

INSPECTION REPORT

HARTHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Harthill, Sheffield

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique reference number: 106868

Headteacher: Mrs J E Williams

Lead inspector: Parveen Raja

Dates of inspection: 10th – 12th November 2003

Inspection number: 256349

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:	165
School address:	Union Street Sheffield
Postcode:	S26 7YH
Telephone number:	01909 770291
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Watts
Date of previous inspection:	9 th March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Harthill Primary School is a smaller than average school, which is at the heart of the village community it serves. There are 165 pupils on roll; 12 per cent of these pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. The school has 28 pupils with special educational needs, including six who have a statement of special educational need, which is above the national average. None of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The pupils' attainment when they start school is average. Most children start the reception year with some pre-school education.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6282	Mrs P Raja	Lead inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology, Foundation Stage
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30823	Mrs B Clarke	Team inspector	English, music, physical education, religious education, English as an additional language
19120	Mr D Pattinson	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, geography, history

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	10
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	13
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	20
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is **sound** and it provides satisfactory value for money. The headteacher, governors and staff have a strong commitment to raising standards and are taking appropriate action to remove the barriers to providing quality education. Standards at Year 6 are now improving and most pupils throughout the school are achieving as well as they could, except the higher attaining pupils who are capable of achieving higher standards in writing, mathematics and religious education. Teaching is satisfactory overall although many changes in the teaching staff and some pupils being taught by temporary teachers have resulted in the quality of teaching and learning being inconsistent in the school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is lack of consistency in the quality of teaching through the school.
- Junior pupils do not achieve well enough in writing and religious education.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to promote literacy and numeracy skills and learning in other subjects.
- The headteacher provides a sensitive and enthusiastic lead.
- Pupils are well supported to maintain good standards of behaviour and good attitudes to work.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve well.
- Good links with the parents and the community contribute well to pupils' learning.

Overall the school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection in 1998. Improvement has been good in strengthening partnership in learning between home and school. Teaching and curriculum planning for the Foundation Stage are now generally satisfactory with good provision for outdoor play. Satisfactory progress has been made on other issues related to schemes of work and planning. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators is at an early stage of development because they do not as yet systematically monitor teaching and learning.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Achievement is uneven in Years 3 to 6 in some areas because activities are not varied to match the wide spread of ability in the mixed age classes. Standards have been maintained in the infants and are beginning to rise in the juniors. Standards have risen very well in science at Year 6 and in reading at Year 2 because of the whole-school focus on development in these areas. In the 2003 tests, whilst standards are below average for English, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level and above has increased with better results in the number of pupils reaching the average standards in reading. In science there has been significant improvement with half of the year group achieving the higher levels. This is due to the leadership and management of the headteacher. Currently standards at Year 2 are average in all the subjects seen and at Year 6 they are below average in writing and religious education and average in mathematics, science and ICT.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the effective additional help given by the support staff. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and most of the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals, with fewer children likely to reach the goals for writing.

Pupils' personal development is **satisfactory** overall. Their attitudes and behaviour are good, as is their attendance. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, although opportunities for developing understanding of life in a multiracial society are limited.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory overall with some weaknesses**. Teaching is **satisfactory overall**. The best teaching was seen in the Year 4/5 class where pupils are provided with challenging and interesting activities; pace in lessons is good and pupils learn well. Good teaching was also seen in Year 5/6 and Year 1. Throughout the school, teachers and other staff take good care of the pupils which results in good relationships between adults and pupils and amongst pupils. In all the classes, teachers work well with support staff, who contribute effectively to pupils' learning, in particular the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Some aspects of teaching in Year 2 are weak because at times strategies for behaviour management are ineffective. In the reception class, on occasions, adults miss opportunities to extend children's learning in structured play activities. In most of the satisfactory lessons, the range of activities is generally narrow and often does not stimulate enthusiasm and inspire imaginative responses from pupils. Teachers do not provide sufficient planned opportunities for the use of ICT to extend learning in subjects such as history and geography and to promote literacy and numeracy skills.

The curriculum is enhanced well by a wide range of after-school activities, clubs and visits. There is some imbalance in the time allocated to religious education, which results in junior pupils not achieving as well as they could.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are **satisfactory, with some strong features**. Since taking up her post, the headteacher has established effective school self-evaluation procedures and as a result the school community has a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. There are good procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning but these have not had sufficient time to affect the rate of pupils' progress. The headteacher leads by example and provides a good model of professional practice. Her leadership and management of science have resulted in very good improvement in the standards achieved by pupils at Year 6. Governors are very supportive of the school and work well to ensure statutory requirements are met but are not so rigorous in measuring the impact of their decisions on school effectiveness.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school and most have no significant concerns. Pupils in Years 3 to 6, whose opinions were sought, feel that the school is good and particularly enjoy the good range of after-school activities provided by the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure activities are interesting and stimulating, are based on assessment information so that they are well matched to the wide range of ability in the classes and provide appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Improve achievement in writing and religious education in the junior years.

- Make planned and systematic use of ICT to promote learning in all the subjects of the curriculum.
- Improve pupils' understanding of living in a multiracial society.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achieve **satisfactorily** in relation to prior learning. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Higher attaining pupils achieve better in science than in English and mathematics at Year 6. Achievement is better in the Year 4/5 class than the other junior classes. In the infants, pupils achieve well in writing. Pupils enter the school with standards which are average. Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are again in line with expectations, as they are in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Standards in writing are above average at this stage. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with the national average in mathematics, science and ICT and most of the other subjects, but have fallen below in English and religious education.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Limited opportunities for extended writing, spelling and handwriting cause underachievement in writing skills in the junior years.
- Pupils make good progress in the infants and achieve well in writing at Year 2.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory in religious education at the end of Year 6.
- There is good improvement in the standards in reading at Years 2 and 6.
- There is very good improvement in science at Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- ICT is not used consistently across the curriculum to promote literacy and numeracy skills and learning in other subjects.

Commentary

1. When children start school in the reception class data shows that their knowledge, skills and understanding are in line with what is expected for this age, with a significant minority showing better than average skills. Progress throughout the Foundation Stage is generally satisfactory for most children although the higher attaining children are not achieving as well as they could in writing. Most children are on course to achieving the early learning goals, with fewer children than average likely to achieve as well as they should in their writing development.
2. The table below shows that by the end of Year 2 pupils have achieved slightly better than average standards in reading, which represents a good improvement over last year. In writing they continue to be above average. In mathematics and science standards are average overall. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 3 is well above average in writing and above average in science. The school's trend in the national tests for this age is above that of schools nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.0 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.4 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.4 (16.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Inspection evidence shows that pupils achieve well in writing because this has been a focus for whole-school development. Achievement in this key stage has also improved well in reading because the school is now focusing on raising standards in reading. The focus on

investigations and experiments in science has helped the higher attaining pupils to achieve at level 3, which is appropriate for their abilities.

4. The table below shows that standards in Year 6 have improved in English, mathematics and science over the past year with very good improvement in science. Standards in reading have also risen well. Standards in English, mathematics and science, which had been declining since the last inspection, are now improving. In science the headteacher's leadership and management of the subject have had a very positive impact and standards have risen dramatically from being well below average to above average in 2003, with a very high percentage of pupils achieving at the higher level 5. This is now at the same level as in the previous inspection. The school's trend in the national tests is below that of schools nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.4 (26.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.7 (25.8)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.7 (26.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. In 2003 end of Year 6 tests the school missed its targets in English and mathematics, particularly at the higher level 5. The school is on course to reach the targets in English in 2004 because these are more realistic, and, with continued focus on reading and writing and additional support given to the high number of pupils with special educational needs and lower ability, it may just get there. However, in mathematics, the school is unlikely to meet its challenging targets.
6. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are generally achieving at a satisfactory level. In the mixed age classes activities are not sufficiently varied to provide challenge at an appropriate level for the higher attainers from both year groups. This problem is resolved more in the Year 4/5 class and to some extent in the Year 5/6 class because pupils have opportunities to work independently on challenging activities that stimulate their interest. In Years 3 to 6, standards are average in mathematics, science and ICT. In English and in religious education standards are below average. This is because pupils are provided with few opportunities to express their ideas orally and in writing in a variety of situations and for a range of purposes. The time given to religious education is not used consistently for pupils to consolidate and record their learning and consequently they do not always build on what they have learnt, resulting in some confusion in their knowledge and understanding of the major religions of the world.
7. Most pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the very effective targeted support they receive. However, earlier inconsistencies in staffing have impeded the achievements of the current Year 6, 30 per cent of whom are registered as having special educational needs. The Year 6 pupils at the school action stage of provision have not made enough progress against their planned targets and remain on the special needs register.
8. Throughout the school, pupils are provided with regular opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding in practical science work, which consolidates and extends learning well and results in good progress being made. This opportunity is not provided in the same way for applying their mathematical skills in solving problems from real life events and situations, which slows progress over time. Whilst provision for reading continues to improve and has a positive effect on pupils' achievement through the school, the provision for writing is not as effective in the junior classes as in the infants. This is because the time allocated for English is not always used as efficiently, which leaves less time for pupils to apply their literacy skills in other subjects or to do extended writing. Insufficient attention is given to improving standards in spelling and handwriting. ICT is not used well to support learning in these subjects. As a result

pupils are not achieving the standards that some of them are capable of. The school recognises most of these weaknesses but the continued problems created by long-term absences present a very challenging situation to manage. The headteacher, with good support from the governors, is now addressing issues related to providing challenge in activities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The behaviour of pupils is **good** and supported well by the effective provision for their moral and social development. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is **satisfactory**. They have **good** attitudes to work and like coming to school. The pupils' attendance rate is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and their attendance is good.
- Relationships throughout the school are underpinned by the caring ethos and are good.
- Children's behaviour is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

9. Most pupils are interested in their lessons and are eager to join in discussions and answer questions. They are confident that their teachers and fellow pupils will listen to them and respect their views. Most pupils can work with sustained concentration, take an active part in lessons and work hard when activities are interesting and challenging. This was apparent in a science lesson when pupils in Years 4 and 5 investigated how sounds are made using tuning forks. As a result of their good attitudes and behaviour, they made good progress in learning in a fun-filled, enjoyable lesson. Apart from the occasional lapse in behaviour of a few pupils in Years 1 and 2, behaviour is good and pupils work and learn in a calm, purposeful learning environment.
10. The school provides sound support for the personal development of pupils. There is good provision for pupils' social and moral development and satisfactory provision for spiritual and cultural development. The school council is now giving pupils a 'voice' in the school and council members confirm that the school listens to their views and acts upon their suggestions. Although they have only been in school for a short time, children in the reception class settle in quickly, are learning the routines of school life and feel happy and secure.
11. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to learning and demonstrate good levels of confidence in lessons. This is because staff know them well and plan effectively for pupils' individual needs. Daily routines, consistently followed by support assistants, give structure to pupils' learning, providing good levels of support and encouragement.
12. The school is a harmonious and considerate community and relationships between all members are good. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the needs of others as seen in the large collection of 'shoe box' gifts for children in Romania. An assembly on Remembrance Day showed pupils listening intently to a visitor reading poetry from World War I, which contributed well to developing empathy and understanding of the consequences of conflict. Whilst pupils have a good understanding of their own culture, their knowledge of the rich cultural heritage of modern day Britain is underdeveloped.

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	164	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0

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

13. Pupils' attendance is good and pupils arrive punctually for the start of the school. There are no exclusions from school or unauthorised absence.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.5	School data	0.0
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory overall**. Teachers manage the pupils well, which results in good standards of behaviour. However, they use limited strategies to make activities interesting and stimulating and do not always provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils in the junior years. Consequently, whilst pupils are well behaved and have good attitudes they are often passive listeners in lessons and on occasions some pupils do not learn as well as they could. Too often, although teaching is basically sound, there is a lack of vitality and sparkle in lessons to inspire pupils into responding enthusiastically with motivation and excitement. This results in a slower pace in learning over time.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are not sufficiently varied in challenge to match the differing needs of the pupils.
- Marking celebrates good effort but does not always inform pupils what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers expect high standards of behaviour in reception and junior classes.
- Teachers work effectively with support staff, who contribute well to pupils' learning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are included in all the activities well.
- Teaching is good in the Year 4/5 class and in some of the Year 1 lessons.

Commentary

14. Teaching is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection, when it was particularly good in the juniors and standards were high at Year 6. The table below shows that there is no teaching that was very good or better; the incidence of unsatisfactory teaching is slightly increased. Some of the decline in the quality of teaching can be attributed to changes in

teaching staff and problems created by long-term staff absences but overall, whilst teachers have reasonable expectations of most pupils, their expectations are not always sufficiently high of the higher attaining pupils. Teachers link their planning to the national guidance and plan lessons that are appropriate to the age they are teaching. In mixed age classes they generally aim at the middle level. However, not all the teachers vary activities to set the appropriate challenge, which matches the achievement levels of pupils in their classes. All the pupils in the classes generally do the same work. This provides little opportunity for pupils to exercise independence and, on occasions, valuable time is used working at a leisurely pace, waiting for their turn or struggling to complete the task.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactor y	Poor	Very poor
0	0	9 (24%)	26 (68%)	3 (8%)	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.

15. There are some positive features in teaching throughout the school. Teachers have a very caring attitude towards pupils and always treat them with respect, which fosters good relationships. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and use effective management strategies, which means that pupils concentrate well on learning tasks. Teachers make good use of the additional support provided by the support staff. In the best lessons, interesting activities and a lively approach stimulate pupils' interest and help them to move forward. Good questioning is used well to check pupils' understanding and extend their ideas. Pace in the lessons is good and pupils achieve well. When teaching is unsatisfactory, much time is used to keep pupils on task, pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher and consequently the lessons move at a slow pace and pupils do not learn well.
16. Pupils who have statements of special educational need make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The very effective support they receive from learning support assistants enables pupils to take part in whole-class lessons and to work on individual programmes at planned times each day. Programmes prescribed by visiting professionals, such as speech therapists, are rigorously followed, and have a significant effect on the progress pupils make. Good teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants provides a clear picture of pupils' achievement, enabling new work to be closely matched to need.
17. Assessment of pupils' learning is not always used rigorously to inform planning, particularly in the reception year, and too frequently structured play activities provide insufficient challenge to the more able children. Teachers make good use of praise and encouragement in their marking but do not always provide comments for next steps in learning or for revising work to consolidate learning. Homework is generally used satisfactorily to reinforce and extend learning. The planned use of ICT to promote learning across the curriculum is inconsistent. Often there are missed opportunities for the use of computers in classes during lessons.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory curriculum that is well enhanced by a good range of out-of-school clubs, visits and activities**. Planning at school level and for each year group has improved since the last inspection and now effectively secures year-on-year development of knowledge, skills and understanding. The accommodation for the school is satisfactory and good for outdoor play and games. The quality and range of resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Extra-curricular activities contribute well to the quality of the curriculum provided to the pupils.
- Planning of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection and further developments are in hand.
- Some imbalance in the curriculum time allocations is due to the significantly high emphasis on English resulting in insufficient time for religious education.

Commentary

18. The curriculum provides a sound basis for learning. It is firmly anchored on the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, although some aspects of the religious education programme are not taught systematically in the junior years. A regular programme of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum. Annual residential visits provide good opportunities for pupils' personal development. Personal development is further promoted through science topics and the personal, social, health and citizenship education programme. These are used well to raise awareness and understanding of issues such as diet, drugs and alcohol abuse and the dangers of smoking.
19. The school continues to develop the use of national guidelines and commercial schemes to tailor its planning to suit the needs of the pupils. An appropriate long-term plan covering a two-year cycle is in place and effectively secures the progress year on year. The planning frameworks covering the termly and weekly plans are used consistently through the school, which ensures consistency in the delivery of the curriculum. However, planning does not take sufficient account of the pupils' needs in mixed age classes. While teachers plan for different ability levels it is unclear how this is related to the different age groups in the classes, particularly the more able in each of the year groups.
20. The curriculum is slightly imbalanced in favour of English and to the particular detriment of religious education. A very high percentage of curriculum time has been allocated to English in the drive to raise standards. Whilst this has contributed well to raising standards in reading there is some slippage in the time allocated to other subjects, religious education in particular; consequently, standards in religious education at Year 6 have declined. The school has recognised this and is considering how best to tackle the problem.
21. The school has fully implemented the new requirements for pupils with special educational needs. They are well supported and consequently they access all aspects of the curriculum. For example, a reticent pupil with specific speech and language difficulties was encouraged to participate in a group discussion and drama, visibly gaining confidence at this time. The provision for pupils who are gifted and talented is at an early stage of development and as yet is not effective in ensuring their satisfactory achievement.

Care guidance and support

The school makes **good** provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. Pupils are aware of their responsibilities of living in a community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The care and welfare of pupils have a high profile in the school.
- Pupils have a good and trusting relationship with adults.
- The induction procedures are good.

Commentary

22. Adults in school know their charges well. All staff are alert to the needs of pupils who may be having difficulties and readily offer them help; consequently, pupils develop confidence and trust in their teachers and this is based on mutual respect. There are good procedures in place for the welfare and health and safety of pupils. Child protection procedures are in place and the medical needs of pupils are met well. First aid and accident recording procedures are good. The school conducts risk assessments of the site in line with local authority guidelines. As a result of this good provision, pupils and parents are confident that their children work and play in a safe, secure learning environment. Pupils grow and thrive in a caring community.
23. The school has good induction procedures for settling pupils into school and there is also good provision for preparing pupils for the transfer to high school. Pupils know their views matter. The school now has a regular, formal system for taking pupils' views into account through the school council. There is sound support for pupils' personal development through the personal and social education programme. Pupils' personal development is well enhanced when pupils visit places of interest and visitors come to talk to them and work with them. For example, infants made good progress in the French session after school taught by a visitor. The school makes satisfactory use of assessment to guide pupils' academic progress in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and is working towards developing assessment practice in other curriculum areas.
24. The support for pupils with special educational needs is good. There are clear procedures for systematically tracking pupils' progress so that pupils with special needs are identified early and supported effectively from a very early stage.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents who are supportive of the school and of their children's learning. Links with the community and other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has strengthened its links with parents since the previous inspection.
- The quality and quantity of the general information parents receive are good.
- Parents would like more information on the progress their children are making.
- The good links with the community enhance pupils' learning.

Commentary

25. Parents consider that their children like school and that the school helps them to work hard and achieve their best. A few parents expressed concerns about bullying but no evidence of unkind behaviour or harassment was seen during the inspection. In discussion with pupils, they confirm that the school takes prompt action if they express a concern about bullying. Parents receive a good range of general information about events and activities taking place in the school and about the curriculum their children will follow each term. Although the school offers three consultation evenings each year, a high percentage of the parents who responded to the inspectors' questionnaire do not consider that they receive enough information on the progress their children are making. The school is aware of this and measures are being taken to improve the situation. The reports to parents on their child's progress mainly summarise what their child can do in subjects but do not state what they need to do to improve. Some targets are set on the reports but these are too vague to be of help to both children and parents.
26. This is a school at the heart of its community. The Parents' Association is active in organising social and fund-raising activities, for example a 'Stars in their Eyes' competition for which many members of the community provided refreshments and resources. These funds are used well to improve the resources for learning. The school opens its doors to the local community

through the range of adult courses offered in the evening. A short course with crèche facilities is offered to parents so that they can give maximum support to their children. Community members make a significant contribution to pupils' learning by listening to children read, and running an art club, football training and lessons in the French language. There are good links with other primary schools and with the main high school to which they transfer and as a result pupils learn valuable inter-personal and social skills. Gifted and talented pupils' learning is enhanced by attending advanced classes in English and confidence is gained through the many social and competitive events pupils attend at the high school. All these good links raise pupils' awareness of the importance of being a valued member of the community.

27. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted and informed regularly about their children's individual education plans and progress. Parents say that the school's 'open door' policy enables them to share concerns with teachers and assistants, and that this supports their children well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are **satisfactory** with strengths in some areas. The new headteacher gives a sound lead to the school and has done well to move the school forward from a difficult staffing situation. Management of the school is satisfactory and improving. The governance of the school is sound, with the governing body having a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and some governors making significant contributions to the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher has high aspirations and a clear vision for the school.
- The senior management team is helping to shape the school's direction, but is not yet fully effective.
- Strategic planning reflects the school's aims and values, but contains too many priorities for development.
- Management is satisfactory, and is improving, as introduced strategies start to make a positive impact on the work of the school.
- The development of subject leaders as effective managers of their subjects has been adversely affected by staffing problems.
- Finances are well analysed and used, so the school makes the most of the money it has.
- The committed governing body carries its responsibilities well, but is not yet good enough in holding the school accountable for what it does.

Commentary

28. The new headteacher provides strong, purposeful and mostly effective leadership. She has clear priorities and has established a clear and rigorous agenda for needed improvement. Her energy and enthusiasm inspire a sense of shared purpose among staff and governors, who are keen to make the school successful. She has secured the commitment of all to school improvement and initiated strategies and approaches to make this happen. For example, parents and pupils are gradually becoming involved in shaping the school's future direction. Staff and governors have been fully consulted to determine the school's priorities for development to ensure all have a say in what the school needs to do to improve. However, the weaknesses in teaching and learning although identified have not been addressed sufficiently, particularly for children in the reception year.
29. The senior management team, of head, deputy headteacher and Key Stage 1 co-ordinator, is planning and leading the implementation of essential improvements. The roles and responsibilities of the senior management team are not yet clearly defined and documented to help improve its effectiveness and to help ensure that all know of its importance in moving the school forward.

30. The headteacher works sensitively with staff to help them to develop and to support them in their work. She has used the management and co-ordination of science very effectively as an example of developing a subject at school level and raising standards. Subject leaders are developing their roles and are not yet fully effective because they do not systematically monitor teaching and learning, check pupils' work for consistency, quality and quantity, or study plans regularly to ensure that there is good balance of work across all subjects. As a result subject leaders are not fully aware of the impact of the weaknesses in teaching, of some underachievement of the higher attaining pupils or of the lack of teaching of important skills in some subjects, which make the curriculum narrow. The difficulties in the staffing situation have hampered a smooth role development. However, the headteacher is already taking steps to ensure that there are now rigorous action plans in core subjects and the subjects identified in the school improvement priorities, to help raise standards and improve teaching and learning.
31. School improvement planning provides a useful tool for development, with a clear, measurable agenda for improving achievement, teaching and learning. It is used well to determine the best use of funds available to the school to support the priorities for school improvement. It is closely linked to the planned provision of training of teachers and support staff, and to the performance management arrangements, which are embedded in the school's work. However, the school improvement plan contains too many priorities, some of which are only tenuously linked to raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning. Within the context of the school's continued problems with long-term staff absences, the priorities need to be sharp and clearly focused on areas that will most improve the quality of education and raise standards.
32. The headteacher has established effective monitoring and evaluation procedures to help raise achievement. These include:
- Monitoring teaching and learning through regular lesson observations, using agreed criteria to help raise standards.
 - Analysing pupils' performance in the national tests to identify and overcome weaknesses.
 - Tracking of achievement of individual pupils.
33. However, not all pupils as yet have individual targets and have little understanding of what they need to learn or the standards they achieve. The many initiatives introduced by the headteacher are only just beginning to make an impact on improving teaching and learning and on raising achievement.
34. The management of pupils with special educational needs is good. Support assistants are well trained, enabling them to approach their work confidently. The headteacher ensures that staff's individual skills and expertise are used effectively. Good use is made of visiting professionals who support pupils in classrooms and also provide effective input to staff training. The governor with special responsibility for special educational needs is knowledgeable and plays a strategic role in the school's provision.
35. The governing body provides sound support for the headteacher and carries out its statutory duties well. All committees are properly structured, have clear terms of reference and meet appropriately to help ensure that they support the headteacher effectively. The governing body is aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and is working with the headteacher to move the school forward. It is placing increasing emphasis on strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation to enable it to improve its effectiveness and to help it become a true critical friend of the school. However, the governing body does not yet challenge enough in all areas to shape the future direction of the school's development.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	402363
Total expenditure	403077
Expenditure per pupil	2651

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	21814
Balance carried forward to the next	21100

The management of school finances is good. Careful and regular monitoring of spending patterns helps ensure that finance is used to benefit pupils. The balance carried forward to the current year is used well to improve the physical environment and meet the high cost of cover for staff absences. Principles of best value are applied well, and the governing body is strongly committed to ensuring that all funds are wisely spent. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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 **overall satisfactory** and has improved since the last inspection. Improvement is good in provision for outdoor play, and resources for learning have much improved. Planning is now well linked to the national guidance and covers all the areas of learning adequately. Assessment procedures have been introduced but are at an early stage of development and hence do not yet contribute to planning. However, the school continues to experience problems created by long-term absence of staff for the reception year. The temporary teacher in post provides satisfactory teaching overall but lacks the necessary expertise and skills to lead and manage the provision for this stage. The training and in-class support provided by the early years local authority consultant have been very effective in improving the provision and raising knowledge and understanding of how young children learn in the school.

Most of the children have attended the pre-school provision on the same site and enter school with average skills. Teaching is satisfactory overall and leads to children making satisfactory progress. There is effective regular support by parents. All adults set very good role models and work well as a cohesive team. **Links with the playgroup are good with joint planning for the shared outdoor play area.** The school has introduced a single entry to the reception class this year and has made good induction arrangements for the children. The accommodation outside is good and is satisfactory inside.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided to build confidence and esteem; children display a good level of involvement in activities.
- Children listen to adults and others and behave well.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided to develop independence and initiative.

Commentary

36. Children are provided with good opportunities to play and work co-operatively with others. They quickly learn to share equipment and in discussions are taught to take turns. Even at this stage in the term the clear boundaries and the consistent role models set by the adults in reception ensure that the children know what is expected of them. They soon learn to conform to the standards of behaviour set by the adults. Most children take interest in what they are doing, concentrate well, even when they are not directly supervised, and are eager to learn. However, on occasions they are expected to stay quietly focused on tasks for too long which hampers the opportunities to ask questions and explore their ideas with others. Through stories and sharing of events children learn right from wrong. Adults use praise and encouragement well, which fosters confidence and esteem and children form trusting relationships with them and others. Children are expected to clear up after themselves and change for physical development lessons but adults are quick to help out and only a few children develop independence. There are limited routines and activities offered to promote independence and initiative in learning. Most children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Stories and books are used well to develop children's interest in text and awareness of the link between written and spoken words.
- Role-play is not used as effectively and sufficiently to promote language development.
- Limited opportunities are provided for the higher attaining children to extend their writing skills.

Commentary

37. Teaching in this area of learning is broadly satisfactory but more use should be made of assessment to ensure that tasks are fully matched to the needs of the differing abilities of the children. Most children achieve satisfactorily. An appropriate range of activities is planned to develop language and early literacy skills, with an emphasis on developing early reading skills. Good use is made of stories and non-fiction books to develop awareness and understanding of print. There is appropriate emphasis on the recognition of sounds to help children learn to read and write. The higher attaining and the average children are beginning to read a few words with growing accuracy. Most children take books home and are well supported by parents. However, opportunities for developing skills for the higher attaining children who are beginning to write in recognisable form and attempt plausible spellings are too limited. Spoken and writing skills are generally promoted through structured play activities but on occasions children are left to play without adult support to extend their ideas and language skills, which slows the pace of their learning. The provision for role-play activities lacks the imaginative and stimulating contexts to fire children's imagination. Lower attaining children are well supported and join in the activities confidently. Children are encouraged to write their names independently and many are beginning to attempt writing without support and some can write their first names. Overall expectations for this area of learning are not always high enough to extend children's learning at a brisk pace and help them to make better progress. Most children are on course to reaching the early learning goals, with less than the average number likely to reach the expected standards in writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An appropriate range of activities is provided to support learning.
- Pace in lessons is sometimes slow.

Commentary

38. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The teacher plans a range of activities to promote mathematical development. Most children are working at levels expected for their age. No recorded work was seen for this area because no written recording of number has been done so far. In oral sessions the more able children had a good grasp of number up to 20 and were able to work out 'one more' and 'one less' than a given number with growing mental agility without prompts from adults. Most children understand ordering of numbers and many can count on and backwards with developing accuracy. Activities are generally matched to different abilities but on occasions opportunities to extend children's learning are missed because children experience structured play for long periods without adult support to draw out and encourage mathematical understanding. This slows the pace in learning and some children do

not achieve as much as they should. Achievement is satisfactory overall and most children are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A range of appropriate activities is provided to promote learning in this area.
- Activities to develop ICT skills are not well matched to the learning needs of young children.

Commentary

39. Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory and children's achievement is sound. Visits are used well to extend children's understanding of different places. They explore how people travel to places in different ways as part of the topic on transport. It forms a good basis for further work in the class in making moving trams with classroom materials. Children develop making skills and use simple tools to cut and paste with growing accuracy. Effective adult support enables children to explain their work and evaluate the products. In discussions children use their experience of holiday travel to suggest other means of transport. Children use the classroom computer confidently with growing independence to access literacy and numeracy programs, working in pairs or in small groups. However, opportunities for developing these skills in the computer suite are not as effective because the planned work is not appropriately matched to young children's learning needs and they are expected to carry out operations which are too advanced for their level. Children make good use of the listening centres to listen to favourite stories and consolidate developing reading skill. Most children are on course to meeting the expectations for this area.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for outdoor play.
- Adults are good at intervening to help children to improve their physical skills.

Commentary

40. There are good opportunities for outdoor play. Children are encouraged well to use the large toys, the climbing frame and other equipment to push and pull, ride tricycles energetically and show developing awareness of space and others. Teaching uses outdoor play in imaginative ways, making physical activity interesting and exciting, which creates good opportunities to develop children's spoken language. In physical education lessons, children use their bodies with increasing control. They stop and start and move around in controlled movements. Children develop manipulative skills well by handling dough, scissors and small construction toys. They use these skills in making junk models, and construct imaginatively with construction equipment which provides good practice to refine these skills. Achievement in this area is at least satisfactory and children are on course to meet the expectations for this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards, but the work on display indicates that standards are in line with the expectations for this age. Some effective samples of

colour mixing were seen as well as a range of media used to create pictures with good links to other areas of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in writing at Year 2 is good.
- Achievement in writing at Year 6 is unsatisfactory.
- The teaching of reading is good.
- There is some lack of challenge in lessons resulting in some passivity and underachievement, in boys especially.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The teaching of handwriting and spelling is not consistent enough and pupils' checking of spelling and written work is not sufficiently careful.

Commentary

41. Results in national tests and current standards at the end of Year 2 reflect better levels of achievement than at Year 6. This is due to a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching and learning over time, creating gaps in pupils' learning and leaving too much ground to make up. This is especially so for the current cohort of pupils in Years 5 and 6 where standards in writing are well below average and reading standards are below average. Results in national tests show that in Year 6 girls do better than boys. The school has been proactive in purchasing books and resources that interest boys. However, a feature of most of the lessons observed was that boys took a less active part than girls, especially in question and answer sessions. Because boys are not as active participants as girls, many boys lose interest, and so the overall rate of their learning is reduced.
42. The school's focus on reading has been successful. The good amount of curriculum time allocated to daily group reading sessions is providing consistent opportunities for reading, and standards are rising. At Year 2 the improvements in the number of pupils reaching average levels of attainment in the national tests in the last two years has been good. At Year 6, whilst still below average, pupils' attainment in reading exceeds that in writing so that, in 2003, 25 per cent of pupils achieved the higher level 5. Because teachers provide carefully structured activities, pupils read for a good range of purposes that interest and engage them. Good home/school communication enables parents to consolidate their children's reading well. Pupils complete reading logs but are insufficiently challenged to review their reading in a variety of ways or to systematically read in a range of genres.
43. Teaching is satisfactory and makes a sound contribution to pupils' achievement overall. Teachers share clear learning objectives so pupils know the purpose of their learning. Planning is good because new activities build on earlier learning, enabling pupils to learn in a consistent way. Activities are relevant, which helps pupils to contribute from personal experiences, for example writing instructions for cleaning teeth. Whilst pupils' standards and achievements in speaking and listening are satisfactory, some of the most able are underachieving in writing. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills, such as 'talking partners' discussions. However, there is a lack of opportunities in lessons for pupils to speak, for example through drama, role-play and group or individual presentation. This also reduces pupils' overall levels of interest and enthusiasm for the subject because they spend more time listening than being actively engaged in learning. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. They are well supported by knowledgeable, energetic support assistants both in class and when delivering the particular requirements of pupils' individual education plans.

44. The school is about to introduce a handwriting scheme but as yet pupils in Years 3 and 4 struggle to use a fluent style and this has an effect on their written speed and presentation. Most pupils are insufficiently challenged to spell words correctly, even when copying from a book or worksheet.
45. The subject is led satisfactorily. Assessment procedures are good, providing high quality information. This is being used effectively to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. Whole-staff discussion has led to teachers developing relevant half-termly assessments so that Year 2 teacher assessments of pupils' writing now closely match test results. However, because teacher assessments and actual test results for Year 6 pupils remain at variance, the school cannot accurately predict pupils' outcomes in national tests. Insufficient analysis of how curriculum time is used overall results in limited opportunities for extended writing and insufficient time to apply literacy skills in other subjects.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory but has weaknesses. Satisfactory use is made of reading and writing in other subjects, for example labelling drawings in science experiments. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use computers to develop appropriate word-processing skills, or for information retrieval purposes in lessons. Library provision is satisfactory for pupils in Years 5 and 6, but is underdeveloped for other age groups.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers do not consistently use assessment information to inform planning for the more able pupils in junior classes and work is not sufficiently matched to their needs.
- Teaching and learning are unacceptably varied, but satisfactory overall, with most teaching in both the mixed age classes for Years 4 to 6 being good. Subject leadership is satisfactory, and is helping to raise standards over time, but is not yet fully effective.
- Increased focus on providing regular opportunities for practical and problem-solving activities is helping to raise pupils' achievement.

Commentary

47. Analysis of pupils' work reveals that standards are broadly in line with national levels by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. This is because the work teachers give most pupils enables them to build on what they have learnt before. However, more able pupils do not always make the best possible progress because teachers generally require these pupils to complete the same work as most other pupils in their class before proceeding to appropriately challenging tasks. Approaches to assessing and recording pupils' progress from day to day to enable teachers to build carefully on previous learning are not used as rigorously for the more able. As a result, on occasions work given to more able pupils does not match their precise needs, which limits their progress.
48. Most teaching and learning are satisfactory because they are consistently linked to the framework to ensure skills, knowledge and understanding are developed systematically as pupils move through the school. However, teaching in lessons seen ranged from good to unsatisfactory, with the best teaching observed in both mixed age classes for Years 4 to 6. Strengths include purposeful questioning which develops clear understanding of new knowledge, good encouragement which helps to motivate pupils, and well-chosen resources which aid learning. Teachers' marking almost always celebrates pupils' efforts and sometimes

helps them to move forward. Learning support assistants work well with pupils with special educational needs and other less able pupils. These positive features of lessons help to explain the satisfactory and sometimes good attitudes to learning and mostly good behaviour seen during the inspection, which contribute to the satisfactory standards achieved. However, in one lesson judged unsatisfactory, unclear instructions, insecure control strategies and low levels of challenge resulted in pupils of all abilities making limited progress.

49. The co-ordinator has a sound understanding of some of the subject's strengths and shortcomings. She has compiled plans for the subject's continued development, which address most of the required areas for improvement. A start has been made on analysing data from national tests to identify areas requiring improvement. Consequently, teachers now give problem-solving activities greater emphasis as a means of developing pupils' thinking skills and helping facilitate mathematical understanding. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 investigate the nets of different three-dimensional shapes and Year 1 pupils engage in 'Let's Think' practical activities. Most pupils take pride in their work, although not all teachers insist on high standards of presentation.
50. Pupils do not yet have precise targets to help them to develop a better understanding of their learning. Worksheets are overused in some classes and make the curriculum uninteresting. Pupils have too few opportunities to develop their own strategies for solving 'real life' problems to help them appreciate the importance of mathematics in daily life. Pupils have too few opportunities to handle data, such as through the use of computers

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. The development of mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding through other subjects is not given enough emphasis. Older pupils have started to use spreadsheets to represent mathematical information in ICT and some teachers use timelines in history to help develop number skills. However, opportunities tend to occur coincidentally rather than as part of systematic planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subject leadership and management are good and have led to good improvement in standards at the end of Year 6.
- Regular opportunities for investigations and experimental work in all the classes help to raise achievement.
- There is not enough emphasis on the use of specific technical language.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to explain their work.
- Insufficient use of ICT is made to support science.

Commentary

52. The provision for the subject is now improving rapidly because the headteacher is leading the subject as an example for the other co-ordinators on how to effect improvement in learning and raise standards. She has established effective monitoring procedures and has used them well to build a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. These have formed a good basis for the action taken, which has contributed very well to improving provision in the subject and raising standards at Year 6. These include:
 - A new rolling programme of topics on a two-year cycle to accommodate mixed-age classes to ensure all elements of the subject are covered.
 - Setting higher expectations through modelling good teaching by example.

- Increasing the range of high quality resources for science, including a new commercial scheme for investigations and practical work.
 - Staff training provided by the headteacher in teaching of investigations and experimental science.
 - Regular evaluative feedback to all teachers on the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement reflects the headteacher's very good subject knowledge and high expectations.
 - Analysis of statutory test results to pinpoint strengths and areas for development and information is used for subsequent planning.
53. Standards achieved by pupils at Year 2 have been maintained but at Year 6 have declined since the previous inspection. In the 2003 results Year 2 pupils achieved average standards and Year 6 pupils achieved above average standards, which is a very good improvement over the previous year when results were well below average. Inspection evidence shows that pupils at Year 2 and Year 6 are on course to achieve average standards. Most pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls. Teachers' planning for lessons now includes some challenge for the higher attaining pupils and, whilst all the pupils do the same tasks, there are generally appropriate opportunities for these pupils to achieve their potential. In lessons where extended activities are provided, pupils respond well to the challenges presented, work at a brisk pace and learn well.
54. The school's introduction of the national guidance and the commercial scheme for practical work has enabled teachers to plan science work that shows clearly what pupils will learn in each class. This has provided the necessary consistency in teachers' planning and has effectively built on prior learning for many pupils.
55. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is better in the Year 4/5 class because the teacher plans interesting activities that engage pupils who consequently work with enthusiasm and concentration. Most teachers use effective behaviour management strategies, which result in good standards of behaviour. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and give constructive feedback in lessons, which deepens understanding. They provide good opportunities for pupils to plan investigations and choose methods for recording their findings and offer some choice in the resources pupils use to conduct the experiments. This contributes well to personal development. However, pupils have fewer opportunities to explain their work and use of subject-specific vocabulary is limited; this was clearly evident in pupils' work in books. There is also lack of the use of ICT to support learning in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers give good emphasis to the development of key skills to help pupils reach nationally expected levels, but more able pupils do not make the best possible progress.
- ICT is not used enough in other subjects and in classrooms to help support learning.
- Subject leadership is sound and development priorities are well linked to improvements in teaching and learning.

Commentary

56. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Direct teaching in the computer suite, supplemented by the use of laptops, and an appropriate range of opportunities to practise are helping to improve pupils' skills and achievement. There is a scheme of work to help teachers plan appropriate activities. Good teaching enables pupils of all abilities to achieve well such as when pupils in Years 3 and 4 experimented with text, changing the size, style and colour of font

in a good link with literacy. This lesson worked well because the teacher's subject knowledge was secure, her approach was confident and the pace was brisk, with high levels of challenge and good organisation also evident. As a result, pupils were interested and involved and achieved well. However, on occasions some tasks given to pupils are too prescriptive, which results in a lack of challenge for more able pupils.

57. The subject is soundly led and there are clear plans for its continued development based on an audit of what is needed to raise standards. Identified priorities are the right ones for the school. They include improving resources to extend the use of ICT through other subjects, addressing issues relating to staff confidence and competence, and developing assessment procedures to ensure that work carefully builds on learning for all pupils. However, the subject co-ordinator is not fully effective because she does not regularly monitor teaching and learning or scrutinise pupils' work to help identify and overcome weaknesses. The ICT curriculum is satisfactory overall; some areas, such as the use of the Internet to obtain information and control technology, are clearly evident but other areas are not given enough emphasis, such as exchanging information through e-mail.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

58. Pupils do not use their ICT skills enough. Younger pupils use computers to write a sentence about themselves and write 'autumn' poems, but there is very little evidence of word-processing skills being used to practise skills in literacy, geography and history. Some teachers make increasing use of the Internet in subjects such as history, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 find out about the ancient Greeks. Older pupils use spreadsheets in mathematics to present findings about the areas and perimeters of shapes. However, there are too few examples of ICT work on display or recorded in pupils' books. Classroom computers are not used enough to support and extend learning in other subjects. The school recognises that the use of ICT to assist teaching and learning requires further development, especially in English and mathematics.

HUMANITIES

Geography and History

Provision in history and geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The development of important skills is given emphasis in both subjects, with some first-hand experiences and local visits to help bring them to life.

Commentary

59. No lessons were seen in geography and only a small number in history. Judgements about pupils' standards have been made by scrutiny of pupils' completed work and discussions with teachers and pupils.
60. Pupils reach average standards at Years 2 and 6 in some areas of geography and history. They make sound progress in developing their knowledge of different places and of the past. For example, in geography by Year 6 they know about the water cycle, and can name some important rivers. In history by Year 6, pupils make comparisons between Athens and Sparta in work on ancient Greeks. However, in both subjects pupils of different abilities are usually given the same work, which prevents some pupils, mostly the more able, from making the best possible gains in learning.

61. Teachers use local historical landmarks and the immediate locality well for the development of enquiry skills in history and mapping skills in geography, which make the experiences meaningful and generate interest and curiosity, and as a result pupils learn well. For example, Year 2 pupils in history visit the village memorial in work about Remembrance Day. In geography, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use maps to locate leisure facilities in the local area.
62. There is a good range of historical objects to support learning in history, which helps to motivate and interest pupils. Visits, such as to Dukes Barn and Ewden water treatment works, help to bring learning to life for pupils. However, there are too few examples which give pupils opportunities to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in both subjects. The school is aware that there are no consistent approaches in both subjects for assessing pupils' progress in the development of knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school.

Religious education

Provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is below the standard indicated in the locally agreed syllabus and standards have declined since the last inspection.
- Insufficient curriculum time is allocated to the subject, resulting in pupils' limited knowledge and understanding of major world faiths.
- Insufficient time is provided to develop pupils' written skills.
- The subject plan does not take sufficient account of pupils' needs in mixed age classes.

Commentary

63. In most classes insufficient time is given to the teaching of religious education. As a result, pupils have too little time for writing, limited opportunities to reflect on and consolidate their learning, and also reduced scope for revision. Because the subject plan does not effectively address the needs of mixed age classes, the school is not well placed to ensure that pupils access all aspects of the agreed syllabus, or build new knowledge and understanding in a consistent way. Hence, by Year 6, pupils experience significant gaps in their learning of major world religions and achieve unsatisfactorily. The scheme of work does not closely follow the agreed syllabus. Some religions receive substantial focus, whilst others receive minimal coverage in both time and emphasis. By Year 6, this lack of consistency results in pupils having a confused understanding of religions, for example, which religions are associated with specific artefacts, holy books or places of worship.
64. In Years 1 and 2, teachers place good emphasis on the teaching of Christianity, so that pupils know the significance of the key festivals of Christmas and Easter. However, lack of appropriate opportunities to broaden this provision results in older pupils having limited understanding of the importance of a faith to a believer or how this affects their daily life. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to use computers in their work, for example in word processing or through use of CD-ROMs. This reduces the scope of their learning and the development of skills of enquiry.
65. In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory. Because most teachers manage pupils effectively, pupils listen attentively and show respect for others' views. The main weakness in teaching is the limited number of strategies used to engage pupils' interest and motivation. This results in pupils being passive and using little effort to contribute ideas. Teachers' planning is mostly a list of activities, failing to identify key learning objectives and lacking appropriate assessment of pupils' achievement.

66. In a more effective lesson in the Year 4/5 class about the Good Samaritan, the teacher used drama effectively to develop pupils' understanding of a victim's feelings. The pupils became enthusiastic learners as they planned and performed group frieze frames, co-operating well and gaining deeper understanding of the teachings of Jesus. Sufficient time allocation enabled pupils to revise learning through written jottings.
67. The school provides opportunities for pupils to visit the local church and chapel but there are no planned visits to other places of worship, and limited visitors from different faith communities to deepen understanding and raise pupils' awareness of the diversity of beliefs and cultures.
68. There has been insufficient monitoring and evaluation of pupils' achievements in religious education, so that inconsistencies in subject planning and curriculum time allocations have not been addressed. A new co-ordinator has already evaluated the strengths and weaknesses in provision but has had insufficient time to take action.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only one lesson was seen in art and design and one in physical education; no lessons were seen in design and technology or music. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors spoke to co-ordinators about their work and looked at work in books and on display in art and design and in design and technology.

The school continues to place high emphasis on making good provision for **art and design**. It is evident from the work on display, teachers' planning and the small sample of work seen that pupils are provided with varied and interesting work. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. An after-school art club and the creative arts club are attended well by many pupils and help them to explore a range of media, learn new art techniques and practise skills. Pupils showed a high level of interest and worked with enjoyment and enthusiasm. Visiting artists, an annual art week and community involvement all support pupils' development in the subject. Monitoring procedures are used effectively to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses. In the one lesson seen, teaching was satisfactory and work was linked well to the history topic on the ancient Greeks. Direct teaching of techniques in pencil work helped pupils to convey their ideas effectively, showing well-developed observational skills.

In **design and technology** very little work was available for scrutiny. Discussion with the co-ordinator and the school's analysis of its provision for the subject both indicate that there has been little improvement in the subject since the previous inspection when standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 were below average. The co-ordinator has just taken over the responsibility, and as a small school with long-term staff absences over the past few years, there has been little opportunity to focus on developing the subject. The school has changed from using national guidance to adopting a commercial scheme, which has generated renewed interest and enthusiasm in the subject. Resources for the subject are adequate.

In **physical education**, the two classes with Years 4 to 6 have swimming lessons for one term, and last year most year 6 pupils could swim at least 25 metres. A range of interesting activities enriches the curriculum. There are currently clubs for football and mat ball, which enable pupils to develop skills beyond the school day. Visits from local football and rugby coaches and involvement with the village cricket club enhance provision. There are good links with the high school to which most pupils transfer at age eleven. As part of a current national initiative, a visiting physical education teacher works weekly with two classes, sharing expertise with class teachers, and developing good links with the secondary school. A new co-ordinator has just been appointed but has yet to evaluate the effectiveness of provision. There are comprehensive subject guidelines, giving good support to teachers.

In the one observed dance lesson, illustrating the story *The Quest*, Year 2 pupils demonstrated standards appropriate for their age, using realistic facial expressions and body stance to portray feelings. They showed sound control of body movement, adopting moments of stillness and adapting

movement in response to the story. Teaching was satisfactory overall, with some good features. For example, the chosen story had sufficient variety of situations to promote a good range of stimuli, such as moving clumsily in heavy armour, pushing against a heavy door, running across hot ground, and climbing quickly. Pupils knew the story well and were enthusiastic learners. The teacher made effective use of demonstrations of good individual pupils' performance to help others adapt their movements. The overall pace of the lesson was lessened by the need to settle pupils between activities.

In **music**, since the last inspection a suitable curriculum plan has been devised that addresses the needs of mixed age classes. However, lack of guidance about time allocations has resulted in some inconsistencies between classes. Interesting visitors enrich the subject. For example, after listening to a live performance by a banjo player, Year 2/3 pupils produced detailed labelled drawings of the banjo. Music is used appropriately to support work in other subjects. For example, as part of their history topic in the class for Year 4/5, pupils were taught Tudor dances and songs. Pupils have suitable opportunities to sing in school performances at Christmas and Harvest, but a lack of opportunity to sing in the daily assemblies reduces the scope of this provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

There was not enough evidence to report on the individual components of this aspect of provision. Discussions were held with the co-ordinator and the pupils. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its work. There is a good programme of activities including work on diet, health, sex, drugs and personal safety. Through this programme pupils are supported well to develop a safe and healthy lifestyle, gain in confidence and practise their social skills. The school council provides pupils with opportunities to witness democracy at first hand. Assemblies make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4

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	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

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).