

INSPECTION REPORT

HOMERSWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Welwyn Garden City

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117252

Headteacher: Mr J W Drew

Lead inspector: Mrs R S Rodger

Dates of inspection: 15-18 September 2003

Inspection number: 256497

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:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	203
School address:	Kirklands Welwyn Garden City Hertfordshire
Postcode:	AL8 7RF
Telephone number:	01707 320610
Fax number:	01707 371293
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Whyatt
Date of previous inspection:	June 1 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Homerswood Primary School is an average-sized school situated on the outskirts of Welwyn Garden City in Hertfordshire. The school provides for children between the ages of three and eleven. This includes a breakfast, lunchtime and after-school club. As well as a nursery open daily in the morning there is a pre-school on the same site that provides for children under five in the afternoons. There are currently no pupils with English as an additional language. Most pupils are from UK heritage with a small number of mixed race pupils and Asian and Black British pupils. There are 30 pupils with special educational needs, including two pupils with a statement of special educational need; this is a broadly average proportion of pupils. Special educational needs are mainly moderate and specific learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school at other times is below average. An average proportion of pupils are eligible for a free school meal. The school serves an area of mixed housing. Attainment on entry to the nursery is above average. The school received an achievement award in recognition of the good achievement of pupils in the national tests in 2002. It was awarded Investors in People and Healthy Schools awards in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10347	Mrs R S Rodger	Lead inspector	English, geography and history, special educational needs
9958	Mr T Page	Lay inspector	
23453	Mrs C L Cressey	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, mathematics, religious education, art and design and music
30506	Mr R Bowers	Team inspector	Science, design and technology, information and communication technology, physical education

The inspection contractor was:

PBM Brookbridge & Bedford Ltd
13A Market Place
Uttoxeter
Staffordshire
ST14 8HY

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is **effective in some aspects of its work**, but overall improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. It provides unsatisfactory value for money. The school experiences high levels of staff turnover.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the very effective contribution of the governors in setting the future direction of the school;
- the unsatisfactory management of the headteacher;
- pupils in Year 6 underachieve compared to their above average standards at the end of Year 2;
- the amount of unsatisfactory teaching is too high, although teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good;
- the curriculum is effectively enriched through sports, residential trips and day visits;
- the unsatisfactory provision in the Foundation Stage¹;
- the strong caring ethos created by the leadership of the headteacher;
- provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the previous inspection;
- attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

Although the school provides an acceptable standard of education, nevertheless it has serious weaknesses in the amount of unsatisfactory teaching, the underachievement of a group of pupils and aspects of the management of the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

The results in the table above refer to pupils who have left the school. The national test results for 2003 were average in English and below average in mathematics and science, although the proportion of pupils achieving the high levels was well above average in English, above average in science and below average in mathematics. The results compared to schools in similar circumstances were below average in English, mathematics and science. Achievement overall is **unsatisfactory**. Based on the above average standard of attainment shown by the children when they start in the nursery achievement is unsatisfactory by the end of the reception year as the children do not achieve the nationally agreed early learning goals in communication, language and literacy or mathematical development. As a result of good and better teaching standards are above average by Year 2 and achievement is good in reading and mathematics. It is satisfactory in writing. By Year 6 standards are average, but there is significant unsatisfactory achievement in the current Year 6 class in English and mathematics. Standards and achievement in science are satisfactory. Standards and achievement in all other subjects are satisfactory. Standards and achievement in ICT have improved and are now satisfactory.

¹ Foundation Stage is the period pupils are in the nursery and the reception class

Personal relationships, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **satisfactory**. Behaviour in and around the school is generally satisfactory. It is good in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are well-respected and given a range of responsibilities.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory** overall. Teaching and learning are **unsatisfactory** in the Foundation Stage and in Year 6. They are consistently good in Years 1 and 2 because pupils are challenged and instructions and demonstrations clearly show what pupils have to do. Assessment information is used well in some classes to identify pupils who are underachieving or achieving better than expected. Weak subject knowledge, insufficient support for lower-attaining pupils and ineffective classroom management strategies are features of the unsatisfactory teaching. Higher attaining pupils learn satisfactorily because they are generally keener and have the basic skills to enable them to get on. The curriculum is satisfactory. All subjects are taught, but opportunities to promote literacy and numeracy in other subjects are not clearly planned. A wide range of out of school activities including, residential visits and sports events very effectively enriches the curriculum. Accommodation and the use of resources are good. Arrangements for the care, welfare and health and safety of the pupils are satisfactory. The care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. Links with parents are satisfactory. Links with the community, other schools and colleges are good. There are appropriate procedures in place to gather the views of pupils through the school council.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. Leadership by the headteacher is satisfactory. He has created a caring, inclusive school that values the pupils highly. However, there are aspects of his management that are unsatisfactory. Communication with the governors is a weakness. Procedures and protocols required by the school are sometimes very slow to come into effect. Staff deployment is ineffective. Key members of staff are keen to innovate but not always encouraged to do so. The governance of the school is very good because the governors are well informed. They are conscientious in their pursuit of excellence and meeting their statutory duties as well as providing a supportive role for the staff.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views are satisfactory. They value the ways in which the school encourages their children to become independent and to work hard. They are less happy about the information the school provides about their children's progress, the amount of homework they are expected to do and the bullying and harassment of some children. Pupils like the school and want it to stay the same.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the management of the school;
- Improve the quality of teaching;
- Take steps to eradicate the causes of underachievement in Year 6;
- Provide a higher level of challenge for the children in the Foundation Stage;
- Improve attendance and punctuality.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure all information required is included in the prospectus.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in the Foundation Stage, based on the children's above average attainment on entry to the nursery and below average attainment when they start in Year 1 is unsatisfactory. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good and for pupils in Years 3 to 6 it is satisfactory in Years 3 to 5 but unsatisfactory in Year 6. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics are above average in Years 1 and 2 as a consequence of the good teaching the pupils receive. Standards are average in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 5, although currently pupils in Year 6 are seriously underachieving, based on their prior attainment at the end of Year 2 and their attainment is below average, as a result of serious disruption to their teaching throughout their time in Years 3 to 5 and serious weaknesses in their current teaching. Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are good in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
- By Year 6, pupils underachieve in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils achieve satisfactorily in ICT throughout the school compared to the last inspection.
- Standards and achievement by the end of the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16 (15.7)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.4 (12.7)	14.4 (14.3)
mathematics	17.6 (16.2)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (25.6)	27 (27)
mathematics	27.5 (24.7)	26.7(26.6)
science	29.5 (28.4)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The results above relate to pupils who have left the school. The results of the 2003 national test results shows that there was a fall overall in standards in English, mathematics and science for pupils achieving the average levels, although the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in English was well above average. In Year 2, the 2003 national results show an improvement in reading and writing, but less so in mathematics.
2. Standards in lessons in Years 1 and 2 are good in English and mathematics. Pupils achieve well as a result of good and very good teaching. In reading, pupils are encouraged to use ICT

to learn key sounds and words. They read together in class with good expression and learn to project their voice well. Letter formation is accurate and higher attaining pupils spell accurately. Standards currently in Year 6 are unsatisfactory because presentation of work is untidy, and sentence structure and use of common grammatical conventions are insecure in the work of too many pupils. This low level of presentation and care is not evident in the work completed by these pupils when they were in Year 5 last year. They showed then that they understood how to write formal and informal letters and to put forward different points of view and write alternative endings to a story. Grammar use was accurate and presentation and content of their work much better.

3. In mathematics, Year 2 pupils achieve above average standards and are confident in adding three numbers to 20 and accurately add two numbers mentally. Year 6 pupils understand decimals to two places, but pupils with special educational needs are unsupported and make limited progress because too little account is taken of their needs. Standards in science are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 3 to 5, but unsatisfactorily in Year 6.
4. Standards and achievement in Years 3 to 5 are more secure as a result of stronger teaching and better attitudes shown to their work by the pupils. Children in the Foundation Stage are not achieving as well as they should. Despite several children new to the nursery this term demonstrating high communication and mathematical standards, for example, one boy confidently counts to 20 as he launches a rocket and a group of girls talk with confidence about their own lives and pets they have, this capability is generally not built on effectively in the planned tasks that do not differentiate between the needs of three and four year olds in the nursery.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily overall in English and mathematics and attain commensurate to their level of ability. Good achievement is evident, as a result of good intervention and support by teaching assistants in some classes.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Attitudes are good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Behaviour is good in Years 1 and 2 and it is satisfactory elsewhere. Older pupils have difficulty in maintaining self-discipline when teaching is weak. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is effective in building confidence and self esteem amongst its pupils.
- Relationships are good. This leads to the school being a friendly, considerate and caring community largely free of oppressive behaviour.
- Pupils take a keen interest in school life, they understand the need for rules, and are able to take responsibility.
- Attendance has suffered from a large element of term-time holiday absence as well as an exceptional level of illness earlier in the year.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	92.4
National data	94.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.8
National data	0.5

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

6. The headteacher's leadership has been effective in creating a caring and friendly community based on mutual respect and trust in which pupils quickly build confidence and self-esteem. Responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires give a clear indication that pupils like school. The majority of pupils display good attitudes to learning but, when tested, they do not possess sufficient self discipline to maintain acceptable behaviour in the face of weak teaching. Attendance has deteriorated since the last inspection due to genuine illness and a significant element of authorised holiday absence. While there are good absence monitoring procedures in place, the promotion of good attendance, and punctuality, has not proved to be effective.
7. Behaviour overall is satisfactory. Outside the classrooms pupils' behaviour is at least good; pupils are polite and courteous, and quick to offer help. They take a pride in their surroundings, take care of property, and drop very little litter. There was no oppressive behaviour seen during the inspection and this is consistent with pupils' own perceptions.
8. Pupils' personal development is good. They are interested in different cultures and support a range of charities that help people less fortunate than themselves. In the last year they performed their Christmas concert in St. John's Church, and visited a synagogue in Welwyn Garden City. Pupils are being provided with appropriate experiences to prepare them for life in a multi-cultural society, and are developing their citizenship skills well.
9. There is a democratically elected school council, and elected 'buddies' who act as befrienders. Two teaching assistants support the school council so that it can be distanced from any possible teacher influence. Class councils feed issues into the school council where they are debated and passed on to management. There is an understanding that many requests may have a cost, and members accept explanations for those that cannot be accommodated. An excellent example of the school's trust of the council, and an indication of its maturity, is found in the established procedure for school council members to interview applicants for teaching posts. A recent appointee spoke of courteous but incisive questions that prompted her to re-examine and confirm her reasons for teaching! The council's terms of reference are clearly well in advance of most primary schools and confirm the school's and particularly the headteacher's respect for the pupils. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted well in class and whole school sharing assemblies with the outcomes evident in pupils' appreciation of their surroundings and the care they take to keep them that way. In a Reception class there was a definite 'wow' moment when pupils observed how much their dough had risen while it had been resting prior to being baked into bread. Provision for moral development is satisfactory. Pupils' know right from wrong and can discuss issues openly in school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall although there is good and very good teaching in some classes and as a result pupils learn effectively. Overall, there is too much unsatisfactory teaching in Year 6 and in the Foundation Stage. This is a serious weakness. The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory overall and the provision for out of school activities is a strength. Care, guidance and support for pupils and the partnership with parents are satisfactory. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are good.

Teaching and learning

Overall the quality of teaching is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2.

- The teaching of the newly qualified teachers is, at least good, and sometimes very good.
- Teaching assistants contribute well to the teaching of ICT.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- Teaching in Year 6 is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2 (5%)	14 (41%)	14 (41%)	4(12%)	1 (3%)	0

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

10. The amount of good or better teaching in the school is too low. Management decisions relating to the deployment of staff are unsatisfactory and contributing to serious underachievement by particular groups of pupils in the school. In good lessons, pupils are involved in their learning and know what to do to improve their work. They are interested and keen to learn. Behaviour is good and pupils are encouraged to contribute in lessons, especially in whole class sessions. Newly qualified teachers use their good subject knowledge effectively to support and challenge pupils. Expectations in the good or better lessons are high. A system to track pupils' progress year by year is in place and provides detailed information that is used to identify pupils who have met and those that have not met their end of year targets in English, mathematics and science. This effective system has not been developed to include informing the pupils of their targets for improvement and so give them greater responsibility for their learning.
11. Teaching in 15 per cent of lessons is unsatisfactory or poor. Insufficient attention is given to the possible outcomes of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. As a result, sometimes they are inadequately challenged and teaching does not build on the high attainment demonstrated by the new children coming to the nursery. The needs of the higher attaining and older children due to start school next term are not met effectively and too much time is spent in aimless play.
12. Unsatisfactory aspects of teaching in Years 3 to 6 include: weaknesses in subject knowledge; whole class sessions where the pupils have too little opportunity to contribute by explaining their understanding or misconceptions; and weaknesses in classroom control and the organisation and management of lessons. Training is taking place to improve the unsatisfactory teaching in Year 6.

The curriculum

13. The quality and range of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught in full but there are significant weaknesses in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage. The provision of extra-curricular activities is a major strength of the school and makes a good contribution to the quality of the teaching and learning. Overall, the accommodation and the use of resources make a positive contribution to pupils' learning but there are some weaknesses in the strategic deployment of staff.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum places considerable emphasis on nurturing high quality personal and social skills and this has very positive effect on pupils' attitudes to learning.

- A very good range of clubs, sporting activities and visits enriches the statutory curriculum and enhances personal and social skills.
 - Activities in the Foundation Stage lack sufficient challenge.
 - Accommodation is good.
 - The deployment of support staff is good but there are weaknesses in the deployment of some teachers which adversely affects learning.
14. The curriculum often lacks sufficient interest and challenge to meet the needs of children in the nursery and reception classes. Planning, particularly for tasks and activities children choose for themselves, does not provide a clear framework for what children are expected to learn in relation to the nationally agreed stepping stones and early learning goals. As a result too few children attain the goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
 15. There is a systematic whole school approach to the planning of the teaching and learning and, in general, the teachers use nationally recommended schemes of work to help them plan lessons. This provides the staff with a sound framework to promote continuity within the curriculum. Links with other subjects are evident and add interest and enrichment to pupils' learning and there are appropriate opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy and literacy skills in other subjects.
 16. Arrangements for pupils' personal, health and sex education are good and are underpinned by the school's caring ethos and values. There are agreed policies for health, sex and drugs education and quality time is made available within lessons to develop these areas in ways which are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils. Well-planned themes on significant issues, such as 'friendship', self esteem and achievement are introduced in assemblies and followed through in class lessons. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory.
 17. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is satisfactory. All policies have been amended to ensure they take into account the needs of pupils who learn at different rates, have different cultural backgrounds and learning styles. Booster classes and additional literacy provide support for pupils who learn at a slower rate. However, more able pupils do not always receive sufficient support, for example through well-planned extension tasks to help them reach the higher levels. The school has recently introduced 'brain based learning', which promotes a range of different teaching and learning styles. As yet the school has not monitored or evaluated this innovation to check if it is meeting the needs of different groups of learners and raising standards.
 18. There is a good range of out of school clubs and visits to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of what they are being taught in school and to promote their personal and social development. Clubs include football, netball, art, choir and drama. All are very well attended and all members of staff, including non-teaching and support staff, give very generously of their time to extend pupils' interests and skills. Residential trips are available for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and there is almost complete take up. They are carefully planned to link topics being taught at the time and are effective in deepening pupils' learning as well as developing independent and social skills. Pupils value these trips and talk animatedly about their experiences and what they have learned. The school has satisfactory links with other schools and groups. Links with the local pre-school enables children's entry into school to be a positive experience. Before pupils transfer to the secondary school, information on their progress is exchanged and pupils are able to enjoy time at their new school to familiarise themselves with routines and staff to ensure a happy and secure transfer. The curriculum prepares pupils appropriately for the next stage of their education.
 19. The accommodation is good and the building is very well suited to the learning opportunities provided. Resources overall are satisfactory. The outside play areas for the Foundation Stage are of a particularly high quality and enhance children's physical development well. The whole

building is very well maintained to a high standard of cleanliness. The teaching and support staff work well together for the benefit of the pupils and teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support pupils who learn at a slower rate. The deployment of less experienced staff in key areas limits pupils' learning and they do not achieve as well as they should.

Care, guidance and support

20. Overall, the provision for pupils' care, welfare health and safety is satisfactory. While there are examples of good practice, there are important matters to address, and these have been notified to the school. In school, there is a warm and caring environment where pupils are valued as individuals and their views are respected. Pupils build secure and trusting relationships with adults who they know they can turn to for help. Induction procedures are good. Except for the Foundation Stage, academic support is satisfactory; marking is helpful but pupils are given little information about levels of attainment or set targets for improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures are secure.
- Pastoral support is stronger than academic support because attainment levels and targets are infrequently shared with pupils unless they have individual education plans.
- Induction of pupils is sensitive and caring but unsatisfactory assessment in the Foundation Stage leads to a lack of challenge, and is a cause of underachievement.

Commentary

21. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and has received appropriate training. Staff members are clear about their responsibilities, and the school's procedures. Regular risk assessments are carried out, and satisfactory checks are undertaken on the school's equipment. Records of accidents and illness are maintained, there is a first aid base in school, and some midday supervisors carry a first-aid pack with them in the playgrounds.
22. Pastoral support is good and strongly imbedded in the school's caring ethos. Significant information and details of medical conditions are kept in pupils' files. However, although teachers keep written notes of some potential concerns and can act swiftly to support pupils, there is no requirement to do so. This could jeopardise ongoing support if key staff members were absent and the information was not to hand. Academic support suffers from unsatisfactory assessment in the Foundation Stage, and insufficient rigour being given to inform pupils of their attainment levels and targets for improvement further up the school.
23. Pupils who have special educational needs are satisfactorily supported. There are satisfactory links with Monks Walk, the main receiving secondary school. Teachers exchange information about pupils and the curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity to visit their allocated secondary schools on 'move up' day.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

24. Links with parents are satisfactory. They hold positive views of the school. The main issues which concern fewer than one fifth of parents who returned their questionnaires are bullying and harassment, information about progress, and homework. Pupils also hold positive views although Year 6 pupils were less sure that there was someone in school who they could turn to. The school is open and accessible with the headteacher taking a delight in meeting and greeting parents dropping off and picking up their children. Parents' views are sought and acted upon but information about pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. Links with the community, and other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are positively invited to come to sharing assemblies where pupils' achievements are celebrated.
- The school arranges termly consultation meetings but information about pupils' standards and progress is not provided. Open days are poorly attended.
- There is a good range of support available to parents ranging from parenting skills to information technology courses.
- The community makes good use of the school premises; some outside provision is available for pupils before and after school, and during the school holidays.

Commentary

25. Parents are in almost total agreement that their children like school. Views of the leadership of the school, expressed at the parents' meeting and in written comments, are diverse. Parents' concerns are not always dealt with as promptly as they would wish. Communications show that parents are welcome in school to celebrate pupil's success but they are not fully informed about their children's progress. Pupils' annual reports provide only a brief commentary on work covered during the year, few targets, and no national attainment comparisons. This is compounded by the school not including national test results in the prospectus and governors' annual report to enable parents to compare the school's achievements. Reporting on pupils' standards and progress is therefore unsatisfactory.
26. The school's links with the community are good. There is a breakfast club and an after-school club managed by others but serving the community, including some pupils at the school. The school premises are hired out most days of the week to community groups and clubs. Parents have access to parenting support from the local primary care trust, and information technology classes have been provided at Monks Walk School.
27. Links with local schools and colleges have led to trainee teachers working in the school, and work experience places have been filled by secondary school students. The good links which have been established with Monks Walk support pupils effectively and help remove any apprehension they may have about moving on to secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. There are good aspects of leadership by senior staff who lead by example. Management is unsatisfactory. Governance is very good. A high staff turnover has been a barrier to raising achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body are the driving force in the school. They are rigorous in their pursuit of excellence and are hampered in some aspects by the slowness of the headteacher to respond to their requests and lack of communication about issues pertinent to their role.
- The headteacher shows a strong commitment and a high level of care towards the staff and pupils.
- The school is relatively expensive and is not yet focusing on sufficiently achieving best value overall.
- Despite considerable support from the LEA in the past two years to help improve teaching and learning there is too much mediocre teaching in the school that leads to unsatisfactory achievement by some groups of pupils.

Commentary

28. The governing body bring a high level of rigour to their role and set a clear vision and direction. Governors are well informed and relentless in their pursuit of excellence and meeting their

statutory duties as well as providing a supportive role for the staff. They are assiduous in holding the headteacher to account for the performance of the school and set high standards. They are kept well-informed through the links made by governors to subject leaders and regular meetings with the deputy headteacher. A review of the quality of information available to parents has resulted in a consistent style in the prospectus and other documentation. The governors are not always provided with the information they need in order to carry out their monitoring and evaluation role. This is an area of tension between the governors and the headteacher that is not yet resolved.

29. The headteacher has a clear sense of direction for the school in terms of the friendly and caring ethos he has created. It is supportive of staff and pupils alike. Strategies to support teaching and learning, such as 'brain gym' are firmly embedded into teaching practices, although no steps have been taken to evaluate them. The school does not perform as well as other similar schools in some aspects of its work. Year 6 pupils did not meet their targets in the 2003 national tests. Results in the 2003 national tests fell compared to 2002 in English and mathematics and are likely to be below average in English, although the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 is good. Inspection evidence points to serious underachievement by the current Year 6 pupils throughout their time in Years 3 to 6 that is only now being tackled by the senior management of the school. Arrangements to check the work of the pupils and the quality of teaching are satisfactory.
30. Despite considerable support from the LEA after the review carried out in November 2002 that identified the school as one causing concern, the impact of that support has been minimal. Appraisal arrangements through performance management have slipped as a result of the headteacher not keeping to the timescales set by the governors. Teaching is not as good as it could be. Unwise decisions about the deployment of staff are having an adverse affect on the achievement of groups of pupils. The headteacher has been in post for some time and has been working with the current governing body for two years. In that time they have appraised themselves thoroughly of their roles and responsibilities and have had to find out for themselves what happens in the school. This shift in emphasis on accountability to the governors causes some degree of tension between the headteacher and the governors which sometimes manifests itself in lack of communication and the unintentional withholding of information from the governors. This is a serious weakness that is inhibiting the development of the school.
31. The governors generally meet their statutory requirements very well. There are one or two minor omissions in the school prospectus, for example, comparative national test data is not included. Although the chair is relatively inexperienced as a governor he has equipped himself well with the level of knowledge required to ensure the school meets all statutory requirements. The headteacher has been slow to respond to legitimate concerns of the governing body and does not adhere to some statutory procedures. The priority given to raising standards has not had sufficient impact as a result of unsatisfactory decisions relating to the deployment of staff. A race equality policy is in place and it is reported that the school keeps a log of racist incidents and reports regularly to the governing body that there are no incidents to report.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	517,524
Total expenditure	522,013
Expenditure per pupil	2,571

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	14,218
Balance carried forward to the next	9,729

32. The most recent financial audit completed over a year ago made several recommendations, all of which have been dealt with. The school secretary manages the day-to-day affairs of the school efficiently. The cost to educate a child at the school is above average. The school seeks to achieve best value for money. The school carries a moderate surplus.
33. Taking into account the relatively favourable context of the school, the unsatisfactory standards by Year 6, the unsatisfactory quality of teaching and some weaknesses in management, the satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils and the unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection, the overall effectiveness of the school is unsatisfactory. Based on the expenditure for each pupil which is above the national average and the overall unsatisfactory effectiveness of the school the value for money provided by the school is unsatisfactory.

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 unsatisfactory. The children enter the nursery with attainment above that expected for their ages and a significant number have particularly well developed speaking and listening skills. However, this good start is not built on sufficiently well in the nursery and reception classes. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall and as a result the majority of children do not achieve as well as they should. The curriculum often lacks sufficient interest and challenge to meet the needs of young children. As a result, too few children attain the goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Teaching to promote physical development and personal and social development is better and is satisfactory enabling most children to achieve satisfactorily and reach the early learning goals in these areas. The school recognises that there are areas of weakness in the provision for the Foundation Stage and has implemented a number of strategies to improve provision. It has been very successful in improving the accommodation for children under five. However, improvement overall since the last inspection is unsatisfactory and weaknesses in planning identified in the previous Ofsted report have not been addressed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have an insecure understanding of how young children learn and of the importance of well planned, high quality play to develop children's early reading, writing and imaginative and creative skills and ideas.
- Insufficient emphasis is placed on providing exciting and challenging first hand experiences linked closely to what children need to learn to reach the early learning goals.
- Planning lacks clear learning intentions linked to the early learning goals. As a result staff miss opportunities to extend children's learning through working with them in well-planned activities of high quality, particularly those which children have chosen for themselves.
- Assessments are not consistently linked to the early learning goals and records are not used as effectively as they could be to provide more challenging activities for children as they move through nursery into the reception class to enable children to achieve well.
- Tasks are often not well matched to the different attainment levels and children who learn at a slower rate are engaged in the same tasks as those who are more able. Activities are too often mundane and children in nursery and reception are seen engaged in similar low-level tasks such as ladling water or building sand castles.
- The role of the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage is under-developed and insufficient time is available to provide in-class support for less experienced staff.
- Outdoor play provision is of a particularly high standard.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are good and as a result children feel valued and secure and behave well.
- They have good levels of independence and work well with each other.
- Children's play is sometimes boisterous or repetitive due to a lack of challenge and planned adult intervention.

Commentary

34. Children enjoy coming to school and even the youngest newcomers to nursery leave their parents and carers happily. The majority are very eager and enthusiastic learners. Children are

encouraged to be polite and kind to each other and reflect on their feelings, actions and experiences. Staff members provide good role models on how to solve simple conflicts, such as whose turn it is to go on a bike. Children are learning to share, take turns and co-operate, such as when working in the imaginative play areas or choosing a wheeled toy. In both classes children are encouraged to plan and choose their own activities. Emphasis is placed on helping children to develop an understanding of acceptable behaviour and of what is right and wrong and most children behave well in the nursery and reception class.

35. Because tasks and activities are not consistently as well planned as they could be there are instances of some children, usually boys, becoming over-exuberant, and there is little evidence of learning being moved on at an acceptable rate.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teacher directed tasks are appropriate for developing children's early reading and writing skills.
- Insufficient opportunities for children to develop and use these skills independently in activities they choose for themselves limit their achievement.
- A love of books and reading is not fostered sufficiently well.
- Teachers too often miss opportunities to interact and intervene to extend children's communication skills which are already well developed from support at home.

Commentary

36. Where teaching is more structured with clear learning intentions, such as group times in the nursery and the literacy hour in the reception, children's achievement is satisfactory. Games and activities systematically introduce children to letter names and initial sounds and older children are learning to write letters accurately and to complete three letter words. In the nursery, there are too few activities which involve children making marks on paper and there are insufficient opportunities for older and more able children to write their own simple sentences using recognisable letters, sounds and words. A range of role-play situations are available but staff do not engage in these situations often enough to help children explore new ideas, develop new and exciting vocabulary and structures and use their reading and writing skills independently. Resources are not high quality and lack challenge and there are too few activities to encourage children to read and write during their play. In the reception class, whilst most children have a reading scheme book reading areas are lacking in comfort and books are poorly displayed and not easily available and this limits children's enjoyment of books and their progress towards independent reading.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teacher directed tasks are appropriate for developing children's early mathematical skills.
- A lack of well planned opportunities to use and develop these skills in practical situations and in other areas of learning limits children's learning.
- Teachers too often miss opportunities to interact and intervene to extend children's mathematical skills through imaginative play.

Commentary

37. In nursery and reception classes, formal activities and games are used appropriately to develop mathematical understanding. Elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are implemented in the reception classes and children respond well to the mental and oral part of the lessons. In these lessons teaching is lively and resources, such as puppets, number lines and games are effective in developing children's counting skills. Children are learning to count to ten and beyond. A lack of effective planning results in teachers missing opportunities to encourage children to explore and consider size, shape, and position, when playing with two and three-dimensional shapes, small world toys, or emptying and filling containers in the sand and water play. There is little evidence of progression in these tasks from nursery to reception. Members of staff do not plan for children to extend their knowledge and understanding of number, space and measurement through more stimulating resources and more focused play activities. For example, goods in the 'shops' in both nursery and reception were not priced and children were given no guidance, prompts or tasks to focus their learning and extend their thinking.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Insufficient evidence was gathered to make a judgement on all aspects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Tasks lack challenge to reinforce and extend scientific ideas and are over directed by staff.
- There is little evidence of progress between classes particularly in those tasks children choose for themselves.

Commentary

38. Children work independently with a range of construction toys but tasks lack focus and do not extend learning sufficiently across the classes. Tasks are not sufficiently well planned to extend children's understanding of scientific ideas and they are not encouraged to use their literacy or mathematical skills to record their observations. For example, children enthusiastically tried to identify different drinks through taste and smell but teachers missed opportunities to provide labels such as 'sweet' and 'sour'. They were not encouraged to record their findings through drawing or making a simple graph. This resulted in a well-conceived task failing to reinforce and extend children's knowledge and understanding of the words and extend their literacy and numeracy skills. There are few opportunities for children to choose materials for themselves when making models. Teachers control materials and direct children which joining materials to use and where to place them limiting children's understanding of design and making.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outdoor equipment and furniture are of a good standard to develop children's skills appropriately and members of staff use the resources well as an extension to the classroom.
- When using the apparatus children show confidence and good control over their bodies.
- Some of the opportunities provided are recreational rather than planned for improving children's physical skills.

Commentary

39. In the nursery and reception there is a good range of large and small equipment available on a daily basis to help children develop their physical skills. Children show good control over their bodies as they run, jump, skip, hop, balance, climb and slide on a variety of interesting and challenging equipment. They manoeuvre wheeled toys well avoiding obstacles and each other with considerable skill. In the reception classes, children have structured lessons to promote their physical development. In addition, they use the nursery provision to extend their skills further. Because of some weaknesses in planning, children's natural exuberance and energy are not always directed well and play can become boisterous and lacking in focus. Children experience an appropriate range of activities to develop their skills in handling tools, construction toys and malleable materials and show considerable dexterity when handling tools, brushes, scissors and small toys.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Insufficient evidence was gathered to make a judgement on all aspects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy role play but opportunities are missed to stimulate children's imaginations and to extend their ideas and skills.
- There are suitable activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour but these often lack sufficient challenge and focus to extend learning.

Commentary

40. A range of role-play situations is provided in the nursery and reception classes and children enjoy taking on the roles of family members, customers and shopkeepers. However, these activities are not always well resourced and do not stimulate children's imagination sufficiently well. Adults miss opportunities to interact with children in these situations and there is a lack of purpose and focus on developing and extending children's ideas and language. Children work with play dough, clay and junk materials to create two and three-dimensional pictures and models. However, these activities are often adult led and children have few opportunities to choose and explore materials for themselves. Sand and water are available for children to explore on a regular basis but the activities are often of a low quality and do not enhance children's learning.

SUBJECTS IN INFANTS AND JUNIORS

ENGLISH

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2.
- Teaching in Year 6 is poor.
- Year 6 pupils are underachieving and standards are too low.

Commentary

41. Standards in the infants are above average in speaking and listening and reading. They are average in writing. They are broadly average by the end of the juniors. 2003 national test results showed that by Year 2, pupils' attainment was above average in reading and writing. Higher achieving pupils achieved well, but there was an overall fall in the proportion achieving the national expectation compared to the previous year's results by Year 6. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and achievement is good as a result of consistently good teaching. However, progress by Year 6 is unsatisfactory. A significant number of pupils are not achieving the levels of which they are capable. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. There are no differences between the achievement of boys and girls.
42. Speaking and listening are good in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are taught to project their voice when speaking and reading. Pupils learn to take on roles and to encourage each other to take part in small group presentations. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 achieve satisfactorily overall, but less so in Year 6. Pupils talk in pairs and in a planned 'hot seating' session in Year 5, they learned to adapt their ideas and speak clearly to gather ideas about characterisation from others in the class. This was effective. However, ineffective discipline limits the achievement of Year 6 pupils although they showed good levels of interest in their discussions about Shakespearean characters.
43. Standards in reading are good in the infants. Pupils read very regularly to their parents and teaching assistants and parents hear pupils read individually in school. A home reading record effectively tracks pupils' progress. By Year 6, a number of pupils are disinterested in reading and consequently they lack motivation which has an adverse effect on their achievement. Average and lower-attaining pupils read with below average levels of understanding. Standards in writing are average by Year 2. Letters are generally well-formed and most pupils can write simple sentences. Standards currently in Year 6 are unsatisfactory because presentation of work is untidy, and sentence structure and use of common grammatical conventions are insecure in the work of too many pupils. This low level of presentation and care is not evident in the work completed by these pupils when they were in Year 5 last year. They showed then that they understood how to write formal and informal letters and to put forward different points of view and write alternative endings to a story. Grammar use was accurate and presentation and content of their work much better. However, as a result of unsatisfactory teaching pupils are underachieving. Expectations are too low and there is a lack of demonstration and explanations to help pupils understand what they need to do. This is particularly marked for the pupils with special educational needs.
44. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in the juniors but there is some poor teaching of pupils in Year 6 whose achievement is unsatisfactory. Strategies to manage misbehaviour and to motivate pupils are unsatisfactory. Expectations are too low. As a result, pupils' written work is careless and unsatisfactorily presented with basic grammatical errors commonplace in work which had previously been well-presented with a fluent, cursive handwriting style and

accurate use of a range of punctuation. Planning throughout the school is based on a consistent format and generally shows how work is matched to pupils' differing levels of ability. Detailed assessment information shows how well pupils have achieved year-by-year in the non-statutory tests. This information is used to identify pupils who need additional support via 'booster' classes in Year 6 to help them to achieve the nationally expected Level 4 in the 2004 national tests. Marking is variable, but was good when the current Year 6 pupils were in Year 5. Assessment information is not used to inform pupils individually of their targets for improvement with the result that there are limited opportunities for pupils to know what they need to do to improve.

45. Leadership of the subject is good. The link governor is well-informed and has observed the literacy hour to help develop her understanding of how the hour is structured. The co-ordinator is aware that the school is not performing well enough in the juniors and will be teaching the higher attaining Year 6 pupils in the spring term. Booster classes are currently taking place for other groups of pupils in Year 6. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. There are no planned opportunities to develop literacy across the curriculum. There is good use of drama to develop historical understanding in Year 5 and to promote confidence and speaking skills in Year 2.

MATHEMATICS

Provision is **satisfactory**.

- Teaching and learning are consistently good in the infants.
- The use of teaching assistants is effective throughout the school.
- Problem solving is given a high priority.
- Assessment is not used as effectively as it should be.
- Teaching in Year 6 is unsatisfactory.
- Higher attainers do not always achieve as well as they could.

Commentary

47. Standards in mathematics have improved significantly in the infants and more steadily in the juniors. In Year 2 standards are above average while in Year 6 they are broadly typical of those found nationally. This is similar to the 2003 national tests. Pupils make good progress in the infants and the majority of pupils achieve well with an above average number of pupils reaching the higher levels. In the juniors the school is successful in enabling pupils to reach the expected levels for their ages but less so in promoting the success of higher attaining pupils. By the time pupils reach Year 6 a significant number of higher attaining pupils are not meeting their targets and do not reach the higher levels of which they are capable. Pupils with special educational needs have clear targets and are given good support enabling them to participate fully in lessons and achieve well. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
48. Standards are good in the infants due to consistently effective teaching and good use of assessments which build well on pupils' knowledge and understanding. Of the two lessons seen one was good and one was very good. Teachers implement the National Numeracy Strategy with rigour and enthusiasm. They use a variety of methods to teach mathematical skills, including effective whole class mental sessions and probing question and answer sessions which are used very well to assess the pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. Relationships are positive and encourage pupils to 'have a go' and not to be afraid of

being wrong. Pupils respond well to this knowing they will be helped to arrive at the correct answer. Resources, such as puppets, number fans, white boards rhymes and games, add interest and provide pupils with a focus for their learning. Clear explanations and very good demonstration and reminders of mathematical strategies, such as 'hold that number in your head' or use your fingers', contribute well to pupils' success. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and attainment resulting in good discipline and standards. As a result pupils in Year 2 are becoming very competent mathematicians, showing a good recall of number bonds to ten and beyond. Higher attaining pupils are learning to add three numbers together always remembering to begin with the largest.

49. Teaching in the juniors is satisfactory overall but there is less consistently good teaching to enable pupils to achieve as well as they could. The quality of teaching varies from being very good in Year 3 to being unsatisfactory in Year 6. The high level of unsatisfactory teaching in Year 6 resulted in the majority of pupils failing to work at the level they were capable of. An insecure knowledge of how primary pupils learn and weaknesses in managing inappropriate behaviour resulted in pupil showing unacceptable attitudes to work and achieving very low standards. This was not consistent with the work seen in the books during the previous year which showed the same pupils working at the appropriate level for their ages. However, there is evidence of pupils not achieving as well as they should and a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Work is very well presented and pupils obviously take pride in their work but pupils rarely get work wrong, indicating that their learning is not being pushed on at a sufficiently fast rate. The school's assessment and tracking of pupils' attainment shows that a significant number are not reaching the targets set for them. This information is not acted upon quickly enough and is a contributory factor in pupils not achieving as well as they could.
50. Teaching assistants are used particularly well across the school. They have a secure understanding of the subject and are skilled and sensitive in supporting pupils who learn at a slower rate. Their knowledge of individual pupils individual education plans is used very effectively to help pupils reach their targets and to pre-empt inappropriate behaviour. This enables all pupils to take full part in the lessons and to achieve well whatever their attainment levels.
51. Pupils present their results in an organised way and are constantly reminded and encouraged to explain clearly the strategies which they use to arrive at an answer. Across the school, teachers place emphasis on ensuring pupils understand and use precise mathematical vocabulary when answering questions or discussing their work. Having been identified as a weakness at the last inspection, emphasis is placed on helping pupils to apply their mathematics knowledge to solve challenging problems in practical situations. Lessons include regular opportunities for mental arithmetic encouraging pupils to become competent in the quick and accurate recall of numbers.
52. The role of the co-ordinator has improved since the last inspection but is more effective in the infant department than the juniors. The use of assessment by the coordinator is still underdeveloped. The deployment of staff to enable pupils to make sufficient progress is a weakness of senior management and has resulted in ineffective teaching and poor standards in one class.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to use, consolidate and extend their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, in geography older pupils created a matrix of population trends and in science information from experiments and observations is recorded using tally charts and graphs.
54. There is an increasing use of information and communication technology to help pupils' learning in mathematics. For example, pupils in Year 4 used information and communication technology to reinforce their skills in using function machines.

SCIENCE

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement in pupils' investigation skills.
- Unsatisfactory teaching and underachievement in Year 6.

Commentary

55. Standards are average overall in the infant and junior classes. The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good in the infants and unsatisfactory in the juniors. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. The inspection evidence, however, shows that the oldest pupils are achieving less well than others in the school.
56. There have, however, been some improvements in pupils' skills in investigating scientific ideas. These improvements have been brought about through training provided for the teachers and through the implementation of a scheme of work which provides structure and progression of skills through practical investigations. Although most pupils are developing a sound understanding of fair-testing and the skills of investigation, the knowledge of some of the older pupils is still limited. During a Year 6 lesson on plant growth, although pupils showed a secure knowledge of the area studied, pupils were expected to listen to the teacher for too much of the time and opportunities were not taken to develop pupils' investigational skills.
57. No lessons were seen in years 1 and 2, and no judgement on teaching could be made. The teaching seen in the juniors ranged from good to unsatisfactory. Where pupils' learning was good, the teacher engaged all the pupils in practical scientific enquiry, setting up an experiment to consider the factors that affect the germination of seeds. Although the skills of investigation of many pupils were not well developed, the teacher controlled the excitement of the pupils and worked with each group ensuring that all pupils succeeded in choosing the correct equipment and setting up their experiments. Pupils' learning is evaluated effectively by the teachers and records are kept of their achievements. but these are not used sufficiently well to reassess pupils' targets and the information is not used as well as it should be to analyse the success of the teaching. Planning shows that the science curriculum is covered well in all year groups. The overall plan is based upon a national scheme and provides good structure, progression of skills and knowledge and practical ideas for teaching.
58. When engaged in practical activities, pupils are interested in their work, enjoy science and their excitement is obvious. They co-operate together well and help each other if problems occur, without prompting from the teacher. Resources are good, organised and accessible.
59. The recently appointed co-ordinator is still acquiring knowledge of the subject and awareness of the role. Evidence shows that the previous co-ordinator promoted the teaching of scientific enquiry through organising staff training and monitoring teachers' planning and teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
- The headteacher leads the subject well and has a clear vision for development.

- ICT is used well to support English and mathematics.
- Achievement is good.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the subject.

Commentary

60. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve effectively. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when attainment at the end of Year 6 was below national expectations and the achievement of the junior pupils was unsatisfactory. Aspects of the subject that are planned for further improvement are identified and set within a clear plan. An ICT suite is currently being set up and is just waiting to have hardware delivered. Information and communication technology is sometimes used effectively to support learning in English and mathematics, although its use in other subjects is limited.
61. Improvements have occurred because: teachers have received training in the use of ICT. As a result, they are more confident and have greater subject expertise. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and enthusiastic, and are used effectively to teach individual pupils and to record the progress made. Teachers make good use of national guidance for the subject when they plan what pupils will learn.
62. The effective recording system ensures that all pupils learn a range of ICT skills. Individual pupils and a small group were observed working with teaching assistants. Year 5 pupils were engrossed in their task using spreadsheets to handle data. Pupils are keen to learn and quickly grasp new ideas. Younger junior pupils were also observed using their classroom computers to design sheets for their history work, changing the shape, size and colour of their text. The teaching assistants effectively engaged the pupils in their task and taught the pupils well. All the pupils show a keen interest in their work on the computers and quickly learn new skills. Details of pupils' experience and progress are logged by the teaching assistants and teachers are informed about the progress of the pupils in their class. As a result, pupils' progress is monitored well.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. The subject is used most frequently to support English and mathematics, where it is expected to be included on weekly plans.

HUMANITIES

Religious Education

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils and two lesson observations. Standards in religious education at the end of Year 2 Year 6 are at a similar level to those reported at the last inspection and are broadly in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Main strengths and weakness

- Pupils' understanding of major faiths is developed well.
- Resources are used well to support pupils' understanding.

Commentary

64. Throughout the school pupils' understanding of major faiths is developed well. Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity are studied. Pupils learn about the customs, symbols, festivals, holy books and buildings of major religions. Pupils develop a tolerance and deeper understanding of the many ways people express their religion and communicate with their God. The study of important festivals plays an important part in helping pupils to develop their understanding of different traditions and religions. Younger pupils in Year 2 know about the importance of Christian symbols while older pupils in Year 3 are developing an understanding of the importance of Mohammed to the Islamic faith. Older pupils think deeply about religious issues and write thoughtful accounts about their own ideas of God and they discuss the impact of religion on people's actions and thoughts and discuss challenging subjects such as the morality of the war against Iraq. Teaching in two lessons seen was satisfactory. Resources are used effectively to enliven learning.

History and geography

Provision is **satisfactory**.

One lesson of geography was seen in Year 2 and three history lessons in Year 1, 5 and 6. Pupils' work from last year was scrutinised.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Year 1 and 2.

Commentary

65. Good teaching characterised by secure subject knowledge, the effective use of first hand resources and secondary evidence contributes well to achievement in Years 1 and 2. For example, pupils learned about life in the past by listening to the oral recount of the childhood of a local resident during and after the war. In geography, Year 2 pupils learn to locate a Scottish island using an outline map of the British Isles. Pupils with special educational needs were very effectively included in the lesson. A history lesson in Year 5 contributed well to promoting literacy skills as pupils wrote a log of Drake's voyage as part of a Tudor unit of work. However, the opportunity to place the event on a timescale and to locate the period of time to help develop an understanding of chronology was missed. This aspect of history was a stronger feature in Year 6, where pupils highlighted key dates and searched the Internet to find out what happened at that time. As a result, higher attaining pupils were confident in their knowledge of key dates. Lower-attaining pupils did not have their needs met well in the lesson as generally they found the work too difficult.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and Design

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that the school provides pupils with a wide range of experiences to develop their skills, techniques and knowledge and understanding.

- Artefacts, nature and literature are used to stimulate pupils' interest and to provide a focus for their work.
- Pupils in Year 2 become very skilled in using line, form, colours and shade, to produce images and pictures.
- The importance of observational skills is central to pupils' success in producing detailed quality work.

Commentary

66. Judgements are also based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards in art and design at the end of Year 2 Year 6 are at a similar level to those reported at the last inspection and are broadly in line with national expectations.

Design and technology

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Commentary

67. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Improvements have been made as a result of training for teachers and the introduction of a scheme of work that identifies progression from year to year. For example, Year 5 pupils designed and made different types of biscuits. They explored types of packaging for their product, designed and made their biscuits, investigated advertising and evaluated their products. Teaching is satisfactory.

Music

68. Overall, too little music was seen to make an overall judgement about standards, achievement or the quality of teaching. Music makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and personal development and adds to the quality of assemblies and worship. The playing of an appropriate piece of music creates a quiet and reverent atmosphere for reflection and worship and has a calming effect on pupils. Singing is well taught and pupils are encouraged to sing with accuracy, expression and articulation as they learn and rehearse new hymns.

Physical Education

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skills are enhanced through a wide range of out-of- school activities.
- Pupils know how to improve and evaluate their performance.

Commentary

69. Pupils' standards and achievement are satisfactory. This was broadly the outcome of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, take part in a wide range of activities including games, gymnastics, dance and swimming. By the time they leave school all pupils can swim 25 metres unaided. Aerobics has been added to the curriculum and, has a positive effect on the physical development of some pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are enthusiastic to learn. Football, netball, rounders, cross-country, athletics and rugby take place after school and contribute well to improving progress. The planning is

based upon national guidelines and gives a general structure for the teaching of the different areas of the subject but lacks detail. Insufficient teaching was seen to make a judgement.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	5
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	5

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