, but there is a commitment to making use of more than computers to capture pupils' interest: for example good use of remote control cars to help Year R and Year 1 pupils appreciate direction and improve hand-eye co-ordination.

69. The management of the subject is temporarily covered by the head. Leadership is satisfactory but there is a need to introduce more meaningful assessment to identify what pupils can do and understand, to track progress, and modify provision accordingly.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. Although there are examples of good practice, more use could be made of ICT to support other subjects. There is very little consideration of how ICT skills will be used and developed in planning for other curriculum areas, and this will need to be addressed to develop the subject further.

HUMANITIES

71. Few lessons could be observed in history during the inspection and none in geography. From school planning and records and samples of pupils' work it is possible to conclude provision in both subjects is satisfactory. However, there was too little evidence to make secure judgements about standards or teaching.

72. **History** and **geography** are effectively planned for using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes of work modified in a rolling two year programme to provide for mixed age classes. Topics are supported with a satisfactory range of materials, including good artefacts for example for Years 3 and 4 work on World War II. Both subjects are satisfactorily led and managed, but both suffer from a lack of monitoring by subject leaders and little assessment made to establish what pupils know. This makes reporting to parents on pupils' achievement difficult.

73. Strengths observed in history were in:

- Years 1 and 2 pupils achieving well in developing skills of observation and deduction using clues from pictures of George Stephenson to establish features of his life and times;
- The Year R study of toys from the past appreciating how things have changed;
- Years 3 and 4 work on the life of Anne Frank appreciating how Jewish people suffered persecution.

74. Pupils are successfully encouraged to question and draw their own conclusions from available evidence and understand that history is open to interpretation.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Only one lesson could be observed in religious education (RE) but an overview of work and planning indicates that provision and standards throughout the school are **satisfactory**.

Commentary

75. It was not possible to generalise about the quality of teaching and learning. However in the one RE lesson seen in Years 5 and 6 pupils showed enthusiasm, and teaching had good features in open ended questioning and in the challenge for more able pupils. Pupils very good speaking and listening skills were used well to develop debate about St Stephen and his example to disciples.

76. Assemblies make a strong contribution to RE and pupils' spiritual development: for example drawing heavily on Bible stories and Christian festivals. Years 3 to 6 pupils begin work on a variety of faiths which makes a sound contribution to their cultural development.

77. RE has not been a high priority for development in the school. Its management is adequate, but the subject is not assessed which means teachers cannot gauge the progress pupils make. The subject leader has not monitored teaching in order to guarantee continuity across the school and this has a negative effect on provision.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was insufficient work seen in **art, design and technology** and **physical education** to make definite judgements on standards and provision. However, in **design and technology**, planning is sound, and limited examples of pupils' work on making containers were above expectations. The work seen on display in **art and design** was of a satisfactory standard and is displayed well, helping

to provide an attractive working environment. In **physical education**, good use is made of a local leisure centre for gymnastics and swimming, and all pupils who left last year could swim the required 25 metres. The extracurricular provision is a strength of the subject, with a good number of clubs, and several competitions and tournaments against other schools. In all these subjects, there is insufficient monitoring, so the subject leader has insufficient knowledge of strengths and weaknesses.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong emphasis on performance.
- Good use is made of peripatetic music teachers.
- There are good links with other schools.
- Storage of instruments is unsatisfactory.
- The subject leader does not monitor the subject sufficiently.

Commentary

78. From Year 3 upwards, all pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder, paid for by the PTA. There are opportunities to learn to play the guitar, violin, clarinet and flute through peripatetic music teachers. When pupils reach a certain standard, they may join the school band. There are opportunities for the band, or other groups of instrumentalists, to play in assembly, at school concerts, at the summer fete, to old folks, and together with pupils from the cluster schools. This, together with normal class lessons, contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral and social education, as well as developing their musical skills. There is a strength in singing particularly evident in assemblies, where pupils sing in tune and with enthusiasm, often accompanied very well by the recorder group.

79. The school has a good range of classroom instruments, and these are used well when pupils are composing their own music. The storage of these instruments, in wire baskets, is not good for the instruments, nor does it demonstrate to pupils how they should care for expensive, and sometimes fragile, musical instruments.

80. The subject leader is keen and enthusiastic, but does not have sufficient time to monitor the subject adequately. This sometimes results in a lack of balance to the timetable: for example with older pupils not always having regular music lessons. There are no plans indicating how the subject is to be developed and improved.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision in personal, social and health education is **good**, despite the absence of a written policy and planning.

Commentary

81. Although no lessons were observed in this aspect and no examples of work are formally recorded by the school, the outcomes in terms of pupils' personal development are good. This is because staff know pupils well and relationships are very good. Excellent use is made of pupils' very good speaking and listening skills to foster discussion about issues relevant to pupils' wellbeing.

82. Time is used well in circle time and assemblies to raise awareness of health education: such as alcohol and drugs abuse, and there is an appropriate programme of sex education. Pupils are encouraged to express their feelings and opinions. They demonstrate caring attitudes to those less

fortunate than themselves: for example in raising money for charities. Through Years 5 and 6 work on issues such as pollution and conservation, pupils develop a good sense of social responsibility.

83. Management of this curriculum area has not been formally delegated with the result that no one has taken responsibility for recording policy and detailing planning. There is a need to address this and monitor what is happening across the school to make the most of good practice and support staff.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
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	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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	2
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
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).