

INSPECTION REPORT

CASTLE BATCH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Worle, Weston-super-Mare

LEA area: North Somerset

Unique reference number: 109135

Acting Headteacher: Mr A V Court

Lead inspector: Mr Chris Kessell

Dates of inspection: 26th – 29th January 2004

Inspection number: 255726

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	425
School address:	Rawlins Avenue Worle Weston-super-Mare
Postcode:	BS22 7FN
Telephone number:	01934 514552
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Wild
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Castle Batch Primary School is larger than most other primary schools and serves a mixed community of private and rented accommodation on the outskirts of Weston-super-Mare. The majority of the pupils come from white ethnic backgrounds, although a very small number of other minority ethnic groups are represented. There are no pupils who use English as an additional language. The school has not received any travellers, refugees or asylum seekers. The number of pupils who either join or leave the school during the academic year is slightly below average. At seven per cent, the proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is well below average. Nineteen per cent of pupils are assessed as having special educational needs; this is about average. Twenty-three pupils have a statement of special educational needs; this is well above average. The school has a Speech and Language Resource Base attended by 16 pupils who come from outside the school's catchment area. For most of the pupils in the unit, the statements of special educational needs are for speech and communication difficulties. In the main school, the special educational needs of pupils who have a statement relate to learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems and physical disabilities. Children start school with attainment that is similar to that expected for their age. In 1998, the school was awarded the 'Investors in People' status and this was renewed in 2002. In 2002, the school was presented with a 'Healthy Schools' award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20695	Mr Chris Kessell	Lead inspector	Mathematics
19693	Mrs Sally Hall	Lay inspector	
18709	Ms Nina Bee	Team inspector	Information and communication technology The Foundation Stage curriculum Special educational needs
29424	Mrs Vivienne Stone	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education English as an additional language
32595	Mrs Gillian Williams	Team inspector	Science Personal, social and health education Geography History Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and gives satisfactory value for money. Pupils' achievement is sound. Standards in Year 2 and 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Leadership and management are currently sound. The previous headteacher initiated a drive for improvement and a good sense of direction for the school. Pupils' personal development is well promoted and there are good relationships through the school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The Speech and Language Resource Base provides a good education for its pupils and for those pupils from other classes who attend the Resource Base for daily support in literacy and numeracy.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is a strong feature of the school. It encourages good behaviour, positive attitudes to learning and the pupils' ability to work well together.
- Although the school has introduced an innovative approach to curriculum planning, a more rigorous monitoring of subject coverage is required to ensure that all subjects are taught in sufficient depth.
- Although the quality of teaching is satisfactory, there needs to be a higher proportion of good teaching to improve pupils' achievement further.
- The teaching and non-teaching staff care about the pupils, who are supervised properly at work and play. However, some aspects of the monitoring of health and safety procedures by the school and governors are not rigorous enough.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The previous headteacher ensured that the school was focused on raising standards and despite a recent fluctuation in standards at the end of both Years 2 and 6, the school's trend of improvement in relation to national tests is similar to the trend found nationally. The school's response to the previous inspection's key issues has been mixed. Good progress has been made in improving standards and provision in information and communication technology. Some good monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning was undertaken by the headteacher last year and the school has focused on developing aspects of teaching. Although there are some very effective teachers in the school, some practice is inconsistent. For example, higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged as well as they could be. This was an issue at the previous inspection and has not been fully addressed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Pupils' achievement through the school is satisfactory. However, the data, shown above, indicates that pupils did not achieve as well as they should have in the 2003 national tests for English and mathematics in Year 6. Recent national test results show, that the differences between the performance of boys and girls, is greater than that found nationally in both Years 2 and 6. The pupils currently in Year 6 are achieving standards that are average in English, mathematics and science. This is an improvement in English and mathematics on the previous year. In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average. This is an improvement in writing on the 2003 tests. In religious education and information and communication technology, standards are similar to those expected at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This represents an improvement since the previous

inspection, when standards in information and communication technology in Year 6 were not as high as they should have been. In the reception class, most children are on course to achieve the learning goals they are expected to reach by the time they start Year 1.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Their attitudes to learning and standards of behaviour are good. Relationships through the school are also good. The pupils' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. A minority of parents could do more to ensure that their children attend school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Although many lessons are often good or better, the overall quality of teaching needs to improve to raise pupils' achievement beyond satisfactory. There are inconsistencies in teachers' expectations, the effectiveness of planning, and teaching methods. This means that pupils do not always produce work at the same rate and acquire knowledge and understanding as quickly as they do when teaching is good all of the time. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, particularly to that of pupils with special educational needs.

The curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory overall. However, curriculum planning does not always guarantee that subjects, such as art and design, are covered in sufficient depth. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. Links with the community and other schools are also satisfactory. The pupils have good and trusting relationships with the staff, but the procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are not good enough.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher is ensuring that the day-to-day running of the school is effective. He is well supported by the teaching and non-teaching staff. The management of the curriculum requires more rigour to ensure that the demands of the National Curriculum are fully met. Governance of the school is unsatisfactory. The school does not fulfil all of its statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall, the parents have positive views about the school. At the pre-inspection meeting, some parents indicated that there were inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The inspection team would support this view. Most pupils are also happy with the school. When responding to their pre-inspection questionnaire, the younger pupils' views of the school were more positive, than those of older pupils. The inspection was unable to determine any particular reason for this.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- monitor the curriculum more effectively to ensure that all subjects are taught in sufficient depth;

and, to meet all statutory requirements:

- improve procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards in English, mathematics and science are average. Girls' performance is better than boys in national tests at Year 2. By the time the pupils have reached Year 6 the gap has closed, particularly in mathematics, where boys outperform girls.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Current standards show improvement in English and mathematics on the 2003 national test results.
- The pupils currently Year 6 did not make as much progress as they should have in the early stages of Key Stage 2¹. There was also some underachievement by pupils in the 2003 national tests for English and mathematics.
- Some higher-attaining pupils could be challenged more.

Commentary

1. Children enter the Reception classes with expected levels of attainment. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection, although the children's personal and social development is not as advanced as it used to be. The children in the Reception classes are on course to reach the expected levels in most areas. A number of children in both classes are likely to exceed these levels. Children achieve satisfactorily but achievement in personal and social skills is good because these skills are well promoted in all activities. In addition, achievement is good as the children develop basic writing skills because both Reception teachers have good subject knowledge and teach these skills well. There is too little evidence to make an overall judgement on physical development.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores² in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.5 (16.5)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	14.3 (14.9)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.2 (17.2)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 57 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The national test results in 2003 for pupils in Year 2 indicated that, when compared to all schools, standards were average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. When compared to similar schools³, standards were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Despite a decline in the number of pupils that achieved the expected Level 2 in 2003, the school's trend of improvement in the national tests for pupils in Year 2, from 1999 to 2003 was above the trend found nationally. Standards are currently satisfactory in Year 2 in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily, overall, although some of the higher-attaining pupils could be challenged more effectively. This was also an issue in the 2003 national tests, where the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. In Year 2, last year, there were a number of pupils with behavioural and emotional problems and

¹ Key Stage 2, sometimes referred to as the juniors, caters for pupils aged between 7 and 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6.

² **Average Points Scores.** The average points scores table compares the school's performance with the national results. The calculations are arrived at by using the total of all test scores gained by pupils, and dividing the total by the number of pupils with a test result. This calculation is carried out for each subject tested.

³ In this example, similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

special educational needs; this situation is the same in Year 2 this year. This has contributed to a recent decline in standards that had improved quite rapidly after the previous inspection. Although there is now a better focus on monitoring pupils' progress and a number of support strategies were instigated by the previous headteacher, teaching and learning still needs to improve further if pupils are going to achieve more rapidly.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.4 (26.8)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.1 (27.0)	27.0 (26.7)
Science	29.0 (28.5)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 62 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. When compared to all schools, the national test results in 2003 for pupils in Year 6 indicated that, standards were below average in English and mathematics and average in science. The national data also indicated that pupils did not achieve as well as they should have in relation to their prior attainment at Year 2. There has been some improvement, with average standards now in all three subjects, rather than just in science. Pupils' achievement is currently satisfactory, but even the pupils currently in Year 6 did not make the progress they should have in the early years of Key Stage 2. Some of the pupils have had to 'catch up' to ensure that they achieve the levels of which they are capable. This has been particularly noticeable in reading, where many of the pupils currently in Year 6 have achieved well in relation to their prior attainment. Although there was a decline in standards last year, compared to 2002, the schools trend of improvement for pupils in Year 6 from 1999 to 2003 was broadly in line with the trend found nationally.
4. Pupils achieve well when they are taught in the Speech and Language Resource Base. This is similar to the previous inspection. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and against their individual targets because the quality of teaching is consistently good. When they are integrated into mainstream classes, they achieve satisfactorily.
5. Most pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily, however, achievement is better in those lessons where teachers promote the targets identified on pupils' individual education plans, in particular those related to the development of basic literacy skills. This practice is inconsistent within the school.
6. National data indicates that the gap in performance between boys and girls in the school is wider than that found nationally at the end of Key Stage 1⁴; the girls do much better than the boys in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, the gap has closed to the extent that boys are doing better than the girls in mathematics. The school is aware of this situation and has undertaken some simple analysis of boys' and girls' participation during the introduction of lessons, but no conclusions have been drawn. Differences in gender performance were not noticeable during the inspection.
7. The majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their children were making good progress. At the parents' meeting, however, parents felt that their children were making sufficient progress, despite some inconsistencies in teaching. This latter view would be closer to the judgement of the inspection team. Most pupils believe that they have to work hard although this view was stronger with the younger pupils. Overall, inspection evidence would suggest that the level of working is similar through the school, although pupils in Year 6 achieved well in many lessons that were observed.
8. Standards in religious education and information and communication technology are similar to those expected for the pupils in Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement in information and

⁴ Key Stage 1, sometimes referred to as the infants, caters for pupils aged between 5 and 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2.

communication technology for pupils in Year 6 since the previous inspection. Although other subjects were not part of the main inspection focus, sufficient evidence was gathered for some areas of the curriculum to make some judgements about standards and pupils' achievement. Standards in geography and physical education are at expected levels for the pupils in Year 6 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils achieve the expected standards in design and technology in Years 2 and 6 and in history at Year 2. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about history in Year 6. Standards in art and design are below those expected in both Years 2 and 6, and pupils make insufficient progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. The provision for pupils' personal development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are generally enthusiastic about their work and other activities.
- Staff encourage pupils to feel part of the school community and there are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and work together.
- Although the school has developed good procedures to monitor and promote good attendance, attendance rates are below those found in similar schools.

Commentary

9. The pupils have maintained their good attitudes found at the time of the last inspection. In lessons most pupils are enthusiastic learners and enjoy challenging tasks. They listen to the teacher and are keen to answer questions. They enjoy group and class discussions. Pupils enjoy participating in the extra-curricular activities such as dance club and residential visits.
10. Children's attitudes to learning are good in the Foundation Stage⁵ and most will achieve the expected levels in personal and social education by the time they leave Reception. They enjoy coming to school and settle into the Reception classes quickly because induction procedures are sensitive to individual needs. Personal and social skills are consistently promoted in all the children do. This results in good independent skills being developed well and the children working well together and developing good relationships with each other and the adults who help them. Behaviour is good.
11. The school's strong moral code and clear behaviour policy works well, as nearly all staff have consistent and high expectations of good behaviour. The school rules are displayed around the school and adults working in school are good role models. Almost all the pupils respond well to the system of rewards and understand the consequences of their actions if they misbehave. Although behaviour is good, it has declined since the last inspection, when it was very good. This is because a few teachers accept low-level disruption such as chatting and fidgeting in their lessons, and this slows the pace of learning. There are a few pupils with challenging behaviour and they are managed well by teachers and support staff. There were no exclusions last year. Pupils with special educational needs are positive learners and respond well in particular when they receive additional help in lessons and work is well matched to their needs.
12. The pupils in the Speech and Language Resource Base have good attitudes to learning and behave well, both inside and outside the classrooms.
13. The school has successfully developed a sense of community amongst staff and pupils and relationships are good. Pupils support each other in lessons and play well together in the playgrounds. There are some good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, and members of the School Council are keen to develop the school environment and purchase new playground equipment. Older pupils undertake office duties such as answering the telephone at lunchtime, and pupils were involved in reviewing the school's anti-bullying policy.

⁵ The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

14. Through whole-school and class assemblies, staff create good opportunities for pupils to think about their life and its meaning. Carefully chosen themes, such as 'Art to inspire, inspired to do art' are used well to explore the beauty of creation, celebrate pupils' talents and caring for the environment. In lessons such as circle time⁶ and religious education, pupils are encouraged to explore their feelings and learn to respect the beliefs of others. Some teachers are skilled in creating an atmosphere where pupils work without fear of failure. For example pupils in Year 6 visited the local Baptist church and confidently asked the pastor questions about his work and the life of the church.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.2	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

15. The attendance rates for the past year are below those found in similar schools, but there is very little unauthorised absence. Absence is due mainly to illness, but a significant number of parents are taking their children on holiday during school time. The school is working hard to improve attendance. It has recently introduced a computerised system for closer monitoring of attendance and office staff swiftly follow up unexplained absences by telephoning home. The current year's rate of attendance has improved to 94 per cent.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Although the curriculum offered to the pupils is satisfactory overall, some subjects are not covered in sufficient depth.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The proportion of good teaching needs to be higher if pupils are to make better progress. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment are satisfactory, although some teachers could be more accurate in their grouping of pupils by ability, and in the challenges offered to higher-attaining pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Speech and Language Resource Base is consistently good and allows these pupils to learn well.
- Learning support assistants enable pupils with special educational needs to make the same progress as their classmates.
- Homework is used well in Year 6 to support literacy and numeracy.
- The pupils are able to work well together and independently.
- Inconsistencies in teaching result in some teachers having expectations of their pupils that are not high enough, and the information provided by marking could be clearer.

Commentary

16. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents indicated that there were inconsistencies in teaching and this is supported by the inspection findings. Although over 50 per cent of the lessons observed during the inspection were good or better, analysis of pupils' work would indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There are some good teachers in the school, but

⁶ Circle time is a session provided for pupils to discuss certain matters as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

inconsistencies in teaching and, consequently, learning means that pupils are currently making only satisfactory progress over time. Despite this, 95 per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching was good.

17. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The teaching of personal and social skills is good and is promoted well in all activities. In addition, both teachers teach basic writing skills well. Children’s learning in these areas is good. The learning support assistants work well with the teachers, develop good relationships with the children and give good quality support. This results in children developing positive attitudes to learning. Planning is satisfactory but does not show clearly how assessment information is used to move individuals onto the next stage of learning. Teachers are beginning to develop profiles on all children using the national guidance.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	6 (13%)	19 (39%)	22 (44%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

18. During the previous inspection, a key issue was raised concerning the challenge offered to higher-attaining pupils, particularly in Key Stages 1 and 2. In many lessons observed during the inspection, higher-attaining pupils were given appropriate work to ensure that they were extended, but this practice is still not consistent enough. Although teachers are aware of the need to ensure that different ability groups within their classes are given work appropriate to their needs, in some instances the expectations of higher-attaining pupils could be higher. Although extension activities are often planned for these pupils, there is not always an expectation that pupils should have completed this work. Time targets to finish work are not used often enough and, on some occasions, higher-attaining pupils are covering work that is too easy for them. An analysis of pupils' previous work provided a number of examples of unfinished work and poor presentation. Unfinished work can be an indication that the work has been inappropriately matched to a pupil's ability, and the poor presentation, in some classes, suggests that teachers are accepting a level of work that is not really good enough for the age and ability of their pupils.
19. Pupils are taught well in the Speech and Language Resource Base. They develop very good relationships with the adults who help them and work hard in all lessons because work is accurately matched to their individual needs. All learn well. When pupils are integrated into the main school they are effectively integrated and supported well. However, work is not always specifically matched to their individual needs.
20. Teaching is satisfactory for pupils with special educational needs in the main school. Sometimes, teachers do not promote the targets identified on pupils' individual education plans, or use information collected on these individuals when they plan lessons. When this happens, pupils do not do as well as they could. All pupils with special educational needs are supported well by the learning support assistants who help them.
21. A number of very good lessons were observed during the inspection in Reception, the Speech and Language Resource Base, Years 5 and 6. These lessons had a number of characteristics that enabled pupils to work productively and acquire new skills, knowledge and understanding at a very good rate. No time was wasted and lessons moved at a very rapid pace. The teachers displayed a very secure subject knowledge in the lessons they were leading and particular attention was paid to the needs of all pupils.
22. The teachers offer plenty of encouragement to the pupils and, in response, most pupils show an obvious enjoyment in learning. Pupils' listening skills are promoted particularly well in class discussions and question and answer sessions. Most lessons are well managed, and this contributes to the good levels of behaviour found in the school and the pupils' ability to work

well, either by themselves, or in small groups collaboratively. Although literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are developed in other areas of the curriculum, this is often accidental or ad-hoc, rather than a planned opportunity.

23. Ninety per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the school provided appropriate levels of homework and the inspection team would agree with this view. At the parents' meeting, some felt that there were inconsistencies with homework provision that were linked to the inconsistencies in teaching and the inspection team would also support this view. The use of homework to reinforce learning in literacy and numeracy in Year 6 is good. The pupils spoke positively about this work and the benefits it provided in supporting their learning in school.
24. The school has a satisfactory range of assessment procedures that enables teachers to track the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school, particularly in English and mathematics. The school is now better placed to ensure that any pupils who are underachieving are identified and then supported with appropriate strategies. However, much of the responsibility for tracking pupils is left with classteachers, some of whom would benefit with support in this process from other key staff. Assessment information is also used appropriately to place pupils in ability 'sets' for numeracy and ability groups within other lessons. Some teachers could make better use of the day-to-day information that they collect on pupils as part of their regular monitoring and interactions. If for example, a particular pupil is finding work too easy they need to be challenged further, rather than being given more of the same work.
25. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall. It is more effective in literacy, where pupils are provided with information to help them move to the next stage of learning or helped to reinforce a particular skill. Although pupils are given group targets for literacy and numeracy, not all of the pupils have a clear understanding of this process. In some classes, teachers encourage the pupils to self-assess their understanding or successes at achieving a lesson objective, and the pupils generally respond well to this. Valuable information about the lesson is also provided for the teacher.

The curriculum

The school provides a sound curriculum that is supported by a satisfactory range of extra-curricular clubs and other activities. All statutory requirements are met. Accommodation and resources at the school are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of school visits to support the curriculum.
- Some subjects are not covered in sufficient depth.

Commentary

26. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There is a good emphasis on the promotion of personal, social and emotional development in all activities. Resources are good and support most areas of learning. Activities are thoroughly planned according to the national guidance. The outside area is secure and is used satisfactorily to promote learning. However, outdoor resources are limited and these have been identified as an area for development.
27. The curriculum provision for Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school. A two-year topic-based curriculum was introduced in September 2003 for other subjects. Teachers in 'phase' teams collaborate with planning which links the subjects into topic themes. However, the curriculum lacks cohesion, because no single person is responsible for maintaining an overview, and co-ordinators do not take a pro-active role in ensuring that subject skills are

appropriately progressed through the school. This leads to subjects being covered in insufficient depth, for example, art and design.

28. The personal, social and health education programme, included in the topics, involves all the classes. Pupils are given opportunities, through 'circle time', to explore moral and social issues, such as friendship, bullying and drugs awareness. Visits out of school enrich the curriculum in the classroom well. In Year 4, for example, pupils enjoy a residential visit to Hooke Court to learn about the Tudors and in Year 6 pupils benefit from an outdoor residential trip to the 'Call of the Wild' centre in Wales. The local area is used to support learning. Younger pupils visit Cadbury Garden Centre and Blaise Castle Estate. Older pupils learning about the different Christian denominations visit the local Baptist Church and Wells Cathedral. Visits such as these also contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
29. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to take part in activities that support learning outside the school day. These activities enhance many curriculum areas. Older pupils take part in dance, netball, ball skills and guitar clubs. Younger pupils take part in art and environmental clubs. These activities are all well attended.
30. The provision for the pupils in the Speech and Language Resource Base is good when they are taught within the base. In Key Stages 1 and 2, a small number of pupils in the mainstream school work alongside pupils from the Resource Base to develop basic literacy and numeracy skills. A carefully prepared curriculum is developed for each pupil, which is special to his or her specific needs. In both key stages pupils' social interaction into the main school is good in assemblies, breaks and lunchtimes. In Years 1 and 2, some pupils are integrated for science and art. In Key Stage 2, most pupils are integrated for all subjects, with the exception of literacy and numeracy. Two pupils are successfully integrated on a full-time basis.
31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs in the main school is satisfactory. Pupils' individual education plans generally have clear targets, but a few contain targets which are vague and make the rate of progress difficult to measure. In addition, targets identified during reviews are not systematically transferred onto the pupils' individual education plans. This is unsatisfactory. Reviews are completed regularly, and parents are satisfactorily informed of progress. Procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory.
32. The school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Support staff are particularly effective at supporting pupils who have special educational needs.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are satisfactory. Provision of support, advice and guidance is satisfactory. Involvement of pupils is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although governors and staff are vigilant of potential risks, formal risk assessments have not been completed.
- Staff show concern for the pupils and give good support, especially to those with particular difficulties.
- Pupils feel that they can turn to adults in school if they are worried or upset.
- Staff do not give pupils enough advice on how to improve their work.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to set and review personal targets.

Commentary

33. Staff endeavour to provide a safe and healthy environment for the pupils. They pay good attention to health and safety in lessons and supervision is good. Governors make regular

checks of the premises and appropriate arrangements are in place for emergency evaluations and testing of electrical equipment. However, the monitoring of health and safety is unsatisfactory, as formal risk assessments have not been completed. Child protection procedures are known well by nearly all staff, and they also know that they should report any concerns to the special needs co-ordinator. Arrangements for first aid are good and detailed records are kept when treatment or medication is given.

34. The results of the pupils' questionnaire show that nearly all the pupils say that they can talk to a member of staff if they need help. Teachers know and care for the pupils well. Support staff, midday supervisors and office staff also make significant contributions in supporting pupils. However, although teachers encourage pupils in their lessons, they do not generally give pupils enough guidance on what pupils need to do to improve their work.
35. Induction procedures are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, which results in most children coming into school confidently and happily. All children are well supported and looked after by the adults who work with them.
36. The adults that work in the Speech and Language Resource Base are well qualified and very aware of the needs of the pupils in their care. In all year groups, teachers and teaching assistants work well together, as a team, and have a clear idea of how these pupils learn. The daily support that pupils receive is good. When pupils are integrated into the main school, the teachers are supported well by experienced learning support assistants.
37. Outside agencies are used well to support pupils with special educational needs in the school and those in the Speech and Language Resource Base. Occasionally, incidents of bad behaviour or changes of circumstances are not systematically recorded and this is a weakness.
38. Teachers listen to pupils and welcome their comments, but there are few opportunities for pupils to think about their personal academic goals and decide if they have achieved them. The members of the school council take their duties very seriously and the school acts upon their suggestions. Pupils were involved in reviewing the school's anti-bullying policy, they have also made helpful suggestions about playground organisation, and are currently discussing playground equipment.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are satisfactory. Links with the community are satisfactory. Links with other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides parents with relevant and timely information about school life.
- There are good links with the local Baptist Church.
- Links with schools in Wolverhampton provides good opportunities for cultural and social development.
- The school does not regularly survey parents, but has sought their views on specific issues.

Commentary

39. The school recognises the need to reach out to parents and encourage them to become more involved in their children's education, and there are plans to invite parents regularly into school. One of the initiatives, a 'meet the teacher' session, at the beginning of the academic year, proved very popular. Parents feel that staff are approachable and say that they are able to come into school if they have concerns. The school provides parents with helpful information about school events through regular newsletters. The prospectus and governors' annual reports are useful documents, although both have minor omissions of statutory information. The pupils' annual reports are satisfactory, but not all of them contain clear information about how pupils can improve their work. Termly consultations provide good opportunities for parents

to discuss their children's progress with the teachers. Most parents ensure that their children complete homework and some parents help in school. Parents support fundraising events, and are involved in the running of the parent-teacher association, 'Friends of Castle Batch'. The school has consulted parents on subjects such as uniform and security, but does not undertake regular surveys of their views of school life.

40. The school has established satisfactory links with the community. Visits to museums, theatres and historic buildings enrich the curriculum. A residential visit helped pupils develop their social skills as well as enabling them to experience aspects of Tudor life. The school has developed strong links with the adjacent Baptist church and the pastor is a regular visitor in school. The church is used for special services and pupils visit the building to gain understanding of the Christian faith.
41. The school works with the local pre-school groups and the local secondary school to ensure that appropriate transfer arrangements are in place. Teachers have useful meetings with other primary school staff to discuss the aspects of the curriculum. The school has developed beneficial links with two schools in Wolverhampton. Pupils in Year 5 correspond with each other through the year and exchange visits are made in the summer term. This enables pupils to experience urban life and gain understanding of the richness of other cultures.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The current leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The former headteacher provided good leadership. The management provided by key staff is satisfactory. Governance of the school is unsatisfactory, as not all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The previous headteacher brought a drive and sense of purpose to the school. She had high expectations.
- The day-to-day management of finance is good.
- Procedures for ensuring that the school meets all relevant health and safety legislation are not all in place.
- There are weaknesses in monitoring curriculum coverage.

Commentary

42. At the time of the inspection, the school did not have a substantive headteacher. The previous headteacher left the school at the end of the last term and the deputy headteacher was appointed to an acting position until a new headteacher joins the school at the beginning of the summer term. At the pre-inspection meeting, concerns were raised about the continuity of school management. However, the same parents were clear that the previous headteacher had developed a strong ethos for learning in the school. In a short period of time, she had initiated a number of changes in the school to ensure that it would move forward, with improvements in the quality of education and a rise in standards. Although there is still some way to go, the benefits of her good leadership were evident during the inspection. She brought a focus to the school with regards the monitoring and evaluation of performance data. Her monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning were rigorous and enabled the school to, for example, strategically place more experienced staff in areas of the school that were causing concern. Development planning is focused on improvement and appropriately involves both staff and governors. A cycle of improvement was introduced to ensure that, over a period of time, all areas of the school curriculum would be audited, reviewed and developed.
43. During the inspection, the acting headteacher ensured that the school ran smoothly and he was supported well by teaching and non-teaching staff. The strong focus on raising standards, initiated by the former headteacher, is uppermost in everyone's minds and the majority of teachers are receptive to new ideas which will improve the quality of education. The school operates in 'phase' teams, which normally includes four teachers from two year groups, for example, Years 3 and 4. This was initiated to prevent year groups working in isolation, to

encourage teamwork, and provide an opportunity to share ideas with regards curriculum planning. As a result, the curriculum is planned on a two-year cycle with greater cross-curricular links. This innovative approach has worked well at some levels. Teamwork is effective across year groups, and staff are supportive of one another but the curriculum has suffered with this approach and a number of subjects are not covered in sufficient depth. Some co-ordinators do not have a clear idea of what is being taught in their subjects and this is unsatisfactory.

44. The Foundation Stage is led satisfactorily. The clear systems, which everyone understands and works to, enable all adults to work together successfully as a team. Achievement is satisfactory, but it is good for children's personal and social development and the development of their writing skills.
45. The Speech and Language Resource Base is led and managed well. All procedures are clear and shared with all staff. This enables the pupils to receive a curriculum, which is specific to their individual needs. Resources are satisfactory to promote learning in all areas. However, there is little evidence of monitoring of how well the pupils are achieving when they are integrated into the main school. There are no procedures in place for the special needs co-ordinators in the main school to monitor how well pupils with special educational needs achieve in lessons. Funding for special educational needs is used appropriately.
46. As was found at the time of the previous inspection, the governors are 'committed, caring and supportive'. There is a mix of experience and those governors who are new to the role take advantage of the governor training courses run by the local education authority to improve their understanding and expertise. The governors contribute unsatisfactorily to the overall work of the school, as they do not fulfil all of their statutory requirements with regards to health and safety legislation. They do, however, appreciate the need to improve standards and had also identified concerns about the challenge offered to higher-attaining pupils, which is an issue identified by the inspection team. The governors have been appropriately involved in the production of the school development plan and have a secure understanding of what is going on in the school. They are currently developing a monitoring policy and are not afraid to make difficult decisions or challenge what is going on in the school.
47. The governors have met their statutory duties to agree and monitor the school budget and have a good understanding of the challenges that face the school with regards financial planning. They do their best to ensure that the financial resources available to the school are used appropriately, but also understand that the current carry-forward figure, which is higher than the recommended percentage, will not continue to support the budget and that some cuts or changes in resourcing will have to be made. There is a clear and open cycle of financial planning and the day-to-day monitoring of expenditure by the school administrative assistant is good.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,198,759
Total expenditure	1,091,625
Expenditure per pupil	2,470

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	104,876
Balance carried forward to the next	107,133

48. There is a good awareness of the need to apply best value principles when securing goods and services. However, the school and governors have not made any comparisons with the school's levels of expenditure against those found nationally and have not explored how the expenditure per pupil at Castle Batch compares with other schools. This is useful information for governors to have when evaluating the success, or otherwise, of financial planning.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is good for their personal, social and emotional development. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is a secure outdoor area which is satisfactorily used to promote learning in many areas. There is a limited amount of resources for outdoors, but this area has been identified as an area for development. Other areas are well resourced. Induction procedures are satisfactory and this ensures that the children settle in happily and enjoy coming to school.

The majority of children in the current Reception classes have levels of attainment expected for their age. A few children have been identified as exceeding these levels. A significant number of the children were identified as having limited personal and social skills on entry to school. Achievement is satisfactory but most of the children achieve well in the development of personal and social skills and basic writing skills. This is because personal and social skills are well promoted in most activities by all adults who work in Reception. In addition, the teaching of basic writing skills is good because both teachers have a good understanding of the necessary skills needed to develop writing. Assessment is satisfactory. Information collected on individuals is used to place the children into ability groups. However, it is unclear, within teachers' planning, how on-going assessments are used to move individuals onto the next stage of learning and this is a weakness.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good. This area of development is consistently well promoted in most activities.
- All adults support children's learning well, as they interact sensitively when children work in small groups or alone.
- Children's personal development is reinforced well.
- The children develop positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good.

Commentary

49. Good provision enables most children to at least reach the expected levels by the end of their time in Reception, with many likely to exceed these levels. All adults have very high expectations regarding children's behaviour and, as a result, behaviour is good. Most children are confident and get on well with all adults with whom they come into contact. Teaching is good, and learning support assistants enhance children's learning considerably, as they provide good support in both classes. Achievement is good because the children show positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. They work well together in pairs and small groups and begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently. Most children take turns and concentrate well as they interact positively with each other and the adults who help them. They all know that they are expected to help to tidy away at the end of each session. Personal independence is well developed. Activities, such as making toast and allowing the children to spread the butter, develop personal independence well. In addition, before painting the children get an apron, and after painting, the children go and confidently wash their hands and then hang up their aprons. When they need help all are confident enough to ask. Previous work and photographic evidence shows that the children begin to develop a satisfactory understanding of festivals within different religions. Celebrations, such as Christmas and Diwali, are focused upon at different times of the year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of basic writing skills is good.
- The children respond positively to lessons.
- Resources are good to promote this area of learning.

Commentary

50. Most children are on course to attain the expected levels by the end of their time in Reception with a significant number likely to exceed these levels, in particular in the development of writing skills. Teaching is satisfactory, but it is good for writing. Both teachers in Reception teach basic writing skills well. All children are clearly shown what they need to do to form letters correctly and are given many opportunities to develop their writing skills. This results in most children attempting writing activities confidently and enthusiastically, in particular with regard to writing their names. There are good opportunities for children to begin to develop their knowledge of letter sounds as they learn the correct way to form letters and identify the sounds of familiar objects. Children's previous work shows that teachers have high expectations regarding completing tasks and presenting all attempts at writing, neatly. All adults have high expectations about listening carefully at all times and this results in most children listening well and responding accurately during class discussions. The children have many opportunities in both classes to develop speaking skills and this results in most children in Reception speaking clearly and confidently. In both classes, children were seen carefully selecting books from the well-resourced mini-library areas. Higher-attaining children began to recognise familiar words but the lower-attaining children used the pictures to tell the story. Average- and lower-attaining children have little idea of vocabulary related to reading such as 'title' and have a muddled idea of words and letters. Most children confidently identify and read their own names. Achievement is satisfactory.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical activities reinforce skills in many other areas.
- Relationships are good, which enable the children to work well together as they develop number skills.
- The children have too few opportunities to develop an idea of writing numbers with correct formation.

Commentary

51. Teaching is satisfactory. Basic mathematical vocabulary, such as 'heavier' and 'lighter' and 'the number before' and 'the number after' are developed satisfactorily. The children have good opportunities to sequence numbers correctly and to identify numbers up to ten and above. However, too often, opportunities are missed to develop basic number formation. There was little evidence of the children recording any mathematical concepts during lessons or in previous work. The children develop a sound idea of basic two-dimensional shapes and most children begin to show a simple understanding of symmetry. For example, children were seen working enthusiastically with a teacher, developing symmetrical butterflies. Other children were observed confidently making shape pictures using an art program in the computer suite. Computer skills are used satisfactorily to support this area of learning. Adults use clear questioning to promote learning by singing number rhymes, such as 'Ten Green Bottles'. Activities such as these, which the children enjoy, enable them to gain an idea of counting

backwards and forwards. Resources are good to support this area. In Reception, adults interact well within the ability groups which the children work in, and give the children many opportunities to articulate their thinking, thus developing their mathematical understanding. Relationships are good. All children work well together. Children achieve satisfactorily and most are on course to at least reach the expected levels by the end of their time in Reception. A few children are likely to exceed these levels.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are interesting, and well-resourced.
- The adults develop good relationships with the children and support them well in all activities.
- The children respond positively to activities, develop good relationships with each other and support each other well.

Commentary

52. Teaching is satisfactory. The children have satisfactory opportunities to develop information and communication technology skills in the information and communication technology suite and in the classrooms. Children in both classes were seen confidently working through simple programs as they used the mouse to move the cursor around the screen. During activities using the computers, the children work well together in pairs. Relationships are good. For example, without being told, higher-attaining children were seen sensitively helping others who were having difficulty. All children work together amicably, as they build and construct with a wide range of objects. Exciting activities, such as playing with ice cubes in the water tray after discussing cold climates, enable the children to see how substances change as they begin to discover why this happens. A higher-attaining child said, 'The ice melts because my hands are hot'. However, although most of the others knew that the ice 'melted', they could not give the reason why. Past work and photographic evidence clearly shows that the children have had an interesting time studying plants from a local garden centre and seeing what makes them grow. Activities are well resourced and imaginatively thought out to support this area. For instance, the children sorted soaps by 'smell', 'feel' and 'touch', as they developed a greater awareness of their senses. They put on warm clothes and went outside on a particularly frosty morning to explore their immediate surroundings. Achievement is satisfactory. Children are achieving the expected levels for their ages. A few are on course to exceed these levels.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

53. There is too little evidence to make a judgement on provision and teaching in this area. No direct teaching was seen. However, physical development is satisfactorily planned for each week. The children regularly use the school hall and photographic evidence clearly shows that they enthusiastically use large apparatus during these lessons and begin to develop the skills needed to dance. Children were seen handling paintbrushes and pencils with sound control. They play imaginatively and confidently with construction toys and have sound opportunities to use soft materials such as 'Play-dough' and 'Plasticine'. Children in both classes were seen developing satisfactory rolling skills and used tools confidently as they worked with 'Plasticine'. Achievement is satisfactory and most children are on course to reach the expected levels.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning support assistants support the teachers and the children well. This enables all children to succeed.
- The children enjoy all aspects of this area, working well together at activities.
- The area reinforces children's personal and social development well.

Commentary

54. Teaching is satisfactory. All adults support the children well enabling all of them to succeed. Learning support assistants were seen encouraging children to think carefully before deciding what colour to use when painting. This resulted in paintings showing accurate use of colour and carefully painted figures. The 'Let's Pretend' room' is used well to promote this area. For example, the area designated for imaginary play is well resourced and the children have frequent opportunities to use it. They use their imagination well, as they express their own ideas and communicate their feelings during play. Children were seen achieving very well during a music lesson, which developed a good understanding of high and low sounds. Activities were well thought out as the children sang and played musical instruments showing good control. Past work shows that the children have many opportunities to use tools such as, glue sticks, scissors and paintbrushes with satisfactory control. Achievement is satisfactory and most children are on course to reach the expected levels by the end of the reception year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising.
- Day-to-day assessment is not used to ensure that work is always appropriate for all abilities in a class.
- Provision for speaking and listening is good.
- There is not enough monitoring to ensure consistency in every class.

Commentary

55. Standards in English are rising because of the school's focus on improvement in this subject and its clear understanding of areas for development. Work currently seen in school and predictions for the pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 6 indicate that test results in 2004 will be closer to the school's targets than those for the previous year. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, past gaps in learning are still preventing the pupils in Year 6 from attaining more highly. Throughout the school, standards are higher in reading than in writing. In order to raise standards, the school has devoted a considerable amount of time to the teaching and learning of literacy, but this leaves little time for pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects. This is preventing standards from rising further.

56. Although there is some very good and good teaching in the school, most of the teaching is satisfactory and this is also preventing standards from rising as fast as they could. In their planning, teachers pay too little attention to what pupils know and can do and, as a result, the work provided does not always extend the more able pupils or support those who find learning more difficult. More rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning is required. Literacy targets

from the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are not used to plan work for these pupils in literacy lessons, which reduces the progress that they make. Teaching assistants are well used to support intervention strategies such as in Year 1 where the additional support is effectively targeted. However, 'Booster' classes for pupils in Year 6 are not currently being implemented; this reduces the support offered to targeted pupils.

57. In order to raise standards in writing the school has identified group and some individual literacy targets for pupils, based on assessments of what pupils can do. The targets are used well in some classes to help pupils know how to improve and to inform teachers' planning, but in other classes pupils are not aware of their targets and teachers do not refer to them in their teaching. This reduces the achievement of pupils in these classes. The quality of teachers' marking is not consistent. Some make helpful comments so that pupils know what they need to do to improve and pupils are given opportunities to apply the suggestions so their work improves. Other teachers have yet to adopt this way of marking. The presentation of pupils' work is also inconsistent from class to class. Teachers have different expectations for the quality of handwriting and tidiness of pupils' work.
58. The school has made good links between reading and writing. These are helping to raise standards in writing by providing pupils with clear models for different styles of writing. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well when demonstrating to pupils how to draft, revise and edit their writing. This helps to involve pupils in their lessons and sustains their interest.
59. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are good. Most pupils speak confidently and are able to express their point of view. This is helped by the planned opportunities provided for pupils to work in pairs in both English and in other subjects to discuss their work and the encouragement given by teachers to the development of oral language.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Links between literacy and other curriculum areas are insufficiently developed. The school does not make enough use of the contexts provided by the other subjects to enhance pupils' learning in reading and writing. It has not identified in the long-term planning for subjects, opportunities for writing so that pupils can apply what they are learning in literacy lessons. Writing completed by pupils in other subjects does not reflect the depth seen in literacy lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving.
- Some of the higher-attaining pupils could be challenged more effectively.
- Teachers' marking could be more helpful for the pupils.

Commentary

61. Standards in mathematics are average for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is an improvement on last year when standards were below average in Year 6 and pupils had not made sufficient progress in relation to their prior attainment. However, although the pupils currently in Year 6 have made sufficient progress in relation to their prior attainment in Year 2, evidence provided by the school indicates that this progress has not been consistent and unsatisfactory for many pupils when they were in the early stages of Key Stage 2. The pupils have 'caught-up' as a result of more rigorous tracking of pupils' progress and consistently good teaching in Year 6. Trends over time indicate that at the end of Key Stage 1, girls perform better than boys to a greater degree than that found nationally, and at the end of Key Stage 2, the boys perform better. There was no evidence of these differences during the inspection and the school is aware of the situation. Teachers ensure that they direct questions

at both boys and girls and treat them equally. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates. This is often the result of the good support they are given by teaching assistants.

62. Despite the majority of numeracy lessons observed during the inspection being good or better, this was not reflected in the analysis of pupils' work through the school. Teaching and learning are judged as satisfactory overall. Teaching is consistently good in Year 6 and pupils are learning effectively. Lessons in this year group have good pace and the needs of different ability groups are addressed well. This is a weakness in some other parts of the school, where higher-attaining pupils could be challenged more effectively. Homework is also used well in Year 6 to reinforce the learning that has taken place in the classroom. Although pupils in Year 2 generally have a mathematical knowledge and understanding similar to that expected for their age, the amount of work that they have recorded is less than one would expect. Some work in other parts of this school is untidily recorded and there appears to be no consistency amongst teachers with regards the use of rulers and other aspects of presentation. In some pupils' books, work is unfinished, which normally indicates that the work is either too hard for the pupil, or expectations for finishing work are not high enough. The marking of pupils' work needs to be more informative.
63. The majority of lessons start well and the recommended mental mathematics sessions, which begin numeracy lessons, are managed well. These are normally well paced and enjoyed by the pupils. The main activities are introduced well and pupils have a clear understanding of what they are doing. Question and answer sessions are managed well and the skills of speaking and listening promoted particularly well. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support numeracy. Some teachers involve the pupils in assessing their own work and this strategy provides benefits, particularly to the class teacher, who can reassess their lesson planning for the next session. Although pupils are set targets for mathematics, many are still unclear about what these mean and what their targets are.
64. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Standards are improving and the subject is a significant feature of the school development plan although too much emphasis has been placed on Key Stage 2. Performance data is now being monitored and evaluated far more effectively and the school has looked very closely at the transition between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, as this was identified as an area where pupils' progress had slowed in the past. Talented mathematicians have been identified and the 'setting' system that operates in Key Stage 2 enables these pupils to work in classes where the level of work is more suited to their ability. A talented mathematician in Year 2 follows a Year 3 programme of work. This is all good practice and many of these pupils are making good progress. However, the school needs to ensure that all pupils are being accurately provided with appropriate levels of work.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Numeracy skills are promoted satisfactorily in other lessons. Subjects such as science enable pupils to develop their data-handling skills, and during the inspection, In Year 6, pupils were using mathematics in their work on spreadsheets. The school has made a point of providing resources that link mathematics to other areas of the curriculum. However, some of these links occur by accident and are not planned. When teachers plan their lessons, mathematical links are not identified.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are improving.
- Higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- Assessment data is not used to identify areas of strengths or weaknesses.

- Good use is made of information and communication technology.
- Marking is not linked to learning objectives.

Commentary

66. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The number of pupils at the end of Year 2 that teachers assessed as attaining the higher Level 3 in 2003 was lower than average. Pupils produce work of similar quality and quantity. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 are not given tasks that are sufficiently challenging.
67. Teaching is sound throughout the school. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 make good use of the commercial scheme of work that the co-ordinator has linked to the objectives from a national scheme of work for science. Good use is made of information and communication technology, for example, pupils use electronic microscope and digital cameras. In one effective lesson in Year 6, the teacher made good use of the program 'Forces All Around' which enabled pupils to identify the forces that act on moving objects. Social skills were developed as they worked well together in groups of three to set up a fair test to measure the effect of winding an elastic band around an object that is moving down a slope. Pupils were aware that accurate measurement was essential and could explain that one part of the test was varied while the others must remain the same. Pupils' social skills were also promoted in a good lesson about changing materials in Year 2, when the teacher asked pupils to work with a partner to describe an object which could or could not be changed, and to explain why.
68. A study of the work of pupils in Year 6 indicates that all aspects of science curriculum are covered. Pupils record in a variety of ways, including the use of charts, graphs, accounts and pictorial representation. However, recording is often superficial, especially where worksheets are used. Pupils of all abilities and those with special educational needs are given the same work and this limits the challenge that can be provided for higher-attaining pupils and raises questions about whether lower-attaining pupils fully understand what they are doing. Teachers do not mark pupils' work according to the learning objectives and the inaccurate spelling of scientific words is not always corrected. Pupils in Year 2 use a variety of ways to record their work, including flow charts and simple tables.
69. The subject co-ordinator has a secure understanding of the subject and this is reflected in the school's improving results. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the subject and has monitored teaching in the classrooms and plans to scrutinise pupils' work in depth. Teachers undertake assessments at the end of units of work and pupils' progress is tracked by the co-ordinator. More work still needs to be done to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged in science and given appropriate levels of work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching has improved at Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection.
- Standards have improved.
- Higher-attaining pupils are not always suitably challenged in lessons.
- Information collected on lower-attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, is not always used effectively when planning lessons.

Commentary

70. Provision has improved since the previous inspection. All classes now have regular access to two information and communication technology suites. In addition, teachers use information and communication technology skills daily in their classrooms as they confidently use laptops and interactive whiteboards to enhance teaching. All teachers demonstrate secure subject

knowledge and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils now achieve the expected standards by the time they reach Year 6. The leadership and management of the subjects are satisfactory.

71. Teaching is satisfactory. One good lesson was seen in Year 6. In this lesson the teacher gave a very good demonstration in the classroom before taking the class to the information and communication technology suites. She used the interactive whiteboard very well to demonstrate how to develop a spreadsheet.
72. In one lesson seen in the information and communication technology suite the pupils in Year 6 worked well in mixed-ability pairs, and alone. Most demonstrated good skills of independence as they programmed the computers to work out the areas and perimeters of rectangles. A few higher-attaining pupils finished relatively quickly and although given a task of working on a history multi-media presentation, were not all challenged sufficiently regarding developing information and communication technology skills. A few lower-attaining pupils, including one with special educational needs, had difficulty because they were unable to spell words, such as 'perimeter', and had forgotten how to work out the area of a rectangle. Assessment information collected on these individuals had not been used effectively when planning the lesson and, as a result, their pace of learning slowed down.
73. Lessons observed in Years 3, 5 and 6 and discussions with pupils, in particular those in Year 6, clearly showed that standards are average. Pupils in Year 2 spoke enthusiastically about the subject and demonstrated levels expected for their ages. They spoke excitedly about the programmable floor robot. One boy correctly said, 'It is like a robot and you have to clear the memory and program it. Then you press go. It can move forwards and backwards and turn'. Others spoke confidently about using the Internet to find out about Florence Nightingale and the Great Fire of London. The pupils spoke with confidence about having a 'class file' and how important it is to save work and what they have to do to print out work.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. The school is beginning to use information and communication technology to support other subjects. In Key Stage 1, pupils use the computers to find out information in history. They talk of using the different tools in art programs to develop pictures. Pupils speak of making charts, such as block graphs and pie charts in mathematics. In Key Stage 2, older pupils speak very confidently about the 'PowerPoint' presentations they have produced. They go into their own files and are very keen to show work that they have saved. There are satisfactory links with most subjects, in particular history, geography, religious education, and mathematics. In both key stages, pupils learn how to write using the computers as they develop word processing skills in literacy lessons and in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history were not part of the inspection focus. One lesson was observed in **history** in Year 3, and discussions were held with pupils in Years 2 and 6.

75. Evidence would indicate that standards in **geography** in Year 6 are similar to those found in most schools. Standards in **history** in Year 2 are similar to those found in most schools. Pupils in Year 2 had not undertaken any geography so there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement. One history lesson was seen, in Year 3, and the teaching was satisfactory. In this lesson, pupils created their own Tudor style portraits having studied some Tudor portraits in detail that were projected onto the whiteboard. As the pupils in Year 6 had only just started this term's history topic on Victorians there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards for history.
76. The pupils in Year 2 have covered a satisfactory range of work in history. Discussions with pupils of all abilities indicated that they knew about the lives of some famous people and events from the past, for example, they understood that Florence Nightingale nursed soldiers in a war and that she had made hospitals very clean. They were also able to explain what had

happened during the Great Fire of London and knew that it had started in Pudding Lane. Pupils are encouraged to write their own accounts and do not rely on worksheets, but not enough attention is paid to the different ability groups and most pupils do the same work. This results in some pupils of lower ability having incomplete pieces of work.

77. Pupils in Year 6 were able to talk about their geography and history work. They were able to name coastal features and explained how a stack is formed. They discussed the major mountain ranges of the world and where they are found. The pupils explained how they began the Victorian topic with a time-line of important events and a list of things that they would like to find out about. Their workbooks showed that they covered a range of work, however, most pupils do the same work and the development of their writing skills is limited because much of the work is on worksheets.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A secure scheme of work linking with other subjects in the curriculum.
- Good use is made of the links with local churches to support the curriculum.
- Written work does not always reflect the good quality of learning in lessons.

Commentary

78. Standards in Year 6 and in Year 2 are similar to the expectations outlined in the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and pupils make satisfactory progress.
79. Teaching is sound throughout the school. Planning for religious education shows good curriculum coverage in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus. A variety of teaching methods are used, including drama. Speaking and listening skills are encouraged in discussion. Teachers do not always expect written work in lessons and this is reflected in the quantity of work seen in pupils' books. Pupils in Year 2 studying the Bible as part of their topic on special books can recount Bible stories, such as 'Noah's Ark', and 'Joseph and his multicoloured coat'. They explore other faiths, such as Islam. Pupils in Year 6 learn about religious buildings. In one very good lesson in Year 6, pupils visited Worle Baptist Church. They learned about the function and purpose of the Baptistry and found out what it is like to live a Christian life by asking good probing questions of the minister.
80. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of the direction of the subject and has recently updated the scheme of work to include assessment material provided by North Somerset for use at the end of each unit of work. She has identified a need to make more use of information and communication technology in religious education and this forms part of the religious education action plan. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

These subjects were not a focus of the inspection and there was not enough evidence to report fully on them. However, work was sampled in **art and design, design and technology, music** and **physical education** and discussions were held with pupils from both Years 2 and 6.

81. Three lessons were observed in which **art and design** was taught linked to other curriculum areas. In each of these lessons no teaching of art took place and the emphasis was on developing knowledge and skills in other subjects. This reduces pupils' opportunities to make sufficient progress in art and contributes to standards that are below expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Evidence from the work seen in pupils' sketchbooks and from discussions with pupils also indicates that standards are below average and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Year 6 produce superficial and immature drawings in their study of a

beach environment and they are not challenged to improve their work. The recent changes in planning the curriculum for art and design have resulted in less focus on ensuring that all elements of the subject are covered in sufficient depth. Although these changes are relatively new, there has not been adequate monitoring to evaluate their effect on the standards of the work produced.

82. No lessons of **design and technology** could be seen. From evidence of work seen and from talking with pupils, standards in design and technology are in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Their achievement is satisfactory. Older pupils understand how mechanisms can be used when designing a moving toy and understand the need for a design brief to consider the needs of the user. Pupils are less secure about evaluating their work so that real improvements are made. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop designs using information technology control. When planning their designs, pupils do not use their numeracy skills to ensure accurate measurements.
83. Only one part lesson was seen in **music** and there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in the subject. The singing heard was satisfactory, but there is no evidence of pupils' achievement in other aspects of music. The current scheme of work does not ensure that information and communication technology contributes to the subject, although the school is aware of this and plans to implement change. The length of music lessons in some classes does not allow enough time for pupils to make progress in their learning, which reduces their achievement.
84. Three lessons in **physical education** were seen, two in gymnastics and one in orienteering. The teaching in the two lessons in Years 5 and 6 was good and, in a Year 1 lesson, it was satisfactory. In gymnastics, by the end of Year 6, standards are in line with expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils show control and fluency in connecting a series of movements that they perform accurately in pairs. They have a good understanding of safety issues and understand the importance of exercise to their health. Because of the size of the school, limited access to the hall reduces opportunities for pupils to have regular exercise when the weather prevents physical education taking place outside.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

85. Two lessons were observed in both Year 2 classes. Social skills were developed well during the lessons as the pupils were encouraged to work co-operatively with a partner to undertake a task to make a rainbow fish scale. This lesson was part of a unit of work taken from the topic programme which incorporates personal, social and health education. In addition to personal, social and health education themes, there is a progression of skills for each key concept for Years 1 to 6. Personal, social and health education is timetabled and each class has a regular 'circle time'. Pupils recognise that they are able to express their views and feelings during this time. In Year 2 the work in pupils' books indicates that pupils are raising questions and understanding their own feelings on subjects such as 'being afraid' and 'making promises'. The co-ordinator has recently reviewed the drug education policy and has produced a scheme of work that is well linked to the personal, social and health education and science curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
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	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
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	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	5
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).