

INSPECTION REPORT

NEWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newton-in-Furness

LEA area: Cumbria

Unique reference number: 112194

Headteacher: Mr G Hudson

Lead inspector: Mrs D Bell

Dates of inspection: 22 – 24 March 2004

Inspection number: 257020

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	57
School address:	Newton Road Newton-in-Furness Barrow-in-Furness Cumbria
Postcode:	LA13 0LT
Telephone number:	01229 897927
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Fowler
Date of previous inspection:	5 May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Newton-in-Furness primary school is a small rural school with 57 pupils (27 boys and 30 girls), all from white British backgrounds. The number on roll has declined since the previous inspection due to a fall in the birth rate in the area that the school serves, which covers mainly Newton and Dalton, though some pupils also come from Barrow-in-Furness. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals (12.5%) is below the national average, but the proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is, at 26.3%, above the national average. The children's attainment on entry varies greatly from year to year because of the small numbers, though in most years it is as expected for their age. An increasing number of pupils are joining the school after Year 2 as the school tries to keep its numbers up. In the current Year 6, a significantly high proportion of pupils joined in Year 5. Because of the small numbers in each year group, the school is organised into three mixed-age classes: one for pupils in Years 5 and 6; one for pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4; and one for pupils in Reception and Year 1. Apart from the headteacher, all staff are new since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16413	Mrs D Bell	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs
1234	Mrs T Bradley	Lay inspector	
23392	Mrs A Ellison	Team inspector	Foundation stage Mathematics Science Geography History Physical education Religious education

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	20
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 & 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	32

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

A small, rural school in Cumbria, Newton Primary was inspected on 22 – 24 March 2004 by a team of three inspectors led by Mrs D Bell

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school is **not effective**. Unsatisfactory leadership and management have resulted in: a curriculum that lacks breadth and balance; too much variation in the quality of teaching as staff work and plan independently of each other; too many statutory requirements not being met; and pupils not achieving well enough by Year 6. Value for money is **unsatisfactory**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is no long term strategic planning, no whole school approach to planning, teaching, learning or assessment, and the curriculum does not meet statutory requirements
- There are examples of good teaching up to Year 4 but beyond this, teaching is unsatisfactory.
- The school has procedures to improve behaviour but they are not specific enough or applied consistently enough to improve the poor behaviour of a significant minority of pupils.
- The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is unsatisfactory and pupils of all ages have some concerns about behaviour and bullying.

Improvement since the last inspection has been **poor**. The issues identified at that time have not been properly dealt with and remain issues for the school now. There are still no whole school, strategic approaches to planning, teaching, learning or assessment and the advisability of keeping the front door securely locked at all times has again been strongly recommended to the school.

In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspections Act 1996 I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Although standards are as expected for pupils' ages in English and mathematics in Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' overall achievement is **unsatisfactory**. Caution is needed when interpreting the national test results and trends because each pupil represents around ten per cent. Nevertheless, some generalisations can be made. In most years, attainment on entry is typical of the children's ages. Those currently in their reception year are on course to reach the goals expected for the end of reception in all six areas of learning. The trend in the school's results is below the national trend in Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 2, the reading and writing results have declined considerably in the past three years, as have the mathematics results in Year 6. In contrast, Year 2 pupils did very well in mathematics in 2003, and teacher assessments show that they also did very well in science. Year 6 pupils did very well in English. The national test results in 2003 for pupils in Year 6 were as follows:

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

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.

Better planning to meet pupils' needs has led to improvement in mathematics in Year 2, and similar good planning is now evident in English. This accounts for the better standards in reading and writing seen during the inspection in that age group. The heavy reliance on the commercial scheme for mathematics prevents Year 6 pupils from progressing at the rates of which they are capable. They do much better in English because, despite the lack of teachers' planning, their work is well marked, and they have some freedom in their writing to show what they are capable of. The school exceeded its targets for English in 2003 but did not meet its target for mathematics. Overall, its expectations of its pupils are not high enough and it does not do enough to ensure that pupils always achieve as well

as they can. Parents ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time, and attendance is consistently well above the national average. Overall, however, pupils' behaviour, attitudes and values are **unsatisfactory**, as is their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **unsatisfactory**, as is the overall quality of teaching and learning. There are examples of good teaching in the school but the lack of a coherent approach to planning, assessment and the consistent management of pupils' behaviour slows learning down considerably in Years 5 and 6, and also affects learning from time to time in the mixed Reception / Year 1 class. The curriculum is not planned well enough to ensure breadth and balance across all subjects, and does not fully meet statutory requirements. While English teaching is satisfactory overall, the over-reliance on a commercial scheme for mathematics, and the over-use of worksheets in other subjects, mean that the more and less able pupils are not catered for well enough. Insufficient attention is given to promoting literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Although it cares satisfactorily for its pupils, the school does not provide them with enough support and guidance, academically or personally. The accommodation and resources are used appropriately, except for the information and communication technology (ICT) suite, which is seriously under-used as a tool for teaching and learning. The school's partnership with parents is unsatisfactory. However, links with the community and other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **unsatisfactory**. Governance is unsatisfactory and subject leaders have minimal impact beyond their own classes. The headteacher does not provide a strong enough lead in planning for improvement. Finances are managed satisfactorily but there is no long term strategic planning to tackle the major issues facing the school. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's work is ineffectual and too many statutory requirements are not met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Although, overall, the views are broadly satisfactory, parents and pupils have major concerns about behaviour, bullying and harassment. The school is not dealing effectively enough with these issues.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Devise and implement a long-term strategic plan that provides vision and direction for its work.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels and implement rigorous systems to monitor, evaluate and improve all of its work.
- Plan a whole school curriculum that is broad, balanced and meets all statutory requirements.
- Establish a consistent, whole school approach to planning, teaching, learning and assessment
- Use all assessment information more effectively to meet pupils' individual learning needs.
- Improve the management of pupils' behaviour and ensure consistency of approach at all times.

And, to meet statutory requirements:

- Meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and the statutory duty to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils
- Write and implement a policy to promote race equality, and ensure all statutory information is included in the prospectus and the governors' report to parents

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **unsatisfactory** overall because weaknesses in teaching and learning mean that too many pupils do not reach the levels by Year 6 of which they are capable.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are as expected for pupils' ages in the subjects it was possible to inspect but there has been a worrying decline in overall standards in recent years.
- Pupils achieve satisfactorily up to Year 4. Achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6 because teaching, learning and pupils' behaviour are not well enough planned or managed.
- The school sets targets based on the outcomes of annual tests but it does not assess, analyse or plan pupils' learning well enough to ensure that the targets are both realistic and challenging.

Commentary

- 1 Although attainment on entry fluctuates slightly from year to year, in most years it is in line with that expected of four year olds. The children currently in the Foundation Stage are on course to reach the goals expected for the end of Reception in all six areas of learning. Their achievement is satisfactory overall. However, in physical development, it is unsatisfactory. They do not have regular, spontaneous access to outdoor play. In physical education sessions, they find difficulty keeping up with the Year 1 pupils alongside whom they are taught, especially when dressing and undressing for the lessons.
- 2 Standards in English and mathematics are satisfactory in Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils achieve satisfactorily up to Year 4. Achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6 because of the disruption to learning caused by serious weaknesses in planning, assessment and the management of pupils' behaviour. Because there were fewer than ten pupils in Year 2 or Year 6, the tables showing the average points scores are omitted from this report. All comparisons must be treated with caution because of the small numbers and the fluctuating attainment of the pupils in each year group. Nevertheless, some generalisations can be drawn. The trend in the school's results is below the national trend in Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 2, the reading and writing results have declined considerably in the past three years, as have the mathematics results in Year 6. In contrast, Year 2 pupils did very well in mathematics in 2003, and teacher assessments showed that they also did very well in science. Year 6 pupils did very well in English. Better planning to meet pupils' needs has led to improvement in mathematics in Year 2. Similar good planning is now evident in reading and writing in that age group and accounts for the improved standards seen during the inspection. Standards in reading and writing are satisfactory in Year 2 and Year 6. In speaking, they are good. Confident youngsters express themselves articulately by Year 6, using a good range of vocabulary and adapting their speech to suit their audience. Listening skills are not as good. Too many pupils do not listen well enough to each other or to their teachers, and this disrupts learning for all.
- 3 The heavy reliance on the commercial scheme for mathematics prevents Year 6 pupils from progressing at the rates of which they are capable. They complete too many mathematical exercises from the scheme books. Because they are not given enough opportunities to engage in practical and investigative activities, they do not apply their mathematical learning well enough in real-life problem-solving situations. This is being addressed satisfactorily in Year 2 and accounts for the better achievement noted in the younger age group. Year 6 pupils do much better in English than in mathematics or science because, despite the lack of teachers' planning, their writing is well marked, and they have some freedom in it to show what they are capable of. In Year 6, pupils' achievement in science is hindered by their having to complete

too many worksheets rather than engaging in practical and investigative activities for themselves, and recording their findings in different ways.

- 4 The school exceeded its targets for English in 2003 but did not meet its target for mathematics. Again, this evaluation must be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils involved. However, there is no secure data to ensure targets are both challenging and realistic and, overall, the school's expectations of its pupils are not high enough. Although the school analyses the outcomes of the national tests, it does not do the same with the optional annual tests. It tracks pupils' progress from year to year but states too readily that for some pupils 'to stand still is an achievement'. It does not investigate why some pupils' progress slows and does not do enough to ensure that achievement is as good as it could be by, for example, adapting planning, teaching and learning to tackle weaknesses as they arise.
- 5 The only other subjects in which it was possible to make judgements about standards and achievement in Year 6 were geography, history and religious education. Standards are sound in the first two subjects but unsatisfactory in the third. Pupils do not know enough about different religions to understand how they influence the way people live. Achievement is unsatisfactory in all three subjects. While pupils had good recall of history or geography topics they were studying or had recently studied, they had little recall of any other topics within these subjects, and very little recall of anything they had done in religious education. Their files are full of worksheets that show little development of skills, knowledge and understanding and stifle their ability to show what they are really capable of doing. This approach also means that pupils do not use or consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills well enough in other subjects. Their work is not well enough planned or organised to enable them to do so. Very little ICT work was available, although Year 6 pupils have used a computer-aided design program to design mini greenhouses, and there is some evidence of control work in their folders. However, they do not use ICT as a natural tool for learning, and this inhibits their learning and progress.
- 6 The progress of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) related to learning is similar to that of other pupils. They have appropriate individual education plans and, up to Year 4, make satisfactory progress towards the targets within them. In Years 5 and 6, they usually do the same work as the rest of the class but complete less of it, or present it less well. Because the teachers' planning does not take enough account of their learning needs, they do not make enough progress in this class. There was no evidence of any differences in the achievement of boys compared with girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Although attendance is good, pupils' behaviour, attitudes, values and personal development are overall **unsatisfactory**. The school does not promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well enough.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is good and most pupils arrive at school on time.
- The recently introduced strategies to promote better behaviour are laudable attempts to promote moral and social development. However, bullying and harassment are not adequately addressed.
- Most pupils are polite, well mannered and eager to work but too many are disrespectful to their teachers and to each other. They disrupt learning and bring down the ethos of the school.
- There is little promotion of spiritual or cultural awareness. Too many pupils miss the daily act of collective worship and the school does not pay enough attention to promoting race equality.

Commentary

- 7 Attendance is consistently well above the national average. Although a good number of pupils live some distance away from school, their parents get them to school regularly and on time.

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.

- 8 Despite their very good attendance, too many pupils have real and well-founded concerns about poor behaviour, bullying and harassment and the way it affects their learning and personal development. The poor attitudes and lack of respect for others shown by a significant minority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a very negative impact on the ethos of the whole school and very much disrupt learning in the Year 5/6 class. The school's provision for moral and social development is unsatisfactory. Too many pupils in different classes feel intimidated and uncomfortable. Younger pupils expressed anxiety at the thought that inspectors might talk to them alongside some of the older pupils. A significant minority of older pupils have developed strategies to cope with verbal bullying that appears to have gone on for some time, and speak with longing of their move to high school where 'things will stop' and they will be able to make a fresh start. Although there have been no exclusions in the past year, parents, staff and governors showed equally strong concern over behaviour. They consider that the problem lies with pupils who have come late to the school, but the inspection team found that the school does not have clearly defined strategies for defining or dealing with bullying or any other form of harassment. This is unacceptable. Although a member of staff does spend time talking to older pupils about their behaviour and feelings, many pupils feel they are not listened to or taken seriously.
- 9 Pupils with learning difficulties are, on the whole, appropriately integrated into their classes. However, the oldest pupils with behavioural difficulties dominate their class groups and cause problems throughout this small school. The school has acted on the advice and support it received last term from the local education authority in terms of setting targets for these pupils. However, there are too many targets for them to cope with all at once. The school has not prioritised them or broken them down to ensure that the intended improvements can be

measured and achieved step by step. Overall, there is little evidence that they are having the desired impact on the pupils' behaviour and attitudes, and the pupils themselves do not take enough responsibility for their own actions. Initiatives such as the 'Golden Rules', the 'Beacon Targets' and 'Student of the week' awards are a step in the right direction towards improving behaviour throughout the school. However, the reasons for the awards are not made clear so they do not reinforce expectations of effort, behaviour or achievement.

- 10 There are few opportunities for social development. Although a family group arrangement is in place at lunchtime and older pupils have opportunities to help younger children, in practice they are anxious to leave the dining hall as soon as they have finished eating. Pupils are given little responsibility and there are few opportunities for them to make their views known or become involved in the life of the school. A significant minority of older pupils speak to staff and other pupils disrespectfully. This is in direct contrast to others who strive to be responsive and co-operative, to work hard and to maintain good standards despite disruption. Few opportunities are provided for pupils to work together. Although the majority do respond well when allowed to do so, social development is stifled by those who find it difficult to relate to others in a positive way. Pupils are often very noisy at work and at play and pay little attention to the needs of others. However, the school works hard to support charities, and pupils in Years 5 and 6 are involved in a junior citizenship scheme. When pupils make individual efforts, such as when one pupil swam to raise a large sum of money for the local oncology unit, this is recognised and applauded in assembly.
- 11 Although assemblies do take place each day, too many pupils miss them for other activities, for example swimming, recorder lessons or learning support. Thus, opportunities are missed to promote spiritual development by achieving a whole school understanding of this area and its impact on personal development. The pupils' knowledge of the Christian religion is minimal. Although other major religions have been touched upon in the younger age groups, pupils in Year 6 are not secure in their understanding of the purpose or key points of different religions or of the uniqueness of each individual. Spiritual development is not given enough attention in other subjects either. Residential visits, visits to places of historical and cultural interest, and visitors to the school make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' understanding of the British cultural heritage. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures. The school does not do enough to promote race equality and does not pay enough attention to teaching pupils about the range and diversity of cultures in Britain today.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **unsatisfactory**. The school does care for its pupils but weaknesses in teaching, the curriculum, the use of assessment and the partnership with parents mean that it does not make sure that pupils achieve as well as they can. This represents a marked deterioration since the last inspection.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **unsatisfactory** overall. It is at least satisfactory up to Year 4 but there are major weaknesses in overall planning and assessment that lead to a deterioration in achievement, which, by Year 6, is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good planning, preparation and enthusiasm for learning generated in the middle class is not carried on into the top class. This slows down pupils' progress in lessons and hinders their overall achievement.
- Planning for the Foundation Stage does not always meet the needs of reception children. Here, and throughout the school, the heavy reliance on worksheets hinders pupils' learning.

- The overall poor management of pupils' behaviour in the top class seriously impedes learning in Years 5 and 6. There is also some inconsistency in the management of behaviour in the youngest class.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory and marking is much too variable throughout the school.
- The total lack of records of planning and assessment by one teacher in the top class means there is no secure way of checking how well individual pupils are doing, or what they need to do to achieve as well as they can.
- Although the school lays down its expectations for homework, its approach is inconsistent and unhelpful to parents and pupils.

Commentary

- 12 Teaching is satisfactory overall in reception and in Years 1 to 4, with examples of good teaching in both classes. However, the absence of a whole school approach to planning and assessment results in a lack of continuity in teaching and learning throughout the school. This weakness was identified at the last inspection and has not been properly dealt with, resulting in unsatisfactory improvement in teaching and learning overall. It especially affects subjects other than English and mathematics, many of which have insufficient time allocated to them, and is a further symptom of the poor leadership and management of the school. However, even English and mathematics are not taught well enough in Years 5 and 6. They are not planned well enough to meet pupils' individual needs and insufficient attention is paid to encouraging pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. The promotion of literacy skills is hampered by the over-use of worksheets, as a result of which pupils are prevented from working to the levels of which they are capable.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 15 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	1	4	8	1	1	0

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

- 13 The school has taken a number of new pupils into Years 5 and 6 in the past three years, some of whom have learning and/or behavioural difficulties. The poor planning and assessment in this class, especially by one of the teachers, mean that pupils' learning is not informed by their prior attainment, and they are not achieving as well as they might. While the two part-time teachers who take the class indicate that they know the pupils well and talk to each other about them, it is clear that they do not take enough account of the pupils' prior learning and attainment, and their often substantial personal knowledge. In particular, the needs of higher attaining pupils are not being met. These pupils are seldom given appropriately challenging work, and there are few planned opportunities for any pupils to undertake personal and extended research. At different times, valuable learning time is lost in the top class because different groups of pupils are not included in parts of lessons and not engaged in learning. This is sometimes because one year group has to wait without a task while the other is dealt with, as happened in mathematics; and sometimes because the content of the lesson is dull and does not spark the pupils' interest because of the way it is taught, as happened in science. At other times, it is because a dominant group of pupils, some with behavioural difficulties and some just badly behaved, show little respect for themselves, other pupils or the teacher, and are not handled well enough. All of these factors add up to a lack of inclusion that is the result of pupils' work not being sufficiently well matched to their levels of capability.
- 14 The satisfactory use made of teaching assistants and national guidance ensures that pupils with special educational needs related to learning make satisfactory progress. This is not so for behaviour. Pupils in the oldest class constantly disrupt the learning and personal development of other pupils. Alongside the weaknesses in planning and assessment, a further problem in the management of pupils' behaviour is the lack of consistency across the school.

In two of the three classes, teachers do not always insist that all pupils are listening to them or to each other. For example, in the youngest class, the teacher sometimes simply raises her voice over the children so they hear her without having to listen properly, and a good number of pupils get away with calling out, interrupting the teacher and responding inappropriately to questions. In the oldest class, one of the teachers did make sure all pupils were listening, and waited for them to behave appropriately, but did not do this the next time they became noisy and were not paying attention. This teacher works hard with individual pupils in Years 5 and 6 to help them understand their behaviour targets. However, the targets are rarely referred to in lessons to remind pupils what is expected of them or to praise them when they are trying to achieve the targets. In contrast, the management of behaviour is good in the middle class. Here, the teacher constantly reminds pupils of their targets and lets nothing go in the drive to ensure that all are paying attention and learning. In this class, when pupils behave or respond responsibly, their contributions are valued and they try hard to improve.

- 15 Although assessment in English and mathematics has improved since the last inspection, it is still not good enough. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' learning is broadly satisfactory in English and mathematics in the two youngest classes, and the information is usually, but not always, used appropriately in planning. For example, planning for the Foundation Stage does not promote independent learning sufficiently. One of the teachers in the top class makes assessment notes on individual pupils but there is little evidence that these are used when planning further work because of the absence of regular, short term planning and records. The other teacher who takes the class keeps no records of planning or assessment. The weaknesses in the top class mean that there is no way of:

- evaluating whether learning is adapted to build on pupils' strengths or to tackle their weaknesses
- knowing whether pupils are making enough progress or achieving to the best of their ability.

In the other two classes, teachers make some end-of-unit assessments in other subjects, but again, there is no whole school approach to using the information in planning, so the value of this work is limited in its ability to move learning on.

- 16 Marking is inconsistent. In English, it is mostly supportive. In the middle class, it shows pupils how to improve their work and they respond appropriately by doing corrections and by adding to their writing. Elsewhere in the school, it sometimes, but not always, makes pupils think about how to improve their work but similar comments are made on all work, rather than being specific to individual pupils' needs. In mathematics, work is not always marked, sometimes for considerable periods of time, and sometimes it is marked correct when it is not. At other times, pupils complete pages of the workbook, getting everything correct and, therefore, not being challenged enough by what they have to do. This inhibits their learning. Earlier this term, all pupils were given targets for writing and there are blank proformas in some teachers' files showing that the school intends to involve pupils in evaluating their progress towards their targets. However, few pupils know what their targets are, or how to achieve them step by step, and they are not yet shared with parents. This limits their usefulness. Files of pupils' work are kept in all classes. However, they are not levelled or annotated to show how well pupils have done or what they need to do to improve and are, therefore, very limited in their usefulness as records of progress. They are mostly marked only with ticks. There are very few comments and there is an abundance of mostly undated worksheets that prevent pupils doing extended writing or research work to take their learning on further at their own pace.
- 17 Parents voiced several concerns about the school's approach to homework. They felt homework was not valued and that pupils did not always receive feedback about it. The school's homework policy sets out clearly the school's expectations for the amount of time to be spent on homework and that it will be an extension of class work. However, the approach to homework is inconsistent throughout the school and there is no expectation that it will be completed, despite the policy stating clearly that if pupils do not do their homework their progress may be hindered. This is unhelpful to pupils and parents. The inspection team found

that homework does not always consolidate or extend class work, and it is not valued enough as a means of doing so.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **unsatisfactory** because it is not sufficiently broad and balanced, and statutory requirements are not met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curricular planning is weak. It does not provide for continuity of teaching and progression in learning throughout the school, and does not meet the needs of all pupils.
- Statutory requirements are not met in respect of: religious education; the daily act of collective worship; a policy to promote racial awareness and race equality because the school does not see these as priority areas.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.
- Timetables, particularly for older pupils, do not lead to an appropriate allocation of time for all subjects.
- Science, history and geography are too worksheet led and there are too few opportunities to use extended writing or to promote thinking and research skills.
- The ICT suite is under-used as a resource for teaching and learning.

Commentary

- 18 The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements and is not sufficiently broad and balanced to meet the needs of the pupils. Planning in English and mathematics takes account of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and mathematical work is supported by a commercial scheme. However, particularly for the older pupils, the heavy reliance on the commercial scheme means that the mathematics curriculum does not meet the pupils' different learning needs. This hinders their progress and achievement. In religious education, insufficient attention is paid to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, and the school does not hold a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. The policy for the subject remains in draft form and provides little guidance for the staff. In other subjects, curricular planning does not support continuous learning throughout the school. The planning done in the two younger classes appropriately reflects national guidance. However, there are weaknesses in the Foundation Stage in relation to the children having enough spontaneous access to, for example, imaginative role play and outdoor learning experiences.
- 19 The school's promotion of the full inclusion of all pupils in all activities is unsatisfactory because the needs of all pupils are not met. While a policy exists to promote equality of opportunity, it does not state clearly how the school will achieve its aim through, for example, approaches to teaching, learning, the curriculum, or a drive to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can. The school does not meet the statutory requirement to have a policy and procedures to promote racial awareness and race equality. It feels this is part of the equal opportunities policy but the blanket statement contained in that policy is not specific enough, and the school does little to introduce the pupils to the range and diversity of culture in Britain today.
- 20 Overall provision for special educational needs is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs related to learning have individual education plans with targets that are appropriate to their needs. However, these are not always shared with the pupil to encourage their success, and they are not always taken into account in teachers' planning, especially in the top class. Although the school makes use of some of the recommended support programmes for literacy, the effectiveness of intervention is not carefully monitored. Programmes for numeracy are not used in a systematic manner and the school does not have a coherent programme of ICT to support individual learning.

- 21 Despite several requests, inspectors were not provided with timetables for the whole of the inspection week. They were given timetables for only the inspection period, and it became clear that full timetables were available for only two of the three classes. There were no planning, assessment or record keeping files for the third class for one of the two teachers who share the class. The information from the second was minimal. It was not therefore possible to trace continuity in planning and teaching or progression in learning, and no way of checking or ensuring breadth and balance across the whole school. There are long gaps between the teaching of units in some subjects for older pupils. The teaching of subjects such as history and geography, and to some extent science, is too worksheet led throughout the school. This means that there are few opportunities for pupils to use their writing, numeracy or ICT skills effectively to reinforce or consolidate their learning. The arrangements for teaching pupils in mixed-age groups are not well thought out. Pupils are generally allocated into year groups for tasks with little account taken of their capability to ensure that the activities pose suitable challenge for them. On occasions, older pupils are left with no task or activity, while a younger age group has homework marked and tasks explained. This is a waste of valuable learning time and is not conducive to good behaviour or a love of learning. Pupils are not secure in their preparation for transfer to secondary school. Although the school feels it has good relationships with the local secondary school and is supported by it in subjects such as design and technology, pupils feel unprepared for the change in the size of school. They are, however, hopeful of making new friends and having wider opportunities for learning.
- 22 In the two younger classes, support staff, parents and volunteers are suitably deployed. However, in the oldest class, a support teacher available for the whole of the inspection period was not well deployed and the overall impact this could have had on pupils' learning and behaviour was significantly reduced. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. However, the ICT suite is a much under-used resource. During the inspection, the youngest class was seen using it on two occasions but it was empty for the rest of the time. In two of the three classes, the suite is clearly timetabled for one discrete ICT lesson each week, and staff and pupils indicate that it is also used by the third class on a weekly basis. However, it is not used effectively enough to develop independent learning or to promote pupils' achievement by supporting those who find learning difficult, or to extend the learning and personal development of higher attaining pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for care, guidance and support is **unsatisfactory**. The school has not fully addressed important issues from the previous inspection, and behaviour and relationships have deteriorated since that time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has recently put into place strategies to promote pupils' personal development but it does not use even its limited assessment information to guide pupils' personal and academic progress well enough.
- Health and safety issues identified at the previous inspection have not been adequately addressed and little progress has been made in other areas.
- The involvement of pupils in their learning and in the school's work and development is poor.

Commentary

- 23 Parents believe there is a family atmosphere in school and that the school cares well for their children. The school does care for its pupils but it has not addressed some important issues identified by its last inspection. There are satisfactory arrangements for child protection. The headteacher and a governor of the school are responsible for implementing these procedures and keeping other adults in school up-to-date with changes. There are no pupils on the child

protection register at present. Pupils looked after by the local authority are adequately supported and the school works closely with their carers.

- 24 The school's health and safety policy reflects adequately the thought given to pupils' safety during school trips, when using the kiln or the Internet, and during physical education lessons and scientific experiments. However, beyond this, the school routines do not ensure the adequate safety of all pupils at all times. The school building is well maintained, risk assessments are carried out routinely, and there are two members of staff with up-to-date first aid qualifications. Other procedures are too haphazard and the school does not consider seriously enough the welfare of all its pupils in all situations. For example:
- despite being told to address the issue at the last inspection, the school door remains unlocked throughout the school day;
 - fire drills are carried out but records are not up to date;
 - parents are informed if pupils receive bumps to the head in school but few details are recorded of these or any other incidents;
 - arrangements are not good enough to ensure that pupils who might be unwell or unhappy in school are secure and well cared for; this was noted in discussions with pupils about bullying, and when a pupil was left alone in a distressed state in a classroom for over half an hour while the class went to assembly.

Induction arrangements for pupils are satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage are appropriately supported and settle quickly into school routines.

- 25 The school is satisfactorily supplementing its new strategies for improving behaviour with the recently introduced 'circle time' sessions. In these, pupils sit in a circle with their teacher during personal, social and health education lessons and participate in activities aimed at helping them to take responsibility for their conduct and for managing their emotions. A good example of this was also seen in an assembly that contributed well to the pupils' understanding of right and wrong, and provided them with opportunities to consider their own feelings and those of others. Unfortunately, not all pupils were present at this assembly and the school lost an opportunity to influence the personal development of some of its ill-behaved older pupils. Academic support is patchy. Although pupils' progress is recorded each year using the optional tests, the information is not used at all well to seek out areas for development and to plan a curriculum that addresses them.
- 26 The involvement of pupils in the school's work and development is poor. The school has no formal mechanisms for regularly seeking and acting on pupils' views, and some relationships have clearly broken down. A significant minority of pupils believe that behaviour is bad, that systems to promote good behaviour are ineffective, and that reporting concerns is unhelpful because nothing is done to address them. Some younger pupils do not enjoy the friendship of older pupils and, in the responses to their questionnaires, many older pupils indicated that they felt they were not trusted to take responsibility. The school meets with outside agencies to support the development of pupils with special educational needs, and knows the difficulties and problems that each pupil faces. It is willing to take advice and guidance in the interests of the child but does not always use this effectively in planning to meet their needs.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is **unsatisfactory**. However, links with the community and other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a high level of parental attendance at meetings, productions and events held by the parent teacher association, which raises considerable sums of money for the school.
- Parents are not given enough information about their children's work and progress to enable them to help their children at school and at home.

- The school does not regularly seek the views of parents or involve them sufficiently in its development.

Commentary

- 27 The majority of parents are happy with the work of the school and appreciate the family atmosphere of a small school. Parents are supportive at meetings, productions and social events, and attendance is high. However, the areas for improvement identified by some parents, and confirmed by the inspection, are barriers to improving learning and raising standards. They include:
- an inconsistent approach to homework
 - a lack of information about the curriculum
 - a lack of mechanisms to seek and value the parents' views
- 28 Some parents are less than happy with behaviour at lunchtime. Lunchtime arrangements are currently unsatisfactory because they do not promote the personal and social development of the pupils. Pupils who eat quickly and are in a hurry to go outside are required to wait around the sides of the dining hall until almost half the school is ready to go outside. As there are only two mid-day supervisors, one stays with diners while the other takes the pupils on to the playground. There is a hurried atmosphere in the dining hall, which is not conducive to lunch being a social occasion.
- 29 The school has involved parents in recent decision making such as the provision of school meals, but regular, formal consultation is under-developed. Newsletters to parents, though infrequent, are friendly and informative about scheduled events in school. However, detailed information about the curriculum and what children will be covering in different topics varies from class to class. The lack of such information hinders the parents' ability to support their children's learning and to become involved in it. Annual reports provide parents with appropriate explanations of what their children have covered in lessons, and give some guidance on what pupils could do to improve their learning in English and mathematics. They are inconsistent about how well this information is specifically designed to the needs of individual pupils. The profile of the targets set for pupils with special educational needs is not raised sufficiently with pupils or parents to encourage success. Although they are discussed with parents and carers, they are not signed and agreed in any formal way to ensure a contract to help the pupil and inform the parent.
- 30 Links with the community are satisfactory. The school's parent and teacher association provides a social life within the community, which raises funds to support the work of the school and provides pupils with experiences that contribute to their social development. An appropriately wide range of visitors to school contributes to new dimensions in learning for all pupils. The school encourages pupils to participate in charitable works and fundraising is aimed at national and community needs. Work with other schools provides pupils with interesting activities and lessons to stimulate their learning in music, art, physical education and design and technology, and gives them the opportunity to work alongside more pupils of their own age. There are good links with the local secondary school that ease transition for the pupils, though many remain apprehensive about their move to a much bigger school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is **unsatisfactory**. Overall, leadership and management have deteriorated significantly since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very limited view of school improvement and development, and does not provide a strong enough lead for staff or governors.

- The issues raised at the previous inspection have not been addressed properly. The school does not make sure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- The governing body supports the school but does not hold it to account or ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
- Although the management of the school's finances is sound, the current management systems in other areas, including monitoring, are unsatisfactory.
- Subject leadership is unsatisfactory. Co-ordinators are not empowered to lead and manage their subjects throughout the school in order to bring about sustained improvement in them.

Commentary

- 31 The headteacher's leadership of the school is poor. He does not provide a strong enough lead for staff or governors in teaching or in determining the school's strengths and weaknesses and what it needs to do to improve. He has a very heavy teaching commitment and this cuts down on the time available for administrative duties. Nevertheless, there are basic weaknesses in the curriculum, teaching (including learning and assessment) and subject leadership that he has failed to address and which are carried over from the previous inspection. Staff in this small school do talk to each other about pupils and their work, and they know the pupils well. However, there is no real sense of a shared view of development and improvement, and there is no long-term strategic planning to support these. As the number of pupils has declined, the school has taken pupils from further afield, many of whom have specific learning or behavioural difficulties. However, it has not taken steps to sustain a positive learning ethos within a changing population. This, plus the lack of rigorous school self-evaluation, presents a major barrier to learning despite the fact that a good number of pupils want to learn, teaching groups are small and, overall, the staff are committed to the school and its pupils.
- 32 Subject leadership is also unsatisfactory. Co-ordinators have minimal influence on their subjects throughout the school. There are examples of good practice where the co-ordinators of some subjects have started to put together files with samples of pupils' work, and to determine areas of strengths and weakness in their subjects. The lack of clear guidance from the top and the absence of a strategic, whole-school approach to leading and managing subjects adversely affect pupils' progress. The funding for special educational needs is appropriately allocated and the special needs co-ordinator has appropriate experience and expertise. However, leadership and management of this area are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has little influence or impact on the learning or behavioural difficulties of pupils in the top class. This is due to the poor planning and assessment in that class that result in the pupils' needs not being well enough met.
- 33 Governance is unsatisfactory. Although some governors have actively sought information to help take the school forward, the governing body has not ensured that statutory requirements are met in respect of:
- the daily act of collective worship
 - religious education or race equality
 - including all statutory information in the school prospectus and the governing body's annual report to parents
- 34 In addition, governors have not adequately addressed the issues identified at the previous inspection or reported the school's progress in these to parents. Governors have been active in ensuring the involvement of the local authority's behaviour management team to help the school tackle the behaviour issues. However, they do not hold the school to account for how effectively the school is implementing the agreed behaviour strategies or how well pupils achieve. They are not successfully ensuring that all pupils have equality of opportunity to learn and make the progress of which they are capable, within a learning environment that is free from bullying and harassment.
- 35 The management of the school is unsatisfactory and self-evaluation is weak. Some monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place. However, it is not recorded and its impact is minimal

because it does not lead to weaknesses in teaching and learning being tackled effectively. Performance management systems are in place but, again, they are not used effectively to tackle the weaknesses in the school. Targets are based on the priorities in the current school development plan but, like that plan, they are not focused well enough on improving teaching in order to improve learning. The development plan itself is limited in its vision. It concentrates more on systems, procedures and documentation than on how the proposed actions will improve learning. A further outline plan for curriculum development is a list of which subjects and aspects will be visited each term up to 2006/7. However, there is no detail beyond this, no rationale for the ordering of the subjects and aspects, and no long-term strategic planning that shows that the school knows where it is going. This seriously hinders its development and improvement.

- 36 Finances are managed satisfactorily. School routines are well established and the school day runs smoothly. Governors are very aware of the impact of the decline in numbers on the budget and the possible implications for the school. They have retained a substantial surplus to keep three classes for as long as possible. However, they do not ensure that they get best value for their spending by evaluating the impact it has on pupils' achievement or on standards. Overall, the pupils do not achieve well enough and too many are not reaching the standards of which they are capable. Therefore value for money is unsatisfactory.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	127,242
Total expenditure	135,441
Expenditure per pupil	2462

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	21,965
Balance carried forward to the next	13,766

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37 The majority of children start school with levels of attainment expected for their age, though the small numbers in each year group mean that this does vary in some years. Reception children are taught alongside Year 1 pupils and have adapted well to the fairly formal approach to learning adopted by the staff to accommodate also the needs of the pupils in Year 1. This does mean, however, that the learning environment is not totally suitable for them. While planning adequately covers all areas of learning, and is in line with national guidance, the planned activities do not allow for the flexibility and independence expected at this age. In addition, the lack of resources for role play, for the development of very early skills, and for regular access to outdoor play means that the children's experiences in these areas are somewhat limited. The overall leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, and staff assess pupils' progress appropriately on a day-to-day basis. However, this information is not yet fed into the foundation profiles, which, though completed termly, are not yet an integral part of ongoing assessment procedures. The profiles do not yet provide an immediate overview of each child's ongoing development in each area of learning and they do not inform planning in any clearly structured way. The Foundation Stage teacher is participating in training to make better use of the profiles.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children cope well with school routines and confidently join in all school activities, including collective worship, playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Adults are used well to help children learn to share and take turns and the majority of children do these things satisfactorily.
- Staff do not consistently manage children's behaviour well enough, and there are too few opportunities when children can develop flexibility and independence in learning.

Commentary

38 Achievement is satisfactory, as is the quality of teaching. Almost all children are on course to reach the goals expected for the end of the reception year. Sound induction procedures ensure that the children quickly settle into school routines. They follow procedures well and behave satisfactorily, moving quietly and sensibly about their activities. However, they do not always listen to others and, rather than insist that they do so by being quiet and attentive, the teacher frequently raises her voice so that they can hear instructions without stopping to listen. Even when they have been asked to be quiet before they leave the room, the line sets off with much chatter that is not checked. Therefore, children do not develop a strong enough understanding of the need to do as they are told so that all can hear and follow instructions first time round. Staff are not consistent enough in managing this behaviour, although they do develop the children's abilities to share and take turns. However, many activities are too adult-directed and, at times, over-supervised, thereby reducing opportunities for pupils to make their own decisions, develop their own skills and become more independent in their learning. The children frequently end up sitting down for too long in lessons and in assemblies. It is to their credit that they remain quiet in assemblies even when the stories and discussions are too complex for them to understand.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children express their thoughts clearly and confidently in simple sentences, often responding accurately to questions posed for the older (Year 1) pupils in the class.
- The teaching of reading is structured well and children develop skills in a systematic way. They have a good knowledge of letter sounds and use this appropriately in their reading and writing.
- The teacher's planning and expectations meet the needs of individual children, except in relation to fostering good listening skills.
- Adult intervention sometimes stifles the children's own imagination and creativity.

Commentary

- 39 Children speak clearly and confidently in the formal and informal situations planned for them by the teacher, for example when telling other members of the class what they have done. They talked confidently to inspectors about their work, explained what they were doing and showed a well-developed understanding of what was expected of them. For example, they enjoyed the chance to use the role-play area as a veterinary surgery. Here, they displayed a good understanding of how to make appointments, and discussed treatment for sick animals, thereby enhancing their reading and speaking skills. However, they do not readily listen to others and this sometimes inhibits their progress and achievement which, overall, are satisfactory. Almost all children are on course to reach the goals expected for the end of reception.
- 40 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Using her expertise in 'Reading Recovery', the teacher provides children with a systematic and well-structured range of reading and writing experiences that successfully secure their basic understanding of these aspects of English. As a result, children have a good understanding of letter sounds and combinations. They use these appropriately to work out how to read and spell new words, and they have an appropriate understanding of how to use capital letters and full stops. The teacher's careful choice of reading materials successfully ensures that the children's needs and interests are appropriately developed, and that they learn to enjoy reading from an early age. There are enough opportunities for children to engage in role play but this is often too adult-directed. Adult helpers ask searching questions of the children, and encourage them to think and make appropriate responses. However, while this develops the children's vocabulary well, it sometimes leaves too little room for the children to become independent learners who organise their own play and exercise their imagination and creativity. These developments are also hindered by the formal approach used to accommodate the learning needs of pupils in Year 1. Nevertheless, the reception children rise well to the added challenge this poses for them, and often respond well to the questions directed at the older (Year 1) pupils.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good starters to lessons give children a clear understanding of number order, although the follow-up activities are not always well enough matched to the children's different levels of capability.
- The heavy reliance on worksheets means that children have few opportunities to find things out for themselves through practical and investigative activities.

Commentary

- 41 Although only number work was observed during the inspection, the teacher's planning follows national guidance and all areas of mathematical development are adequately covered. Sound teaching ensures that children are provided with frequent and varied opportunities to count and order numbers. As a result, they count forward accurately in tens and in units from different starting points, though they are less secure when counting backwards. The teacher directs relevant questions to different children but there is much shouting out during these sessions, which is not curbed effectively enough. The teacher too often raises her voice to be heard above the children rather than insisting that they listen to her and to each other with respect. This stops them from learning effectively from each other. When working on their follow-up activities, the children use their developing mathematical knowledge satisfactorily to group items according to number and to match numerals to groups. However, these activities do not always stretch the numerical capabilities of each child and are often too prescribed by adults, leaving little scope for the children to exercise their thinking skills. Informal and ongoing assessment is carried out but is not always used to best effect to move children's learning on in relation to their capability. Their progress is also hindered by the heavy reliance on worksheets and other systems of written recording, involving children in activities that require them to sit for too long following instructions rather than engaging in practical investigation and discovery. Overall, teaching is sound and children achieve satisfactorily in this area of learning. Almost all are on course to meet the goals expected for the end of Reception.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision for children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reception children cope well with the subject-based approach used in this area of learning, but they lack opportunities to experiment, investigate and discover things for themselves.
- The local environment is used well to contribute to children's learning experiences

Commentary

- 42 The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning and children cope well with the subject-based approach. However, there are few opportunities for them to come to terms with their place in the world through investigation, discovery and emotional involvement because of the subject-based approach adopted to meet the needs of pupils in Year 1. Too many activities in this area of learning involve a great deal of cutting, sticking and filling in gaps in worksheets. Much of the children's learning arises from being shown and hearing older pupils share their knowledge and understanding. Nevertheless, the children achieve satisfactorily and are on course to reach the goals expected for the end of Reception. They describe correctly the differences between old and modern toys and how they work. They draw accurate comparisons between different places, secure in their knowledge that the earth is round, and they have a satisfactory understanding of their own environment and where they live. During the inspection, children benefited from close observation of two orphan lambs brought in by a parent, and were fascinated as they watched them being bottle-fed. This experience engendered much discussion about growing up and becoming independent, and about the passing of time, as well contributing to the children's ability to classify animals and what they give to man. For example, they know that wool comes from sheep. Their files show that they have heard a satisfactory range of simple stories from different religions. Although no elements of religious education were seen during the inspection, these are planned for within the teacher's planning, which is securely based on the national guidance for the Foundation Stage.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for children's physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children lack continuous access to outdoor facilities and there are few opportunities for imaginative, outdoor play.
- Resources for developing motor skills through using bikes and similar equipment are under-used.
- Although teaching is satisfactory overall, activities are not sufficiently well planned with the needs of reception children in mind.

Commentary

43 Although the class teacher is aware of appropriate activities to develop physical skills in this age group, the organisation of the timetable and the deployment of staff limit the children's opportunities for physical activity. A satisfactory range of wheeled outdoor toys are available but they are not regularly accessible to children, and the notion of continuous access to outdoor play is not incorporated into the day. Reception children have the same playtimes and play areas as other children in the school. They engage in physical education sessions with Year 1 pupils on a timetabled basis, and participate in activities that are largely directed at Year 1. The children's manipulative skills are developed appropriately through a range of tabletop activities, but the strong emphasis on colouring, cutting and sticking skills means that opportunities are missed to engage pupils in the finer skills involved through, for example, modelling using different tools and materials. The children do not achieve well enough in this area of learning, though most are on course to meet the goals expected for the end of the reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The provision for children's creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy role play but the formal organisation means they do not have spontaneous access to it.
- Adults are appropriately involved in the role play area though, at times, they take over the activity too much, leaving little opportunity for children to exercise their own imagination and creativity.

Commentary

44 Teaching is sound and children enjoy a wide range of activities that develop this area of learning satisfactorily. They eagerly engage in role-play activities, but do not have regular informal access to them because of the formal timetabling of their day. They play productively when given the opportunity, and move easily into a world of imagination. Although the role-play area is adapted to suit a range of purposes, resources for it are limited. The input of the teaching assistant enhances the children's experiences and guides their development, although at times the adult intervention is too directed, leaving little opportunity for the children to think for themselves. This is true also of musical and artistic activities. While children are satisfactorily introduced to an appropriate range of musical instruments and art and design materials, their work is often too directed, leaving little scope for creativity and imagination. The children do, however, relate satisfactorily to the activities planned for Year 1 pupils and enjoy participating in them. Overall, their achievement is sound and they are on course to reach the goals expected for this area of learning at the end of Reception.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is unsatisfactory overall because poor planning, assessment and management of behaviour in Years 5 and 6 stop these pupils from working to the best of their capability.
- Standards are satisfactory overall. Speaking skills are good throughout the school but listening skills are unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6.
- Good teaching in Years 2, 3 and 4 is accelerating pupils' learning in these year groups, but teaching is unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6.
- The over-use of worksheets prevents pupils from using their thinking, writing and research skills well enough in other subjects, and stops them from working to their levels of capability.

Commentary

- 45 Achievement overall is unsatisfactory. It is sound in Year 1 and is improving in Years 2, 3 and 4 as a result of good teaching in those year groups, but it is unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6. A significant minority of pupils under-achieve in Years 5 and 6. Their learning is disrupted by the ineffective management of badly-behaved pupils, and by poor planning and assessment, which means that their learning needs are not fully met. Overall, standards are as expected for pupils' ages in Year 2 and Year 6.
- 46 In Year 2, speaking and listening skills are good. Pupils speak clearly and, with a good range of vocabulary, express themselves well. Their achievement is accelerating as a result of good teaching in this year group. Because the teacher insists that they are polite and listen to each other respectfully, pupils' listening skills are good. Reading and writing skills are sound. Pupils read fluently with developing expression and have a good understanding of what they read. Most writing is well structured. Ideas are developed appropriately into sequences of sentences that, for higher attaining pupils, are usually grammatically accurate with correct spelling and punctuation. Handwriting is neat and legible, and most pupils are beginning to join up their writing satisfactorily. Lower attaining pupils write legibly with few spelling mistakes, though their ideas are not extended as well in their writing and their use of descriptive language is less well developed. Overall, however, work is engaging and interesting in this age group. Based on satisfactory day-to-day assessment of the pupils' learning and progress, it is planned appropriately to meet the pupils' individual learning needs, with a consequent positive impact on their learning. A weakness in teaching in the two younger classes is the several spelling mistakes noted in displays and in the marking of pupils' work and, in one class, the misuse of the apostrophe. This does not present a good role model for pupils' writing.
- 47 In Year 6, speaking skills are good but, overall, listening skills are unsatisfactory. Reading and writing skills are sound. Almost all pupils speak clearly, and back up their opinions and ideas with good reasoning. However, a significant minority do not listen well enough to the teacher or to other pupils. Their constant shuffling, restlessness and calling out prevent those who do want to listen and make progress from doing so. Higher attaining pupils use their good range of vocabulary well when writing, often using complex sentences accurately and showing a good sense of audience and purpose in their writing. However, at times, pupils' writing does ramble a bit, and loses the reader's interest. This is because the impetus tails off due towards the end and detail is lacking to bring the writing to a satisfactory conclusion. The work of the lower attaining pupils simply tends to be shorter and, although almost always completed, lacks a sense of audience and purpose. When their work is well marked, pupils generally pay good heed to the teacher's comments, and their subsequent work shows that they have learned from their mistakes. Unfortunately, marking is not consistently good throughout the school and often limits pupils' progress by not indicating how they might improve their work. In addition,

presentation is frequently poor. For example, teachers do not always insist that pupils put the date and title on their work. Consequently, it is difficult to gauge accurately pupils' rates of progress from the work in their books. Indeed, because of the absence of planning and assessment in Years 5 and 6, there is little secure evidence on which to plan pupils' work to meet their individual learning needs. There is very little difference between the work given to higher, average or lower attainers in Years 5 and 6.

- 48 The co-ordinator has a good understanding of how to lead and manage English. However, overall leadership and management are unsatisfactory because of the limited impact they have on the quality of teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6. The co-ordinator has set up systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress and achievement, and these are used satisfactorily up to and including Year 4. Beyond this, the absence of such records and of structured lesson planning mean that the pupils' work is seldom matched to their levels of capability, and teaching methods are not adapted well enough to suit pupils' different learning needs. This results in the often poor behaviour of lower attaining pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties, and the under-achievement of higher attaining pupils because the work given to them does not challenge their thinking skills or spur them on to further learning. Overall, assessment and its use in planning across the school are unsatisfactory. The only records kept for pupils in Years 5 and 6 are the year-on-year results of the optional national tests. In English, these show that, although most pupils make satisfactory progress, higher attainers are not doing well enough in relation to their prior attainment, and the school is not analysing why or adapting the curriculum to meet their needs. Nor is it doing enough to meet the needs of lower attaining pupils. While there was clear evidence that pupils in Years 1 to 4 make appropriate progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, these plans are not used well enough in Years 5 and 6 to plan appropriate work for the relevant pupils, whether for learning or behaviour.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

- 49 Pupils use their speaking skills appropriately in other subjects although, for the older pupils, listening skills suffer from the same drawbacks as they do in English. Reading skills are used satisfactorily as pupils use books and, occasionally, computers to undertake research in subjects such as history and geography. Overall, however, ICT skills are under-used in English. There is very little evidence, for example, of pupils using computers to draft and refine their work, especially their extended writing. Although pupils do use their writing skills in other subjects, the over-reliance on worksheets impedes their ability to reinforce and consolidate extended writing skills. This seriously hinders higher attaining pupils, providing them with little opportunity to work to the best of their capability.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' overall achievement is unsatisfactory by Year 6. However, standards are in line with the national expectation and pupils make at least sound progress up to Year 4.
- The heavy reliance on a commercial scheme means that older, higher attaining pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Although it is at least satisfactory up to Year 4, the unsatisfactory teaching in Years 5 and 6 seriously hinders pupils' learning.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

- 50 All areas of mathematics are adequately covered through the commercial scheme that the school uses but, overall, the mathematics curriculum is not well enough planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a wide range of appropriate experiences that consolidate their basic understanding of number. In the mixed Year 2/3/4 class, activities are well matched to pupils' different levels of capability, and suitable extension work is available for pupils who have completed the basic activities within the scheme, moving their learning on apace. The teacher's good planning builds effectively on pupils' prior learning, and questioning is well targeted to enable pupils of all abilities to learn from each other. The same cannot be said of teaching in the mixed Year 5/6 class. Here, pupils of different ages and abilities are not well catered for, and valuable learning time is lost while work is explained to one year group and the other waits without a task to address. This results in pupils becoming disinterested and, for those who find it difficult to behave, disruptive. The use of the mental starter session does not promote a good enough understanding of the different ways to solve numerical problems because pupils are not given the opportunity to explain how they arrived at their answers.
- 51 Because of the heavy reliance on completing the work in the scheme's workbooks, older pupils in this age group do not have enough access to practical, investigative activities and problem solving. In the younger age groups, teachers are selective about the work that is covered and the scheme is backed up with suitable practical and extension activities. In the top class, however, lessons are based too heavily on the commercial scheme, and there is no additional planning or annotation to ensure individual needs are met. Marking is very variable throughout the school and, overall, does not show pupils how to improve their work. Overall assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and planning is poor in Years 5 and 6. The results of the national tests are broadly grouped to indicate areas that have not been well understood, but the information is not used to adapt the curriculum or to inform planning. Apart from some medium-term planning carried out by the part-time teacher, who covers shape, space and measure with the class, there is no planning or assessment in mathematics. The other teacher who teaches the class relies solely on progression through the scheme's workbooks and keeps no records of assessment or progress. This prevents pupils from progressing at a rate appropriate to their capability.
- 52 Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Monitoring of the subject does not lead to the identification of areas for development. There is no whole school approach to planning, teaching, learning or assessment, and the structured evaluation of pupils' progress throughout the school is very poor. The areas for improvement, identified in the school development plan, are limited to the allocation of a morning to analyse assessment and to set targets. A range of appropriate targets has been set but they are not given a high priority in teaching. There is no overall, long-term vision of how the subject might be developed to raise standards. There has been a serious decline in standards in mathematics in Year 6 since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

- 53 There is no evidence of a planned approach to promoting the use of mathematical skills in other subjects, and very little evidence of this happening, even by chance. This is unsatisfactory.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Up to Year 4, work is well planned to meet pupils' different learning needs, and the overall quality of teaching is at least satisfactory.
- The lack of planning and assessment, and the poor management of pupils' behaviour, impede the learning, progress and overall achievement of pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory because, although the co-ordinator has a good understanding of how to improve the subject, this has little impact on achievement by Year 6.

Commentary

- 54 Overall, achievement is unsatisfactory, though standards are at the national expectation in Year 2 and Year 6. Up to Year 4, science is satisfactorily planned, pupils enjoy the subject, and their achievement is sound. However, in all age groups, there is a heavy reliance on worksheets instead of on teaching pupils to record their predictions, investigations and evaluations in a range of ways for themselves. Because they are expected to do so, pupils in Year 2 use a good range of scientific vocabulary and have a well-developed understanding for their age, and of how to carry out a fair test. Their learning is effectively consolidated through the teacher's well-targeted questions, which ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities are fully included in whole-class sessions.
- 55 The range of activities for older pupils is limited. Their prior knowledge and understanding, and their own personal knowledge are not used, built upon or extended sufficiently. This inhibits their learning and overall achievement. In the lesson observed during the inspection, the pupils offered some very relevant, up-to-date information about the planets, but this was not used. Instead, pupils were required to listen to a tape, and to analyse and interpret data that included a range of facts that did nothing to extend their knowledge and understanding of the relationship of the earth, sun and moon to each other. The pupils became restless, and those who find it difficult to behave were not well enough managed to ensure that other pupils could make the progress of which they were clearly capable. The behaviour of a significant minority of pupils, and their unsatisfactory attitudes to adults and other pupils, impacts negatively on their learning and that of others in their class. The science curriculum continues to be very worksheet-led in this age group. There is no written planning, recording or assessment in science in this age group. Therefore, no secure base for determining what different groups of pupils need to do to make the progress of which they are capable. The heavy reliance on worksheets prevents higher attaining pupils showing their true capability. Some useful assessment and recording takes place in the younger age groups but it is not used consistently well in planning.
- 56 Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Although the subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject and the needs for future development, the influence of this is minimal in Years 5 and 6. Planning, teaching and learning are not monitored or evaluated effectively enough to improve pupils' achievement and standards overall. There has not been enough improvement in this subject since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about provision in this subject because only one session was observed and there is little evidence of ICT being used across the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The computer suite provides pupils with a very valuable learning resource, but ICT is severely under-used as a tool for learning.

Commentary

- 57 The computer suite is not formally timetabled for use by each class. The teacher in the youngest class also uses it at other times to enhance pupils' learning, and one of these sessions was the only session observed during the inspection. In it, the Year 1 pupils demonstrated sound knowledge of how to turn on a computer, find an art program and work with it using drawing and painting tools competently. Approximately half of the group remained focused on their work for the full session. However, the other half needed constant reminders to sit on their chairs properly. Some of these pupils shouted at the member of staff, indicating the difficulty pupils have, even at this young age, in showing respect for the staff and for each other. The subject is not well enough led or managed. Planning is not consistent and there are no assessment procedures, no monitoring of teaching and learning and no agreed whole-school overview of the curriculum to ensure continuity of learning for the pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

- 58 The computer suite is severely underused as a resource for learning. Examples of work using word processing were very limited indeed. However, there was evidence that elements of ICT, such as control (plotting directions) and computer-aided design (mini greenhouses in design and technology) are taught, along with some data handling in mathematics. Pupils who have computers at home sometimes use them to do their homework but, overall, computers are not used as natural tools for learning to extend the work of higher attainers, support lower attainers or to foster independent learning.

HUMANITIES

- 59 No overall judgements are made about provision in **history** or **geography**. Only one lesson was observed in history, and no geography lessons were seen. Discussions with pupils indicate that standards in both subjects are broadly in line with those expected nationally for pupils' ages, but that pupils do not achieve by Year 6 as well as they could. This is because the curriculum is not well enough planned for either subject to ensure progression in learning and achievement in line with pupils' capabilities. The time allocated to the subjects is limited. There are no formal assessment procedures, though teachers in the two younger classes do record at the end of each unit of work what pupils have learned. In the oldest class, there are no records of assessment, no planning, and no monitoring or evaluation of standards, teaching or learning.
- 60 Pupils in Year 2 know about an appropriate range of famous people and events in the past and have a sound understanding of life in Tudor times. These pupils talk knowledgeably about where they live and are familiar with the countries of the British Isles. Older pupils have covered an appropriate range of historical units but, the subject has not been revisited since the beginning of the school year, and this slows the rate of pupils' learning. Pupils are, however, knowledgeable about life in St. Lucia and discuss with understanding and insight the impact of tourism on the island.
- 61 Leadership and management are unsatisfactory in both subjects. The co-ordinator for history has no recorded information and lacks a long-term view of subject development throughout the school. Although appropriate policies are in place for both subjects, the emphasis is on subject knowledge rather than on the development of skills. The co-ordinator for geography has a clear view of the units to be covered. However, she has little knowledge of the work covered in the Year 5/6 class, and little influence on its development. There are no records in history or geography in this class, other than the myriads of worksheets that pupils complete. These are not marked or assessed well enough to support the progressive development of skills,

knowledge and understanding, and do little to advance the learning of higher attaining pupils, who are capable of much more than is expected of them.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 62 Statutory requirements are not met in this subject, which was sampled as far as it could be, given the limited evidence available. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus, and pupils throughout the school do not achieve well enough. The subject is not given enough time and status and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are not met.
- 63 Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 have very little knowledge of religious beliefs or of the impact of religion on people's lives. They do not cover enough work in this subject and have difficulty making connections between major festivals such as Christmas and Easter, and their importance in the Christian faith. Pupils have listened to stories related to Buddhism, talked about special places and gained a limited knowledge of Judaism. However, none of this knowledge has been reinforced well enough to promote pupils' understanding, and they do not have a secure enough knowledge of the key facts associated with the major world religions. Pupils are not familiar enough with Bible stories. For example, although there were photographs of pupils acting out the parable of 'The Good Samaritan' in one classroom, the pupils found difficulty recounting the story. The act of collective worship is not accessible daily to all pupils and contributes little to the pupils' religious education. It does not always contain opportunities for reflection; it is sometimes too long for the younger pupils and the content is not always relevant to them. The poor behaviour of some older pupils detracts from the development of an appropriate ethos.
- 64 The leadership and management of religious education are poor. The policy, inherited by the current staff, is inappropriate and does not provide any substantial guidance for teachers. It makes strong reference to the absence of a range of faith communities in the area but does not indicate how this might be tackled in terms of teaching pupils about them. Although the policy refers to the locally agreed syllabus, in discussions with the staff it was clear that the syllabus was not familiar to them and is not used to plan the curriculum. There are no systems for assessing or recording pupils' progress, and no means of ensuring that there is continuity in teaching or progression in learning throughout the school. There is also considerable confusion in the school as to how religious education teaching differs from personal, social and health education.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

- 65 Only one lesson was observed in each of **art and design**, and **music**. No lessons were observed in **design and technology** or **physical education** during the inspection period. There was insufficient evidence in any of these subjects on which to make a secure overall judgement about provision.

ART AND DESIGN

- 66 The art and design policy pre-dates the changes made to the National Curriculum in 2000 and, while national guidance is used for planning up to Year 4, what is done does not match what is laid down in the policy and scheme of work. In addition, there are no links to the National Curriculum programme of study or to the levels expected nationally, especially for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Overall, insufficient attention is given to the progressive development of skills in art and design. In the one lesson observed, which was with pupils in Years 5 and 6, the over-prescriptive design for making an Easter basket, though explained clearly to the pupils, left little room for them to exercise their own creativity and imagination by producing original designs and works of art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

67 Basic designs and evaluations in pupils' folders, plus photographic evidence, show that there is adequate coverage of the National Curriculum programme of study. Standards are as expected nationally for pupils' ages in Year 2, evident in their work on linkages and levers. This work is appropriately matched to pupils' ages in the mixed Year 2, 3 and 4 class. In Year 6, discussions with pupils and evidence from their designs for mini-greenhouses, some of which are executed using ICT, show that the pupils have a sound understanding of different methods of joining, and consideration of the best materials to use. This was further confirmed as pupils described artefacts they had made in the past, for example wooden jigsaw puzzles. There was insufficient first hand evidence, however, to make an overall judgement on standards in Year 6.

MUSIC

68 Only one music lesson was observed, which was with pupils in the mixed Year 2, 3 and 4 class. Achievement and standards are satisfactory in Year 2. Pupils have an appropriate understanding of the musical terminology related to mood, pitch, tempo and dynamics. Through the teacher's gentle probing, they build satisfactorily on their prior learning. However, they are unable to work together to select appropriate instruments and rehearse their work away from the direct supervision of the teacher. This was evident in the squabbling and jostling that ended up with several pupils having the same type of instrument and, consequently, not being able to realise their intentions in their compositions. The teacher's sensitive questioning helps them to evaluate their behaviour and personal development, but insufficient attention is paid to the progressive development of musical skills. There was no evidence in planning, or in pupils' work, of music in Years 5 and 6, and pupils have very little recall of what they have done previously. Music is taught on a half-termly rota with religious education. The school provides instrumental tuition for those who wish to participate, and has recently purchased a set of ocarinas so that all pupils can play an instrument. Nevertheless, there is insufficient time given to music in the curriculum and the lack of access to the regular practising of skills clearly affects the pupils' ability to retain what they have done. There is no recording of coverage in the subject and no assessment of pupils' learning. All of this adds up to an unsatisfactory music curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

69 Although no physical education lessons were observed during the inspection, the school reports that physical education provision has improved since the completion of the new hall. It uses a recognised commercial scheme that ensures that statutory requirements are met, and pupils speak positively about the satisfactory range of extra-curricular sporting activities available to them. The school has good links with a local sports college that benefits the pupils by giving them access to a greater range of activities than could be provided in this small school. It also participates in sporting events with other small schools in the area. All pupils learn to swim, and almost all reach the required standard by Year 6.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

70 No overall judgements are made about provision in this area because only two lessons were observed, one with pupils in the reception/Year 1 class and the other with pupils in the Year 5/6 class. In the younger age group, good teaching focused pupils well on how to help each other, particularly when they see someone who might be sad. This raised their self esteem and reinforced the value of friendship. In the older age group, the teacher successfully focused pupils on co-operation and collaboration by engaging them in practical activities that required them to support each other in pairs and in groups. Some pupils needed constant reminders in this lesson not to laugh at others, make fun of them or interfere in their efforts. This is further evidence of the inability of some Year 5/6 pupils to co-operate, collaborate or show respect for each other's efforts. While they enjoyed the practical activity, a good number of pupils were unable to work together in a group to make the decisions necessary to carry out a group task

successfully. Their thinking was not sufficiently challenged to make them realise for themselves the consequences of their actions. In addition, the mode of dress was not entirely suitable for one of the activities, and restricted the ability of the girls wearing skirts to carry it out successfully.

- 71 The recent introduction of 'circle time' is indicative of the school taking seriously the need to promote pupils' personal and social development more effectively. However, this work is very much in its infancy and there are no systems in place to give pupils a voice in the development of the school or in addressing the issues that they face, for example the bullying and harassment referred to earlier in this report. The school promotes citizenship satisfactorily through the 'Junior Citizens' Scheme' for pupils in Years 5 and 6, which involves the pupils in visits to the police and fire stations, and experiencing a day devoted to learning about home safety. Leadership and management are satisfactory in this aspect of the school's work.

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	5
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	6
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	5
Attendance	2
Attitudes	5
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	5
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	5
The quality of education provided by the school	5
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	5
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	5
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	5
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	6
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).