

INSPECTION REPORT

LAVENDON COMBINED SCHOOL

Lavendon

LEA area: Milton Keynes

Unique reference number: 110242

Headteacher: Mrs J M Desborough

Lead inspector: Mr R Cheetham

Dates of inspection: 8 – 11 March 2004

Inspection number: 256705

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First and middle
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 12 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	93
School address:	High Street Lavendon Olney Buckinghamshire
Postcode:	MK46 4HA
Telephone number:	01234 712680
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Booth
Date of previous inspection:	23 March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

With 93 pupils on roll, this is smaller than most primary schools and is the smallest combined school in the Milton Keynes area. The roll has risen since the previous inspection. The school serves an area of social and economic advantage but a minority of pupils have less advantaged home backgrounds. Most pupils' attainment on entry is wide but mostly above average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' needs include: specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Nearly all pupils have White UK heritage backgrounds with a few from ethnic minority backgrounds. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who start or leave the school at times other than usual is above average. Following a period of management instability, which ended with the appointment of the current headteacher in 2001, there has been a complete change of teaching staff and significant changes to school organisation. Under current proposals, the school will be redesignated as a primary school in two years. This inspection coincided with the headteacher's absence through illness. To support the school, the LEA advised the governors to appoint an interim headteacher to manage the school during the inspection and another has taken over since then.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2592	Mr R Cheetham	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History Physical education Religious education Citizenship Special educational needs
9003	Mr B Findley	Lay inspector	
12954	Mrs P Claxton	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology French Music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils and provides satisfactory value for money. Most pupils reach average standards and achieve soundly. School leadership is satisfactory and, on the whole, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, the school has serious weaknesses in aspects of leadership and management and in the teaching of pupils in Years 4 to 6.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 3 is good and pupils achieve well
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to make good progress
- There is an enriching curriculum that embraces the community
- Parents hold the school in high regard
- Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to school
- Pupils are well cared for and included well in its provision
- By Year 6, pupils' standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average and their achievement is unsatisfactory
- The quality of teaching in Years 4 to 6 is not high enough
- Monitoring and evaluation procedures are not systematically supporting school improvement
- Subject co-ordinator responsibilities do not consistently influence the quality of teaching and learning

The school was last inspected in March 1998. Because of significant management and staffing difficulties it made initial poor progress. Since the appointment of the present headteacher, the school has made better progress but its rate of improvement, overall, has been unsatisfactory. Although above average standards have been maintained in Year 2, they have fallen in Year 6. The quality of teaching is lower, overall. In respect to the Key Issues, teachers now have better planning guidance in all subjects, but provision for ICT, despite notable improvements, has not led to an improvement in Year 6 standards.

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	C	C	A
mathematics	D	C	E	C
science	D	A	E	D

*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.*

Care should be taken in interpreting this table since the numbers in year groups are small and the number of pupils starting or leaving at times other than usual is above average. **Current pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall.** By the end of the Foundation Stage, children will achieve the early learning goals (the standard expected) and, in all but physical development, a minority will exceed them. By Year 2, pupils reach above average standards and achieve well. By Year 2, standards of reading and mathematics are above average and standards of writing are average. By Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are average and pupils achieve soundly. Standards in most other subjects reported are average but ICT standards are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory. By Year 7, standards in English and mathematics are average and they are below average in science. These pupils achieve satisfactorily in all three subjects. Their

achievement is unsatisfactory in ICT and standards are below average. In other subjects reported, standards are average and pupils achieve soundly. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.

The school encourages pupils' personal development well and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There is a good sense of school community. Pupils have good attitudes to school and behave well. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education and the quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Foundation Stage, where the teacher has good subject knowledge and has an effective partnership with the learning support assistant. Together, they promote curiosity and independence in pupils' learning. These learning qualities are fostered in Years 1 to 3 through good planning and some innovative teaching methods. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught soundly through the school. Reading is taught well and pupils are enthusiastic readers. Number and writing skills are not taught systematically in other subjects. The same is true of ICT skills. Investigative skills in science are taught well and pupils learn to question and think logically. Weaknesses in a significant minority of lessons in Years 4 to 6 include lesson organisation, low expectations, slow pace and unsatisfactory subject knowledge. These lead to slow progress. Learning support assistants work well with teachers to encourage lower-attaining pupils to persevere and progress.

The school provides a sound curriculum that is enriched by additional activities. The school takes good care of its pupils, supports them well and makes good use of its assessment information in English, mathematics and science to set pupils targets for improvement. Assessment is unsatisfactory in most other subjects. The accommodation is good. The school has very good links with the community and parents and good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The headteacher provides sound leadership following a period of staffing and management instability. There are weaknesses in the co-ordination of most subjects. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's provision are not leading systematically to improvements. Management of the Foundation Stage and provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Governors are well organised and are involved well in strategic planning. Their curriculum oversight is unsatisfactory since ICT does not comply with statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very pleased with the school and most pupils enjoy their time there and feel secure. Parents appreciate the ways pupils are inducted and how staff listen to and act on their concerns.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that Year 6 pupils reach at least average standards in ICT
- Improve the overall quality of teaching in Years 4 to 6
- Introduce systematic monitoring and evaluation of provision to promote school improvement
- Ensure that subject co-ordinators have clear and manageable responsibilities that focus on improving pupils' achievement

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that the school teaches all aspects of the ICT curriculum

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good and standards in nearly all the areas of learning are above those expected by the time they are ready to start Year 1. Achievement in Years 1 to 3 is good and it is satisfactory in Years 4 to 7. By Year 2, pupils reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science and by Year 6 they reach average standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Since the previous inspection, standards have been maintained in Year 2 but have declined in Year 6
- Children's good achievement in the Foundation Stage is due to well managed provision and consistently good teaching
- Good achievement in Years 1 to 3 in English, mathematics and science is the result of usually good teaching that effectively engages pupils' interest
- Pupils' progress is slower in Years 4 to 7 mainly because the quality of teaching is lower
- By Year 6, pupils' achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory and their attainment below average mainly because the school does not teach the full curriculum
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well

Commentary

1. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is above expectations for their age. They achieve well except in physical development, where they achieve satisfactorily. This is because the outdoor space is too small for them regularly to develop exploration skills and safety awareness by using larger play equipment. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children will reach or exceed the early learning goals (the standard expected) in all areas of learning apart from physical development, where standards are likely to be average.
2. In this small school, trends in pupils' attainment by Years 2 and 6 are affected by several factors: the small numbers in and composition of each year group, the quality of teaching, and the proportion of pupils who start or leave the school at times other than normal. Consequently, care should be taken when examining trends in attainment over time. In Year 2, over the last three years standards have mostly been improving although they dipped in 2001. In the 2003 tests, reading standards were well above average and writing standards were very high. Mathematics standards were above average and in science, teacher assessments showed that pupils' attainment was very high. Over the same period, standards in Year 6 have been declining apart from an upward blip in 2002. In the 2003 tests, standards were average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. However, based on their performance in Year 2, these pupils made very good progress in English, sound progress in mathematics but unsatisfactory progress in science. The school exceeded its Year 6 target in English but fell significantly short of the one in mathematics. Currently, the Year 6 pupils are making satisfactory progress towards their sufficiently challenging targets.
3. In the current Year 2, pupils achieve well in speaking and listening and reading and reach above average standards. Their attainment in writing is average. By Year 6, their attainment is above average in reading, average in speaking and listening and below average in writing. By Year 7, pupils' achievement and attainment mirrors that of Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress in most aspects of mathematics except in applying their skills, as in problem-solving. They make unsatisfactory progress in this aspect because it is not emphasised to the same extent. In Year 6, their attainment is average and achievement is satisfactory, except in using

and applying mathematics because their skills are not developed enough in other subjects. Year 7 pupils' achievement is satisfactory and their attainment is below average. In science, pupils generally make good progress in investigative skills because the school emphasises this. They reach above average standards by Year 2 and achieve well. They reach average standards and achieve soundly by Year 6. They achieve soundly in Year 7 and reach below average standards. Year 6 pupils achieve lower standards and achieve less well than those in Year 2 partly because the quality of teaching and learning in Years 4 to 6 is unsatisfactory and the lack of systematic monitoring has not supported its improvement.

4. In religious education, pupils in Years 2, 6 and 7 reach standards broadly expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus and achieve soundly. In ICT, pupils reach average standards and achieve soundly. Their unsatisfactory achievement by Years 6 and 7 is because they have not studied all aspects of the curriculum. From limited evidence, there are indications that pupils reach average standards and achieve soundly in geography and history partly because the school makes good use of the locality to make the subjects interesting. In physical education, Year 6 pupils reach average standards in gymnastics. In design and technology, work on display and discussions with pupils indicate that standards are average and achievement sound. There is not enough evidence to report on standards in the remaining subjects of art and design, and music. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of well-planned support based on accurate assessments.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (27.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	25.0 (27.0)	26.7 (26.8)
science	26.5 (30.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to work and behave well. They mature well during their time in the school and provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance rates are very high and punctuality is good. The school does not find it necessary to exclude pupils from school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good attitudes and behaviour of children in the Reception class and pupils in Years 1 to 3
- Consistently very high rates of attendance
- Good relationships between pupils and with members of staff
- Pupils accept responsibility well
- Assemblies contribute well to pupils' personal development
- Unsatisfactory behaviour and attitudes to work of a few pupils in Years 4 and 5

Commentary

5. Pupils like going to school. They apply themselves well to their work and try hard to please. Pupils in the Reception class and in Years 1 to 3 are very interested in their work and sustain good attitudes to it. They also respond very well to high expectations of behaviour and established routines. Children in the Foundation Stage listen attentively to adults and one another. They can work independently, share resources well and co-operate effectively to complete tasks. All children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in physical, social and emotional development by the end of reception and a minority will exceed them Staff

provide good role models by valuing individuals' contributions and encouraging polite behaviour and consideration for others.

6. Pupils in a Year 1 mathematics lesson who might otherwise have found the work difficult responded very well to encouragement. In a Year 2 and 3 mathematics lesson, pupils were well disposed to learn because of the interest created by increasing levels of challenge and changes of lesson focus. Around a quarter of pupils in the pre-inspection questionnaire said that they liked school only sometimes. In discussion with pupils it was found that some older pupils from Year 4 upwards felt dissatisfied because lessons are not always made interesting enough for them. This is partly supported by inspection findings where some lessons in Years 4 to 7 lacked pace and challenge.
7. Relationships between pupils and members of staff are warm and respectful so that pupils respond positively to advice and guidance. Pupils work and play happily together with few tensions. Pupils consider that relationships are good and they feel they co-operate well in lessons and can take and give advice to one another freely. They speak of relationships sometimes breaking down in the playground, but this has improved since rules were introduced over football. The inspection team supports these views. The school keeps a good check on how pupils relate to one another and serious incidents, such as bullying or racially motivated behaviour, are few.
8. Pupils value the range of responsibilities they are given and volunteer freely for the rota of jobs. Older pupils support younger ones during play and give out their milk. They monitor corridors during play and lunch-times. Younger pupils take on role of 'King' or 'Queen' for a day in which they perform class duties. These activities create in pupils a sense of involvement in the school community and contribute well towards their social and moral development. Parents are pleased with the way the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible.
9. Teachers encourage the pupils to draw on their personal experiences, particularly during circle time (when pupils sit in a circle and take turns in expressing their views). Assemblies are well planned to be special occasions that make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and moral development. A sense of community is set through music and song and assembly themes are linked well to important areas of pupils' development, such as the theme on community problems and the need for rules, which was seen during the inspection. Assembly time is also used well to respect and celebrate the festivals of different faiths, such as Hinduism and Judaism. Pupils have time to ponder on their responses to values they learn about in assemblies and on how they might carry those values into their daily lives. Visiting speakers, such as local clergy, make a regular contribution to the quality of assemblies, so that pupils get a flavour of life beyond the school, especially local village life.
10. Pupils' participation in the school's extra activities makes a good contribution to their cultural and social development. Local visits and studies broaden their understanding of local customs and help them understand how the past has helped to shape the present. Book days, visits to cultural centres and work concerning their own travels in the UK and abroad help pupils appreciate the richness and complexity of life in modern day Britain.
11. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now consistently well above average. Parents generally respond very well to school guidance about holidays in term time and most absences are due to illness. The school monitors attendance meticulously so that unauthorised absence is kept very low. Pupils arrive promptly.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

The school did not exclude any pupils during the last reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils and provides well for pupils with special educational needs. Provision in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 3 is good and pupils achieve well. Provision in Years 4 to 6 is broadly satisfactory but a minority of higher-achieving pupils do not make sufficient progress. Provision in Year 7 is satisfactory and pupils achieve soundly. The school provides a very good range of extra activities and cares well for its pupils. There is a very good home-school partnership, very good links with the community and good links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 3 but is unsatisfactory in Years 4 to 6. It is satisfactory in Year 7. The school uses assessment information well in English and mathematics, and soundly in science, to chart pupils' progress and set targets for improvement. Because assessment is not as well developed in other subjects, assessment is satisfactory, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching has declined since the previous inspection and there are now some unsatisfactory lessons
- Most lesson planning is good
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is well organised and expectations are high
- Teaching in Years 1 to 3 is often imaginative, occasionally inspiring, and engages pupils' interest very well
- A minority of lessons in Years 4 to 6 is of good quality but others have a slow pace, weaknesses in organisation or subject knowledge and are undemanding
- Teachers and learning support assistants work well with one another to the pupils' benefit
- The weaknesses in assessments of pupils' progress do not give teachers a clear idea of pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science

Commentary

12. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good and reflects its leadership, and the teacher's good subject knowledge and class management. The teacher and the teaching assistant form a strong team. They offer the children a broad, interesting curriculum, which makes learning engaging and fun. They use their knowledge of individual children to ensure that learning is well-matched to their learning needs. Expectations of behaviour and learning response are high and this results in good progress for all children. Classroom

support is well organised and effective. This ensures that the least able children progress well and the more able are suitably challenged.

13. In Years 1 to 7, teachers plan their work using a common format that includes lesson objectives and usually sets out separate tasks for pupils of differing attainment. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science based on the headteacher's analysis of annual test results. Staff set pupil targets in these subjects but some are too general or long term to promote effective pupil progress. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and often make supportive comments. However, the marking rarely pinpoints where pupils need to improve and is not followed up to consolidate learning. Assessments in most subjects are often left to teachers' discretion as to whether they collect samples of pupils' work or note their progress at the end of a piece of work. This is not systematic enough to give other teachers a clear idea of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in order to promote higher achievement.
14. Teachers make good use of national guidance to support their planning. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught at least soundly within most Literacy Hours and daily mathematics lessons but these skills are not developed systematically in other subjects. To some extent this reflects the quality of leadership of English and mathematics. A particular feature of most lessons is the teamwork between the class teachers and learning support assistants, which is the result of effective leadership of special educational needs provision and staff commitment. Shared planning based on accurate assessments of pupils' needs enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress against the clear targets in their individual education plans. Homework is set regularly, well supported and provides consolidation and sometimes extensions to learning.
15. In Years 1 to 3, the best lessons begin with a sense of excitement, continue with an air of purpose and engagement and conclude when learning is at least reinforced and often extended. Good examples of this were in a Year 1 mathematics lesson that quickly established what most pupils could recall before pushing on through a series of more demanding tasks that challenged pupils of all abilities. The teacher deftly changed pupils between groups when some made faster progress than others and included them all in a game at the end when they spotted number patterns and pretended to be passengers on a bus with several conductors accurately giving change for 20 pence. In Years 2 and 3, an English project began with pupils confronted by a crime scene in their classroom and so a series of lessons unfolded when pupils became detectives. They sharpened their discussion and note-taking skills and writing had a real purpose. Motivation and progress were high.
16. In Years 4 to 7, teachers have larger classes and are faced with different organisational issues. In some lessons these are managed well. Examples of this were in a science lesson in Year 4 and 5 that made good use of resources and extra staff, or in a Year 6 and 7 physical education lesson in which the teacher used good subject knowledge to coach pupils and to assess their progress. In both lessons, pupils responded well to the differing demands made of them. However, other lessons such as mathematics and ICT start hesitantly because teachers do not have enough subject knowledge and do not sufficiently engage pupils' interest. Learning is not promoted well enough, either because the teachers' questions do not ask enough of higher-attaining pupils or the time spent teaching different groups does not get to the heart of what they need to do to improve. Opportunities for discussions between pupils are limited and not well managed. Their motivation and progress slows and, although the lesson structure is the same as others in the school, the concluding parts at best consolidate what has been learned rather than extending it.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	4 (13%)	8 (27%)	13 (44%)	4 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The curriculum

The school provides a sound curriculum that meets statutory requirements, with the exception of ICT provision. There are very good opportunities for learning enrichment and the accommodation is good. There is an adequate number of teachers and a good proportion of support staff. Resources are satisfactory, with the exception of those for ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs
- Pupils have good access to a very wide range of extra learning opportunities
- There are good examples of curriculum innovation in the Year 2 and 3 class
- The accommodation provides additional spaces for teaching and learning
- Learning support staff make a good contribution to pupils' progress
- Not all aspects of the ICT curriculum are taught

Commentary

17. Since the previous inspection the staff have developed curriculum plans in all subjects that are soundly based on national guidance. For instance, the school implements the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lessons satisfactorily, although literacy and numeracy skills are not sufficiently promoted in other subjects and tend to be taught incidentally. The school is amending national guidance on other subjects so that it meets the school's specific needs. These are greater than in many schools because of its small size (leading to most classes having more than one year group) and the fact that it teaches the Foundation Stage and pupils of primary school age as well as the first year of secondary education (Year 7). This calls for additional planning and arrangements for some separate teaching of Year 7 pupils so that they are soundly prepared for the next stage in their education. The exception to this soundly based curriculum is ICT. Although the school has significantly improved its provision with the setting up of the ICT suite, lesson coverage does not include all aspects of the statutory curriculum. The quality of ICT equipment in classrooms means that pupils are not able to access technology at the point of need and so the subject is not promoted well enough across the curriculum.
18. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs supports their learning well. This is the result of accurate assessment of need, good individual learning plans with specific aims to measure progress over a given time-scale, good joint planning and co-operation between learning support staff and teachers and good record keeping.
19. For many subjects, the curriculum is planned over a two-year cycle to avoid pupils learning the same content while remaining in the same class. This works soundly in Years 4 to 7, where additional teaching of some subjects with Year 7 pupils gives them access to the curriculum in science and history, for example, that other pupils in similar schools are studying. It works well in Years 2 and 3, where the two part-time teachers co-operate very well to provide some exciting learning opportunities, such as their detective work in literacy lessons or as scientists making new discoveries and testing out their ideas.
20. A school strength is the variety and range of extra activities that provide many opportunities for learning outside of lessons and promote pupils' personal development well. The school uses the resources of the community in part to teach sex and relationships and alcohol and drugs education soundly. An important part of the school's extra provision is the sporting opportunities, which include coaching in most popular sports and active involvement in events with local schools. This widens pupils' sporting and social horizons. The school also plays a full part in cultural events, such as participating in a Milton Keynes choir at the Royal Festival

Hall as well as visits to local theatres. Staff make much of the local community with village studies, participation in village events, studies of local churches, visits to museums and factories and to field centres both locally and further afield. Local clergy are regular visitors and others include a tapestry maker who worked with pupils to produce work currently on display. Just before this inspection, pupils and staff dressed up as characters in fiction as part of the celebration of National Book Day.

21. Alongside most classrooms are activity areas that provide additional accommodation for art and design, design and technology and science. These are used well for work with small groups that are often led by both learning support staff and parents. Learning support staff, who work effectively with small groups of pupils with special educational needs and lower-attaining pupils, also use these spaces. Reorganisation of the accommodation has released one classroom for the timetabled separate teaching of Year 7 pupils. The accommodation also allows for the separate teaching of the Foundation Stage children and supports the provision of a good quality curriculum for these pupils. This takes into account their above average attainment on entry by providing appropriate access to the early stages of the Year 1 curriculum. The provision for outdoor learning and large play equipment is currently limited and the school is planning to improve this. Pupils' access to ICT is limited by the small amount of equipment and this slows their understanding of technology in the world around them.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes good care of pupils' welfare and safety and provides good levels of support for their personal development. Pupils' views are valued and acted on well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety procedures make school a safe place
- Good arrangements for child protection
- Pupil influence benefits the school
- Pupils enjoy trusting relationships with staff
- Pupil assessment data in English and mathematics is analysed to set targets
- There is minimal assessment and recording of pupils' progress in other subjects
- Induction procedures for new pupils are good

Commentary

22. Health and safety arrangements are thorough. The governing body is actively involved in monitoring safety in the school through regular site inspections and there is an effective system for dealing with day-to-day problems. Levels of first aid expertise are high. There is an annual independent audit of practice by the local authority health and safety advisor.
23. Child protection arrangements are good because the school keeps itself very well up to date with locally recommended procedures and amends its policy and practice promptly. A nominated governor liaises with the designated teacher and has recently attended training. All members of staff understand their responsibilities should they have cause for concern.
24. Induction procedures for new pupils are good. Children in the Foundation Stage start confidently because of good staff support and liaison with parents. The teacher carries out detailed assessments to ascertain their strengths and learning needs and these are updated as children progress. She makes very good use of the information to plan activities to promote children's learning. There is detailed and effective assessment and monitoring of pupils with special educational needs. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is informal but effective because staff know their pupils well in this small school. The assessment of pupils' progress in English and mathematics is used to set targets for improvement for individual pupils. In some classes these targets are specific, have small steps towards improvement, and pupils understand what they have to do to improve. In others, targets are too broad and

encompass too much to be effective. There is less detailed assessment of pupils' progress in science but little consistent assessment and recording of pupils' progress in history, geography, ICT, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education, religious education and music. This means that assessment procedures to inform planning, which ensure pupils' progress in these latter subjects, is not effective.

25. The school has responded well in the past to the views of pupils, for example, by bringing in a rota for football to prevent squabbles in the playground. Arrangements for taking pupils' views into account have now been formalised through the recent introduction of a school council, which pupils have taken to well. Pupils also indicate they have confidence to turn to an adult in the school if they have any worries.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school promotes a very effective partnership with parents. Links with the community are very good and those with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very pleased with the school
- Parents involve themselves and support the school very well
- The quality of information about school life and pupils' progress is very good
- Strong links with local churches and the community
- Good bridging links with the secondary school

Commentary

26. Parents express satisfaction in almost all areas of the school's work. They are particularly pleased with induction arrangements, the progress their child makes from good teaching, the way the school encourages pupils to mature, and they feel comfortable approaching the school over suggestions or concerns. The inspection findings support these views, except that there are elements of unsatisfactory progress and teaching for older pupils. Parents have no significant concerns but a few speak of some bullying in the school. This concern was not supported by inspection findings.
27. Parents take a very keen interest in their children's education and a very active part in the life of the school. Good links are made with parents, both before and after pupils start, for example, through the Foundation Stage termly newsletter. The school can depend upon regular helpers in the classroom and very good help with visits and events. Parents also support well the work that pupils do at home. There is a very successful school association that organises functions to raise substantial funds for school improvement. These events are open to the public and sometimes held in the village hall, so that the school and the parent body are also seen as a vital part of village life.
28. Reports on pupils' progress are of a high quality, with detailed information about progress in all subjects but especially for mathematics, English and science. Targets indicate the main focus for improvement and, overall, parents get a good idea as to how their children are getting on. Three consultation evenings are held each year to discuss progress and parents are generally pleased with the information they receive.
29. Information about the school is good because of regular monthly newsletters and very well produced prospectus and governing body's annual report that meet headline requirements and include additional useful information. Curriculum information is sent out each term, so that parents can plan the help they give to work at home and in school. Parents are consulted well over policy changes, either directly or by questionnaire.

30. Examples of involvement in village life include regular invitations to come to assemblies at which the choir and dance club give performances. The choir and dance club also perform at the village hall and at wider festivals. Local clergy are a valuable link with the community and are welcome school visitors. The school plays an active part in the village carnival and pupils study aspects of village life in their history, geography and religious education lessons.
31. The school has close links with Ousedale Secondary School and with the two local pre-school providers in the village. Links with the secondary school are resulting in curriculum developments such as joint topic work in science. Transfer exchanges and visits are well organised and Year 7 pupils are invited to complete art project work in the summer holidays. There is a sports day for all feeder schools to give pupils a chance to make friends.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the school is satisfactory but significant aspects of management are unsatisfactory. The headteacher provides sound leadership following a period of staffing and management instability. Governors carry out many of their duties well. However, they have not ensured that ICT provision meets statutory requirements. This has adversely affected pupils' progress and so their governance is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors fulfil most of their responsibilities well
- The school manages its finances well
- The Foundation Stage is well led, but most subjects are co-ordinated unsatisfactorily
- New staff are inducted well but staff performance management is not improving teaching consistency
- The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- Staff and governors ensure that pupils are all included in the school's provision
- The school does not have rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating its work

Commentary

32. The headteacher provides sound leadership. She took up her post following a period of temporary leadership, staffing changes and a fall in pupil numbers. She has made several staff appointments and begun to analyse and act on pupils' assessment results. She has managed accommodation improvements well and worked hard with staff to make better use of the building by relocating the teaching groups. She has made sure that the school has made some progress on the key issues from the previous inspection and has begun to develop a senior management team. She has been active in promoting the school locally and involving it in the community. This has re-established parental and governor confidence in the school so that, after a time when the school roll went down, it is now increasing.
33. The leadership of other key staff is unsatisfactory. However, the exception to this is the leadership of the Foundation Stage and of special educational needs provision. The headteacher has recently set up a senior management team but this is in its early stages of development. The delegation of some responsibilities is clear and effective. For instance, the Foundation Stage is now well established as an effective feature of the school. The manager is recently appointed and has already made a significant impact on the quality of provision. Her organisation of the curriculum and assessment procedures is good. Consequently, children's learning needs are closely tracked and work is well matched to individual needs. As a result, children make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress, mainly because the provision is overseen well. However, routine systems to monitor and develop the quality of teaching and learning, including performance management, are ineffective so that examples of good or better teaching are not built on enough nor weaknesses identified and remedied. The responsibilities of subject co-ordinators are not defined effectively

and this blunts their effectiveness in developing their subjects across the school. For instance, there are weaknesses in the development of English and ICT and the brief to develop science has involved nothing beyond reorganisation of resources. On the other hand, work in geography is having some impact on provision, and preparations to develop religious education are beginning. Overall, however, most co-ordinators have little idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses in their subjects.

34. Some aspects of management are satisfactory but there are significant weaknesses in others. It speaks well of staff commitment and flexibility that they ensure that the school runs smoothly in the absence of the permanent headteacher. Routines are well established and pupils are encouraged to play an active part in the daily running of the school. Financial planning is good. The school has organised its finances well enough to manage without the rent it had received previously from the private nursery for use of the school building. It earmarked the larger than usual carry forward from last year to finance the development of the Foundation Stage and provide additional ICT resources. Financial planning is part of the way in which the school improvement plan is built up with the full involvement of governors and staff. Together, they work out school priorities and implement action over an extended period. The school has chosen many of the right priorities for improvement but weaknesses in the plan include the lack of completion dates and measurable ways of judging success on completion. The same is true of some subject action plans. These indicate improvements to provision but do not focus on how improvement will benefit learners and how that will be measured.
35. The school does monitor and evaluate some aspects of its work but its weaknesses outweigh its strengths. It uses its information on pupils' progress to set improvement targets, to monitor the progress of different groups, and there is a rota for reviewing school policies in which governors play a part. The development of the newly qualified teacher is monitored and supported well. The work of learning support staff makes a good contribution to pupils' learning partly because the special needs co-ordinator manages the workload and closely monitors its outcomes in terms of pupil progress. However, work to guide whole-school monitoring and evaluation is just being started and a timetable to make the processes manageable and effective in a small school is not in place. One result of this is the lack of basic information on subject development and teaching quality referred to earlier.
36. Governors are well organised into committees, whose sophisticated structure enables them to fulfil most of their duties well. However, they were not alert to the fact that ICT provision does not meet requirements. The committee briefs are clear and the meeting minutes indicate well-founded decisions. For instance, governors work with the headteacher on the analysis of pupils' test results and on deciding the next steps. They are closely involved in the school and go out of their way to help its development through helping in school, especially at times of need. Through the very detailed reports from the headteacher and their own efforts through visits and reports, governors are aware of the school's strengths and most of its weaknesses. They monitor its finances well and take into account best value issues when making decisions on resources. However, this approach does not extend to judging what the impact of major spending decisions such as the ICT suite is having on pupils' achievement. With the school, they consult parents and back the development of the school council to take more account of pupils' views to include what they say in future plans. They are very clear in their support for the school's policy to involve all its pupils in what it provides and through their day-to-day involvement they see practical examples of this, such as access to clubs or involvement in local visits. They give a clear steer to its strategic development through their involvement in improvement planning.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	301,597
Total expenditure	281,607
Expenditure per pupil	3,610

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	16,568
Balance carried forward to the next	36,558

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the Foundation Stage is good. This is because teaching and learning are good and the teacher works effectively with the learning support assistant. Provision is well managed by the leader of the Foundation Stage who has set up the Reception class in a new room, organised resources and supported the induction of the newly qualified reception class teacher well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children make good progress because the teacher sets high expectations
- There are good induction procedures and close links with parents
- Supportive relationships help children to feel confident and secure

Commentary

37. The teacher and teaching assistant set clear boundaries so that children know what is expected of them and the correct way to behave. The children know the routines well and respond without much prompting. Good teaching allows children to make choices and develop independence. There is a good balance between teacher-led activities and those that children choose for themselves. As a result, children achieve well and most will exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children are interested and enthusiastic in what they are learning and most can concentrate for sustained periods, even when not directly supervised. For example, four children worked well together for ten minutes to complete a counting activity whilst the teacher supported another group. Children visit school before they start in Reception and staff make home visits. Links with the local pre-school providers are good. These close links ensure that children are happy to come to school and settle quickly to their learning. The supportive relationships ensure that children feel secure and are confident to express their feelings in a controlled and responsible manner. Children's understanding of right and wrong is further developed through circle time, when moral and social issues are discussed as a class. The lack of outdoor space limits children's access to activities that develop independence and confidence in a less confined environment.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher's planning, assessment and use of time is good
- Children achieve well and reach high standards
- Speaking and listening skills are well developed because staff focus on this area of learning

Commentary

38. Teaching and learning are good in this area of development. This enables most children to reach and exceed the early learning goals by the end of Foundation Stage. The teacher provides frequent opportunities for children to develop their confidence in expressing their ideas in whole-class discussions. Children are required to think hard about what they want to say in response to the teacher's searching questions. They are encouraged to extend and

explain their answers, which most do with enthusiasm. Their confidence is raised because their thoughts and ideas are clearly valued by the teacher and the teaching assistant. Many of the children are articulate, able to give extended answers and explain their reasoning with confidence. Short, well-paced, lively activities keep the learning engaging and fun. For example, the children responded enthusiastically to a session of 'Letter Bingo', quickly writing down the answers on their small whiteboards. Most children already know their initial sounds, can write their own names and identify the title, author and illustrator on book covers. More able children can put together simple sentences in their writing. Children's reading is well developed through group reading and individual support from adults. Children's achievements are carefully tracked and recorded and this information is used effectively to match future work to children's needs.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults make good use of questioning
- A wide variety of activities are used to support learning
- Children achieve well and standards are higher than expected for their age by the end of the Foundation Stage
- Teaching is stimulating, enabling children to enjoy their learning

Commentary

39. Teaching is good and provides the children with a range of stimulating activities to learn and consolidate new ideas. The majority of children enter the school with mathematical skills above those usually found. Consequently, most children will reach and exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. The majority of the children count up to 20 and many count backwards and forwards starting at any number up to 20. They have a good understanding of what is meant by addition and can identify simple shapes. Staff make good use of resources to consolidate learning. For example, children took 'Boris' (a puppet) for a walk along floor number tiles counting backwards and forwards from numbers given by the teacher. Children are provided with number lines to support their learning and required to make quick responses to lively number activities. They are encouraged to explain their thinking and alternative ways of reaching answers are valued and discussed for their merits. This raises children's confidence and their understanding that a range of methods can be used to solve a problem.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher plans an interesting range of activities that stimulate children's interest and curiosity in the world around them
- Children make good progress in learning and achieve high standards
- Children do not have enough access to computers to develop their skills

Commentary

40. Teaching is good and children achieve well. This broad area of the curriculum is covered well, with the exception of the development of children's skills in using computers. Their access to ICT resources is unsatisfactory and this slows their progress. To help children understand

and explore, they have learned to draw simple graphs showing routes to school. They have a good understanding about growing older and how animals and people change over time. Children have a good understanding of the types of weather and the language that describes it, such as, frosty or windy. The teacher plans good links into other areas of development. For example, children went on to develop an impressive composition of weather sounds, using untuned instruments, following on from their work on weather and weather sounds. Children are introduced to basic chronological skills and have a good early understanding. Most children will reach the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher makes good use of the hall for carefully structured lessons
- The children's learning is inhibited by the lack of space for outdoor play

Commentary

41. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In dance and early ball skills lessons in the hall, children achieve high standards. They listen carefully to instructions and have a good understanding of the use of space and body control. The teacher provides a good model by demonstrating movement for the children to copy. Children move with confidence and control and show good awareness of safe behaviour. They are encouraged to talk about and demonstrate what they have learned. This helps them to refine and improve their performance. The lack of an easily accessible outdoor area limits children's access to large play equipment, such as bicycles and climbing-frames. This limits children's opportunities to develop understanding of the skills and safe behaviour needed in the use such equipment. As a result, overall standards are average and achievement is satisfactory.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher has good subject knowledge
- Good use is made of the teaching assistant
- Children achieve high standards

Commentary

42. Teaching is good, children achieve well and most are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is because the teacher has high expectations of what the children can achieve and undertakes ambitious projects with them. For example, the children made model hot air balloons and baskets using papier mâché, carefully moulding the shape and painting the finished product. The teacher and the teaching assistant form a strong partnership to support the learning. For example, when composing music to accompany the theme of weather, the teacher used searching questions to refine children's choices of instruments whilst the teaching assistant helped them to explore the range of sounds each instrument could make. Work round the classroom shows that children have experienced using a variety of media, including paint, weaving and paper collage.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1, 2 AND 3

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement of pupils in speaking and listening in Years 1 to 3 is good
- Most pupils achieve well in reading
- Teaching in Year 1 is good and very good in Years 2 and 3
- The literacy hour is well planned
- Teaching in Year 4 and 5 is unsatisfactory and the work set for pupils in Years 4 to 7 does not challenge them enough
- Attainment in writing in Years 4 to 7 is below average
- Teachers' marking does not routinely set targets for improvement
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop their writing skills in work across the curriculum

Commentary

43. Most pupils reach average standards by the end of Years 6 and 7. This is worse than the previous inspection, when standards were above average. In Year 2, most pupils reach above average standards, maintaining those found previously. Pupils' attainment in reading is above average across the school. In speaking and listening, pupils' attainment is above average in Years 1 to 3 and average in Years 4 to 7. Attainment in writing is average in Years 1 to 3 and below average in Years 4 to 7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of good support from learning support assistants.
44. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall. Excellent teaching in a Year 2 and 3 lesson maintained a lively pace as pupils investigated a 'real' crime incident. Pupils concentrated hard to shape questions that would make their suspects provide additional evidence. The teacher linked this very well to ICT by encouraging the use of handsets and mobile phones as well as a paper version of e-mail to get further clues. Pupils were totally engrossed in the activity and produced a very good selection of open-ended questions for use in the interrogation. This level of interest was not evident in Years 4 to 7 pupils' lessons, where mostly unsatisfactory teaching leads to a minority of pupils achieving less than they should, particularly in writing. Teachers plan lessons by making good use of national guidance to structure the literacy hour. Pupils are told at the beginning of lessons what they are to learn but the balance of time allowed for pupil discussion is not managed well enough in Years 4 to 7. In these lessons, there is not enough work to provide a consistent challenge for more able pupils and expectations of presentation are low. Teachers make sound use of assessment to set pupils targets for improvement but often the targets are too broad to inform future planning for individuals. Teachers' marking does not consistently give advice on how work can be improved and there is little opportunity for pupils to respond.
45. Pupils in Years 4 to 7 listen well when their interest is aroused. They are articulate and explain their opinions thoughtfully and with confidence when given the opportunity. However, they reach only average standards because teachers' questioning mainly requires brief answers and there is little time to discuss issues in depth or to refine and justify responses. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 achieve well and attainment in speaking and listening is good. Teachers provide good opportunities for discussion, ask searching questions and have high expectations of pupil response. They make it clear that pupils' opinions are valued. As a result, pupils are confident in sharing their thoughts and ideas with others. For example,

pupils in small discussion groups considered the framing and wording of open questions in order to gain the most information. They shared their ideas with the rest of the class and discussed which questions would be most effective. As a result they made good progress.

46. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to read both fiction and non-fiction and to develop an interest in reading. Good use is made of group and whole-class reading. Early reading skills are well promoted. The majority of pupils make good progress in learning letter sounds and blends. They use this knowledge with confidence to attempt unfamiliar words. Pupils in Years 6 and 7 read fluently. They have well-developed deductive skills to help them to predict what will happen in a story. Pupils show a keen interest in reading and can talk about their choices and preferences. There are sufficient resources in the school, but pupils were not seen to use the library area for independent research during the inspection. Although some pupils have used the Internet for research, the use of computers as a tool for learning is unsatisfactory and is not established in daily routines.
47. Since the previous inspection there has been an increased focus on writing, and this has continued. The subject co-ordinator's analysis of Year 6 test papers in 2003 alerted the school to declining standards. Teachers provide a satisfactory range of writing within the literacy hour, but do not give enough opportunities for pupils to develop their skills systematically in other subjects. Years 1 to 3 pupils' achievement in writing does not reflect their achievement in other aspects of English. Writing in Years 4 to 7 mainly consists of short pieces, which require little application, with few examples of extended writing for pupils to sustain and develop their ideas. Tasks for more able pupils fail to challenge and stimulate them. The teaching of handwriting and presentation skills is unsatisfactory. Many older pupils have immature handwriting and poor presentation skills and this detracts from their written work in other subjects.
48. The leadership and management of English are unsatisfactory. The English co-ordinator has broadly identified the subject strengths and weaknesses and has drawn up an action plan to address the shortcomings. However, the direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning is difficult to judge because the measures of success are vague. There has been no effective monitoring of teaching or standards across the school and so the precise reasons for the shortcomings in writing or in speaking and listening have not been identified.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. The development of literacy in subjects other than English is not planned. The promotion of higher standards of writing and presentation in other subjects is impeded because of inconsistent expectations. Some teachers expect good standards of presentation and handwriting, whereas others set work, which requires little, more than the filling-in of undemanding worksheets. This does not help pupils to improve their literacy skills. Older pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their writing skills for a range of purposes and audiences. Reading skills for research purposes are average.
50. During this inspection, no **French** was being taught and, as other evidence was limited, no judgement on provision can be made. However, it is clear that French is taught regularly to Year 7 following the appropriate Programme of Study. It is also taught to Year 6 pupils, although this is non-statutory. The provision of French adds to the school's curriculum breadth.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Above average standards have been maintained by Year 2, as has the recent improvement in standards to average in Years 6 and 7
- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 3 is good but is unsatisfactory in Years 4 to 7
- Teachers make good use of national guidance to help their planning
- The school uses its information on pupils' achievement to track their progress well
- Mathematics is not promoted well enough in other subjects
- Teachers and learning support assistants work together well to promote pupils' learning
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous

Commentary

51. By Years 2 and 3, pupils achieve well. By Years 6 and 7, pupils achieve soundly. Most pupils throughout the school make unsatisfactory progress in using and applying mathematics in practical circumstances because there is too little routine emphasis on this, either through problem-solving or in seeking pupils' explanations of their thinking. Pupils' achieve as they do because staff have had additional training and have a clearer understanding of where pupils need to improve. However, not enough is asked of higher-attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 and they do not make enough progress. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because teachers assess their needs accurately and plan well with learning support assistants to help them improve.
52. By Year 3, most pupils have developed confident attitudes to mathematics and have a good grasp of basic number concepts. Teachers make good use of practical equipment, such as number fans and lines, to consolidate pupils' understanding. They include all the pupils throughout the lessons by taking advantage of low pupil numbers to work with individuals and small groups on aspects they find difficult. They ask searching questions and pupils respond well to these by giving good reasons for their answers. Teachers prompt pupils to look for patterns in number sequences and give all pupils time to think their answers through. At the end of a good lesson in the Year 2 and 3 class, the teacher consolidated what pupils had learned by asking them to close their eyes and count the number of pebbles they could hear being dropped into a cup and then to work out some simple multiplication sums from this. This method retained pupils' interest and the teacher used their answers to assess what they had learned.
53. By Years 6 and 7, although most pupils are making sound progress, the quality of teaching in lessons seen did not promote faster progress and higher attainment. Lesson planning is done well and work is set for different levels of attainment within the classes. Learning support assistants are well deployed and help some lower-attaining pupils make good progress, although not enough use is made of practical equipment with the Year 4 and 5 pupils. Lesson introductions give pupils an outline of what they are to do but do not give convincing explanations based on good subject knowledge. Initial work with the whole group lacks pace and does not help pupils see connections between what they are doing and what they have done before. In the Year 4 and 5 class, pupils' work in groups is managed unsatisfactorily and they work slowly, paying little regard to their presentation. In the Year 6 and 7 class, scope for accelerating the pace of higher-attaining pupils' work is not used and they are not challenged to develop examples of their own as extensions to those given.
54. Teachers receive an analysis of their pupils' achievement and use this to guide their planning and have started to set individual and group targets for improvement. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and add supportive comments. However, the comments do not relate sufficiently to pupils' targets nor are they followed up consistently to lead to faster progress.

55. The subject is managed soundly and the co-ordinator has used the analyses of pupils' achievement in national tests to address with staff previous lower-than-expected attainment by Year 6. Staff training has led to some improvements in the use of national guidance to support teachers' lesson planning and aspects of their teaching. The co-ordinator has also checked teachers' plans for consistency with the guidance. Although there have been some observations of teaching, these have not been systematic nor have they pinpointed areas of strength on which to build, nor weaknesses that should be improved.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. There is some incidental teaching of mathematics in other subjects. For instance, in science, pupils tabulate the results of their experiments using bar charts or line graphs, and in geography, older pupils use pie charts to gain information about their projects. This is not part of a coherent approach to use such opportunities either to introduce or consolidate pupils' understanding or to apply what they have learned in different contexts. Because of timetabling and equipment constraints, and some lack of teachers' subject knowledge, pupils have too few opportunities to develop their ICT skills in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 2, pupils achieve well and reach above average standards
- By Year 6, pupils' progress has improved from recent years. They reach average standards and achieve soundly
- Teaching is generally good and is very good in Years 2 and 3
- Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in scientific investigations
- Arrangements for co-ordinating the subject are unsatisfactory and lack sustained impact

Commentary

57. By Year 2, pupils are enthusiastic about science and are intrigued by their investigations. This is because teaching is creative and succeeds in capturing and sustaining their interest through lively lesson introductions and very well planned activities. Pupils are good at asking questions and trying their ideas out by using fair testing methods. By Year 6, higher-attaining pupils are beginning to generate their own lines of enquiry as well as most being proficient at carrying out investigations that are teacher led. Pupils' scientific knowledge is sound. By Year 7, pupils are making satisfactory progress, overall, and standards have improved slightly to below average. Pupils with special educational needs work well in small groups and with the help of learning support assistants make good progress in science investigations and in their social development.
58. Teachers generally make good use of national guidance to help them plan lessons and the teacher's depth of subject knowledge in the Year 2 and 3 class leads to very good teaching and learning. For instance, a very well planned lesson on the absorbency of materials began dramatically with the teacher "accidentally" spilling water. This led to concerned pupils mopping up with strategically placed materials and before they knew it they were considering with the teacher how useful they had found the materials to be. A variety of views spawned the need to investigate their hypotheses more thoroughly. Close questioning and skilful guidance by the staff promoted pupils' good understanding of fair testing and recording of results.
59. The hallmark of lessons further up the school is well-used resources to promote good progress in science investigations. In a Year 4 and 5 lesson, pupils continued with a module of work on friction by taking into account the properties of different materials as well as those of the contact surfaces. The teacher manages the learning well by deploying the learning support

assistant to work with a small group in an adjacent area to make best use of the accommodation. This she does well because she had shared the lesson planning with the teacher and knows what was expected of her. The lesson was well prepared, with sufficient resources for each group. Through well-timed interventions, the teacher prompts some higher-attaining pupils to think more about the variables they could control to ensure a fair test. The lesson's otherwise satisfactory conclusion shows that pupils are not given enough thought to presenting their findings and the further development of pupils' questioning skills is unexplored. In a Year 7 lesson, the teacher engages pupils' interest with a range of photographs, plants and objects to develop their observational skills soundly. She takes advantage of the low group numbers to support lower-attaining individual pupils' progress well, but this tends to lessen the demands made on the higher attainers. The teacher keeps good records of individual pupils' progress and uses this to plan lessons with a wider range of expectations than in the one seen.

60. There are temporary arrangements in place for co-ordination of the subject. So far, the teacher has organised resources for teachers to use in their lessons but has not been expected to go beyond this, partly because she does not have enough subject knowledge to develop the subject further. There is neither an action plan to develop the subject nor any systematic monitoring of provision to determine strengths and weaknesses.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources have improved since the previous inspection
- The curriculum does not cover the statutory requirements
- Pupils' attainment in Years 6 and 7 is below average
- Resources in classrooms are unsatisfactory
- Teaching in Year 6 and 7 is unsatisfactory
- Use of ICT for teaching and learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory
- Subject leadership is unsatisfactory

Commentary

61. Pupils' achievement in ICT is satisfactory in Years 1 to 3 and unsatisfactory in older age groups. This is worse than the previous inspection when standards were average and pupils made satisfactory progress, overall. This is because the planning for older pupils does not cover the statutory requirements for ICT and pupils have few opportunities to use ICT within other subjects. Pupils in Years 6 and 7 can add animation to multimedia presentations and resize and drag and drop text boxes. They can make reasoned decisions about colours of backgrounds and graphics to meet the needs of an audience. They can use the Internet to find information and have experienced using spreadsheets, control, modelling and data-handling packages. However, pupils have not used e-mail for communication with a wider world community or made use of external sensors for measuring aspects such as temperature. There are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to consolidate and develop their understanding through using learned applications in everyday situations. A very small number of pupils at the top end of the school have used scanners and digital photography to enhance presentations but most pupils in the same year groups are not afforded such opportunities. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 can add graphics to word files, open and save files and add a text box to graphics. They understand how to use the left and right click on the mouse to perform different functions. They have limited opportunities to use learned skills within other subjects because of the unsatisfactory provision in classrooms.

62. Since the previous inspection the school has installed a computer suite. This has improved facilities for the teaching of ICT as a subject. However, the set-up of the network is poor and teachers and pupils waste a lot of time searching for stored work files. This was very evident in all lessons seen and caused both teacher and pupil frustration. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 to 3 and unsatisfactory in Years 4 to 7. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher's lack of subject knowledge meant that routine problems experienced by pupils were not dealt with adequately. In lessons seen in Years 6 and 7 the teacher did not check for pupils' prior knowledge, nor engage the pupils in meaningful discussion about the work. Resources in the school remain limited. Classroom computers are connected to the Internet but have very few programs installed. The computers vary in age, specifications and ability to run newer programs. The lack of classroom resources significantly restricts pupils' ability to access ICT to aid their learning when the opportunity arises. During the inspection no classroom computers were used. In addition, resources for sensing technology, digital photography and video are inadequate.
63. The leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory. Assessment of ICT capability is not used consistently across the school to inform future planning. There has not been any monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning in the subject to inform the current ICT action plan. The subject knowledge of the co-ordinator is not secure.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. There is some use of ICT in other subjects, such as art and design, geography and English, but these are not part of a whole-school approach to help pupils to see how ICT can be used to learn or present work in most other subjects. Pupils do not see teachers routinely use ICT to enhance their teaching in other subjects except, for example, the use of an overhead projector in Year 6 and 7. Much of the work undertaken by pupils involves word processing and the use of clip art. Pupils have not experienced the use of e-mail to contact the wider community and the use of the Internet for research at the point of need is limited by the lack of classroom resources.

HUMANITIES

65. In humanities, inspectors sampled work in geography and history. One lesson was seen in geography and two in history and it was not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. From the evidence analysed there are indications that standards are average in Years 2, 6 and 7.
66. **Geography** has been the focus of curriculum development, which the co-ordinator has led soundly. Policy documents and references to planning guidance enable staff to teach the curriculum on a two-year cycle that avoids repetition of content in mixed-age groups. However, she has not played a significant role in monitoring the school's provision in geography. The school makes very good use of local visits and to places further afield to enliven the curriculum and to provide practical activities to deepen pupils' understanding. For instance, older pupils visit a local field centre and study river features. They develop their practical skills of estimating and measuring river flow and examine river features such as meanders and ox-bow lakes. Back in the classroom, they compare what they have seen with their earlier theoretical work. Younger pupils enjoy a study of contrasting localities, a Scottish island and their village, and are good at spotting the similarities and differences. They are less certain about the difference between man-made and natural features.
67. Although **history** has not enjoyed the attention given to geography, staff use the local area well in a similar way. For instance, as part of their study of the Victorians, younger pupils enjoyed a history day at a local living museum where they experienced life in a Victorian classroom and learned about everyday Victorian life. A colourful display of work back at school reflected the range of their learning experiences. Staff managed some useful

discussions in Years 6 and 7 as part of their work on Greek Gods and Thomas à Becket respectively. Although the lessons promoted average standards, the Year 6 lesson in particular did not challenge the higher-attaining pupils.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Younger pupils are developing a good knowledge of religious stories
- Older pupils can discuss a range of moral and ethical issues sensibly and have a good understanding of fairness
- Assemblies have well-planned themes that make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of the subject
- The quality of teaching and learning is good
- Preparations are in hand for the introduction of the new locally Agreed Syllabus but other aspects of subject co-ordination and assessment of pupils' progress are unsatisfactory

Commentary

68. Only two lessons were observed and, as much work in this subject involves discussions, there was limited written work to inspect. However, talking to pupils and analysis of other evidence indicates that pupils' standards by Years 2, 6 and 7 are broadly in line with those expected in the planning guidance that the school uses, which includes a locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils achieve soundly and since discussions involve all pupils making a contribution, pupils with special educational needs also achieve soundly. By Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of Christian stories and also understand that other faiths have their own stories. Higher-attaining pupils and some in Year 3 can also offer explanations as to why they question the literal interpretation of Noah's Ark.
69. By Year 6, pupils can link religious teaching with everyday life and well-led assemblies support this. As an established part of the curriculum, the school arranges for local clergy to work with the pupils and to host visits to the two village churches. On these visits, pupils learn about church rituals and the significance of features of the buildings. Year 6 and 7 pupils learn to listen with respect to religious leaders and are also beginning to understand their social and moral objectives as well as the spiritual ones that motivate them.
70. In both the lessons observed, teachers managed pupils' discussions well and this enabled them to explore their developing ideas in the safe knowledge that their views would be listened to. Older pupils made good progress in understanding the moral dilemmas that face people when they confront injustice. They listened with wrapt attention to a recording of Martin Luther King's, "I have a dream speech" and considered the issues around it.
71. The curriculum is in the process of change and the school is following the local education authority's guidance about the implementation of the new locally Agreed Syllabus. The co-ordinator has started preparations for this but lacks the time to monitor the school's current provision. Although teachers make a mental note of pupils' progress, there is nothing more organised to help staff build on the progress they have made when they change classes.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. Only four lessons were seen altogether in the following subjects: art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Therefore, it was not possible to make a firm judgement about provision. Inspectors examined pupils' work, and held discussions with them in addition to the lessons seen. Teaching and learning seen were satisfactory except in a Year 6 and 7 physical education lesson, when they were good.

73. Pupils' work in **art and design** shows that they have experienced a satisfactory range of techniques. There are strengths in painting and collage in Year 2 and 3 and in sketching in Year 6 and 7. These older pupils have developed their sketching and watercolour techniques by studying the works of Lowry and producing their own work in a similar style. The resulting work is detailed and shows that a good understanding of the composition of Lowry's paintings. Artwork on display shows pupils have worked in a range of materials, including clay, fabric, paint and pencil. The school make good use of visiting artists. For example, older pupils worked with an artist to create a large tapestry that went into a local exhibition. In the satisfactory lesson observed in Year 1, the teacher discussed the use of wool and cloth weaving, provided examples and set up a range of weaving activities. One group had the opportunity to use a small loom. Through using the loom and the shuttles the pupils quickly understood the technique. However, because of limited resources, some pupils had to wait quite a long time for their turn. Assessment and recording is carried out by some teachers on completion of modules of work, but the information is not consistently used to set specific targets for improvement. Subject leadership is unsatisfactory, as standards of teaching and learning in particular have not been monitored.
74. In **design and technology**, pupils have sound opportunities to design, make and evaluate their work. Work on display indicates that standards of attainment are average and that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The work includes a range of puppet types and hinged wooden birds and butterflies, designed and made by pupils in Years 6 and 7. Pupils in Year 2 have designed and evaluated sandwiches and designed packages for them. In a satisfactory lesson observed, Year 6 pupils worked on two linked activities well. Whilst some pupils, supported by teaching assistants, made and baked pastries, the rest of the pupils designed suitable packaging for the finished products. Most were clear about the issues to consider, such as size, attractiveness, and whether the product had to be sold hot or reheated. The teacher provided examples and layouts for the pupils to consider. However, quite a few pupils decided to draw around the examples they have been given rather than design their own. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. There is some assessment of pupils' achievement in design and technology but the information is not used consistently to inform future planning for progress. Standards in teaching and learning have not been monitored and, consequently, there is not a secure understanding of the subject's strengths and the areas for development.
75. In **music**, there are good opportunities for pupils to sing in the school choir, play an instrument and take part in productions of music and dance. In a satisfactory lesson observed in Year 1, pupils created a composition of sound to illustrate a journey by train and jeep. They made sound judgements when matching the untuned instruments to the vehicles. However, some pupils found it difficult to play only when required. This made it difficult for the rest of the class to concentrate. There is a lack of resources for using ICT in music and this adversely affects both teaching and learning. Leadership and management of music are unsatisfactory, as the subject leader has not had time to monitor standards or teaching. Assessment of music is minimal and inconsistent and, therefore, does not provide sufficient information to ensure pupils' progress.
76. A very good feature of the school's **physical education** curriculum is the range of extra activities in which pupils can choose to be involved. During a typical week there are after-school lessons in football, netball and tennis and these clubs are well attended. School staff and local specialists lead these activities. Other clubs run throughout the year in tune with the weather. Pupils take a regular part in inter-school sports such as football, netball and cross-country competitions. This participation plays a significant part in the social and cultural development of pupils in this small school. The co-ordinator actively promotes these activities and also ensures the safety and adequacy of equipment. Beyond this, her role is limited and does not include evaluation of provision or the development of the assessment of pupils' progress, which is unsatisfactory. In the Year 6 gymnastics lesson, the teacher coached the sequencing of movements in pairs well. Pupils made good progress because of the coaching points and their evaluation of their work.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

77. The school is working to develop its personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship provision through initiatives such as circle time, when pupils can discuss issues of concern, and through pupil representatives that are now part of the school council. Assemblies have a strong sense of school community and discussions in them and in some lessons show pupils that their views are valued and that their silence is respected. Staff also take incidental opportunities to discuss social and health issues as they arise, as in a Year 7 science lesson when pupils considered the implications of cross-gender breeding.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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