

INSPECTION REPORT

REGIS MANOR COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sittingbourne

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118351

Acting Headteacher: Mrs T German

Lead inspector: Mr R Fry

Dates of inspection: 21–23 June 2004

Inspection number: 257300

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:	326.5 full time equivalent pupils

School address:	Middletune Avenue Milton Regis Sittingbourne
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs T Buckberry

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Regis Manor Community Primary School is a larger than average sized school, which draws pupils from the west of Sittingbourne. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are well below average. Children's attainment on entry to the school is well below average. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at different times during the school year is above average. In recent years the turnover of staff has been high. This year most teachers are relatively new to the school and the school has been led by an acting headteacher. A new headteacher has been appointed for next September. Thirty seven per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is an above average proportion. Twenty six per cent of pupils are identified by the school as having special educational needs, which is above average. Some of these pupils need extra help with reading and writing skills; others have specific learning difficulties. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs. Nine pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, of whom four speak English as an additional language. They are at a relatively early stage of learning English. The school gained the 'Healthy Schools' Award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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13122	Stephanie Matthews	Team inspector	English Art and design
19227	Paul Missin	Team inspector	History 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 and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	18
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	20
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Regis Manor Community Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and is an improving school. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to reach below average standards at the end of the year in English and mathematics, but their achievement is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The acting headteacher and staff have made a good start this year in moving the school forward. In particular, teaching and learning are better, and staffing is more stable. The school is a harmonious community. Governors make a satisfactory contribution to the work of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The acting headteacher, supported by the chair of governors and the local education authority, has led and managed the school very well this year.
- Pupils in Years 2 and 6 are on course to reach below average standards at the end of the year in English and mathematics. Pupils' achievement is improving.
- The teaching is satisfactory and better in most lessons but some is unsatisfactory.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are good.
- The school promotes attendance very well.
- The support and care for pupils are very good. Relationships are good.
- Some subject leaders do not yet know enough about the teaching of their subjects.
- The school does not do enough to encourage parents to be involved in their children's education.
- Pupils' views of the school are positive.

The school had two areas to improve after the last inspection in 1998: standards in English and mathematics and the role of subject leaders. Presently, many subject leaders are new to the school and have not had enough opportunities to monitor the work in their subjects. However, English and mathematics teaching have received close attention over the last year. Even so, standards in these subjects, and in science, are lower than in 1998. Improvement since the last inspection has, as yet, been unsatisfactory overall.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The school's results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6:	Regis Manor compared with all schools			and similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E*	E	E*	E*
Mathematics	E*	E	E*	E*
Science	E	E*	E*	E

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E* - very low*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

The table above shows that in 2003 in comparison with schools with broadly similar prior attainment, standards in Year 6 were well below average in science and very low (E*) in English and mathematics. These pupils made well below average gains in knowledge between Years 2 and 6. In 2003, as in earlier years, the school's results were frequently in the lowest five per cent nationally. This year, a small proportion of children in Reception will meet the targets set for them nationally.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teachers' assessments this year show that standards are improving because of good teaching in the majority of classes. Standards in English and mathematics in Year 6 are below average although in science they remain well below average. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In Year 2, pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' standards of work in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are below those expected. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers across the school. Pupils with special educational needs reach the targets set for them. There are no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls.

Pupils have good attitudes to school. Most are enthusiastic and eager to learn. Most arrive at school on time and attendance is satisfactory. Standards of behaviour are satisfactory. **Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Their moral and social development is good. Their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory. The best teaching, in about a fifth of all the lessons seen, allowed pupils to make rapid progress in, for example, mathematics and English lessons. Teachers motivated pupils by making these lessons interesting and fast moving. Pupils responded enthusiastically and learned effectively. Teaching assistants made a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. In unsatisfactory lessons, teachers set tasks that were too easy or too difficult for some of the class, or the management of pupils' behaviour was weak.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to take part in activities outside lessons. The accommodation and resources for pupils to use in lessons are satisfactory. The partnership with parents is satisfactory. The school provides very effective care for pupils day to day. Community links and links with other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, two documents for parents do not meet requirements. The acting headteacher and staff have identified the school's weaknesses and have begun to rectify them. The acting headteacher, well supported by the chair of governors, has led and managed the school very well this year and overall provision is improving. The team of teachers and support staff work well together. Some subject leaders are new to their posts. The local education authority has provided extended and positive support for the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Many parents value the school's work and their views are positive. Some, however, are not satisfied with what the school provides. The school does not help parents enough to help their children do well. The school deals very well with parents' concerns, but provision for homework is inconsistent. Pupils have positive views about their school. They enjoy responsibilities and participating in events.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

Improvements needed. The most important things the school should do are to:

- Improve the quality of teaching in some classes, including the management of pupils' behaviour.

- Raise standards and achievement further in all subjects.
- Improve the contribution of parents in promoting the achievement of their children.
- Improve some subject leaders' understanding of what is happening across the school in their subjects.

And to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that all documents for parents meet requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils attain standards that are below average in English and mathematics in Years 2 and 6. Children enter the school with attainments that are well below those typical of children nationally. However, pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 2 and 6 pupils' standards of work have improved this year.
- Standards in science are lower than in English and mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs meet the targets set for them.
- Pupils who are learning English as an additional language achieve well.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.3 (15.2)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	11.5 (12.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.3 (15.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.3 (24.2)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	22.2 (24.4)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	24.6 (25.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 41 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. The tables above show that in comparison with schools nationally in 2003, the school's standards were significantly lower than average in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 and in all three subjects in Year 6. The improvement ('value added') made by pupils between Years 2 and 6 was well below average last year. Pupils attained low standards because there have been many changes of staff and many pupils arrive and leave the school at different times in the school year. Children's attainment on entry to

school is well below average and it is drifting downward. These factors have had a negative effect on standards. However, there has been an upturn in standards this year. Teachers' assessments show that a significant proportion of pupils have made good progress this year. This change has occurred because the staff has remained settled. Also the acting headteacher has focused attention on raising standards and how this can be achieved, and has made it happen. It is likely that pupils do not do as well in national tests because they do not have the ready support of adults in the classroom to for example, rephrase questions.

2. Most teaching now meets the needs of different groups of pupils, including for higher and lower-attaining pupils. The school has set realistic targets for Year 6 pupils to reach in 2004. During the inspection, overall standards were judged to be below average rather than well below average in Years 2 and 6 in English and mathematics, which is an improvement over recent years. However, pupils' progress varies from class to class in keeping with the quality of teaching. Even so, there is enough good and very good teaching to ensure that pupils achieve satisfactorily overall. In many lessons pupils make good progress because the teachers set work that challenges pupils and the work is interesting. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers across the school. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls.
3. Pupils' standards of attainment, at the end of Years 2 and 6, are well below average in science. Their achievement is not as good as in mathematics and English because, for example, there are many facts for pupils to learn and to apply in experiments. Pupils' achievement is hampered by some pupils' lack of ability to recall and build upon their previous learning. Teachers do not revise pupils' knowledge frequently enough.
4. Pupils' standards of work in ICT and religious education are below those expected, but their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils are making better progress than they did in the recent past in ICT because there are more computers for pupils to use. The main factor that limits pupils' standards in religious education is their weak literacy skills. Pupils lack the skills and confidence to write with sufficient accuracy and depth about what they know or to talk confidently about their feelings and ideas.
5. The school's improvement in standards this year has been from a low base. The upward trend in standards has been given a boost because of very good subject leadership in English and mathematics and the school's capacity to understand and act on trends in standards. Teachers have isolated several significant factors to improve standards. For example, teachers are to enforce the disciplinary code more consistently with pupils to eradicate some unsatisfactory teaching and poor responses from pupils. They are to make lessons more interesting by running several lessons in the same subject together so that pupils can finish what they have started.
6. Children enter the school with attainment that is well below average. Children's achievement is satisfactory in Reception. By the end of the Reception year, few children attain the expected standards known as the Early Learning Goals. Their achievement in social skills is a priority for teachers. By the age of five years, children have adequate routines and know how to behave in school, which allows them to make more of their education to come. The school has improved the outdoor facilities and this provision has begun to enhance children's achievement.

7. Pupils' skills in literacy are below average and this affects standards in all subjects that require basic competencies in English. The school has a clear focus on raising standards in speaking and listening and in writing. Pupils are encouraged to label accurately in science and design technology lessons and to write at length in history and geography. Computers are used to develop literacy skills but inadequate library provision is impeding pupils' progress in some literacy skills.
8. Pupils use mathematics appropriately as part of their work in other subjects and consequently they develop an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. For example, pupils use graphs and tables to record data in science or measure components in design technology. In Year 6 pupils have linked their mathematical skills to control technology in order to make a model vehicle follow a prescribed route. Using skills from other subjects enhances their standards of work.
9. Pupils' use of ICT to help them learn in other subjects is satisfactory. Pupils use computers in lessons, for example, to consolidate numeracy skills in mathematics, for writing tasks in English, and to learn about the lives of artists. In Year 2, pupils used computers to help them learn to spell a set of words and in another lesson to investigate number patterns. ICT brings a wide range of information into the classroom.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make the progress intended towards their individual targets in English and mathematics because they are assessed carefully and thoroughly before a programme is selected to meet their needs. Teaching assistants then provide effective support under the direction of well-informed teachers. Pupils with statements of special educational need are supported effectively this year.
11. The achievement of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is good because these pupils are well supported and therefore they progress well day to day. The school has four pupils who require support at present. Each pupil's attainment and progress are checked regularly and the programmes are adjusted according to any change identified in their needs. The co-ordinator for special educational is well informed and uses the good advice and guidance from the local education authority effectively.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. Pupils have good attitudes to school and their behaviour is satisfactory. Their moral and social development is good and their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality are very good.
- Behaviour around the school is good.
- In a small number of lessons some pupils' behaviour is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils of all ages are willing to take responsibility and do so very well.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.0
National data	0.4

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

12. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. The level of unauthorised absence is higher than average because a few parents do not keep the school well informed about where their children are. The 'rapid response' team on the staff have put in very good strategies to improve attendance further. The school is vigilant when recording attendance and punctuality. Parents are aware of what is expected of them but there is a minority of parents who are persistently inactive and do not ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time. In the last full year the number of exclusions was high. Almost all those excluded were boys. The high rate of exclusions reflected the school's difficulties with staffing generally. This year there have been far fewer exclusions.

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	318	31	4
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0

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

13. The school provides a welcoming, calm and purposeful atmosphere where adults encourage pupils to achieve well and feel confident to succeed in all aspects of school life. Consequently, pupils have good attitudes to learning. For example, in a Year 5 literacy lesson pupils listened carefully, recalled information from a previous lesson, were keen to answer questions and persevered with their tasks. Children in Reception mostly settle well, they know the school's routines and most are able to make sensible choices. They make satisfactory progress in reaching the Early Learning Goals in personal and social skills.
14. The school promotes a strong sense of community. Most pupils of all ages are polite and courteous. Most pupils work and play together well, sharing resources happily. They work hard individually and in teams to gain rewards. Pupils understand the reasons for sanctions. They mature as they progress through the school. When lessons do not capture pupils' interest and hold their attention, some pupils are not well behaved. The school has an agreed set of rewards and sanctions but teachers do not apply them in the same way. Hence, teachers' responses to behaviour vary from very good to unsatisfactory across the school. Exclusions have been reduced to a quarter of what they were last year because the staff is settled and pupils know teachers well and relationships are better. The school is successful in discouraging bullying, harassment and racial incidents.
15. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and teachers and other members of staff are good overall. They are based on mutual respect. Pupils value their school and play an active part in making it a better place. The school council is active in putting forward pupils' suggestions and in fundraising. For example, pupils designed the new playground that will be built shortly. They are busy fundraising for spray paint to create games on the playground surface. Pupils in the lower school return the registers to the office reliably. There are classroom monitors and many opportunities for individuals to show their initiative, for example by organising the hall before assemblies. Pupils particularly enjoy after school activities that involve drama. These initiatives help to improve pupils' attitudes to school.
16. The development of pupils' social and moral awareness is good. Adults constantly acknowledge and encourage pupils' good behaviour. For example, a small group of pupils released spiders into their natural habitat after a science lesson and felt they had helped nature. Chosen pupils have responded well to the training for playground 'trouble busters.' The training gives pupils clear guidance about how they should respect one

another and it succeeds with pupils as a whole. The provision for personal, health and social education (PHSE) makes a good contribution and pupils enjoy and respect their school and its environment.

17. The spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to think about their place in the world. For example, pupils were asked to think of themselves as individuals, to know their strengths and to build on them in one assembly. Pupils in a Reception class were keen to experience what frozen water looked and felt like and observed that when left in the warm the water melts. Pupils discuss feelings and emotional responses mostly maturely during 'circle time' discussions. However, pupils in a few classes do not always behave well during these sessions because the teaching does not engage them enough.
18. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Teachers are well aware that the school is in a community where there are few families from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils have studied life in St Lucia and have visited a mosque as part of their work in geography and religious education. Pupils are aware of differences between cultures, for example in food and dress. Pupils learn about other cultures in geography and religious education lessons. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the different cultures present in the United Kingdom. The school works closely with the local education authority to develop pupils' understanding. In the next year, specialist teachers will work with pupils to explain about the way different people live and increase pupils' understanding and tolerance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning and teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are strengths in the teaching of English and mathematics.
- In a few classes teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour effectively.
- Systems for assessing pupils' progress are used effectively in mathematics and English.
- The assessment of pupils' work in science is unsatisfactory.
- Teachers' planning in the infant and junior classes is good overall. In a few classes work is not always well matched to pupils' abilities and lessons are slow paced.
- Teachers throughout the school use praise well to motivate pupils and to raise their self-esteem and confidence.
- Pupils have little understanding of how they can improve from their marked work.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively.
- The provision of homework is inconsistent.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	7 (18%)	13 (33%)	16 (41%)	3 (8%)	0	0

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

19. One of the strengths of the acting headteacher's leadership is the way in which she has stabilised the teaching staff in the past year. Prior to her appointment there was little stability, and many teachers were from overseas, unqualified or employed on short-term contracts. The lack of stability affected the learning of pupils negatively, especially in Years 3 to 6 where there was the most disruption. The acting headteacher has successfully recruited staff this year.
20. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Teachers have a satisfactory understanding of the needs of young children, and plan a suitable variety of activities that successfully cover all of the recommended Areas of Learning for this age group. Teachers take good account of the low starting point of many children. As a result they correctly place a great emphasis on the teaching of early language and mathematical skills, and the promotion of children's personal, social and emotional development. In the main, support staff are used well in the Foundation Stage to work with groups of children, and specifically to foster their speaking and listening skills. Where the teaching is at its best, teachers use resources well to bring the children's learning to life, and to motivate them in their work.
21. Many teachers manage the sometimes challenging behaviour of a significant number of pupils well. As a result, the learning environment is usually orderly and calm, enabling pupils to concentrate on their learning. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good, and are based on mutual trust and respect. Pupils know that their views are valued, and have the confidence to take risks in their learning. Most teachers use praise well to encourage pupils and to raise their self-esteem. Teachers mark pupils' work with varying degrees of thoroughness and with different aims in mind, such as to reward pupils' efforts only. Overall pupils are not guided towards improving their work effectively by the quality of teachers' comments.
22. Lessons are planned well throughout the school, and in most lessons teachers carefully explain to pupils what it is they are expected to learn. Teachers revisit learning targets at the end of lessons in English and mathematics, so that they can measure pupils' progress and evaluate the quality of their learning. In most lessons observed, the pace of pupils' learning was satisfactory or good. Some lessons lacked pace and weak time management failed to move learning on. In these lessons pupils lost interest and motivation. In a small number of unsatisfactory lessons the teachers did not have the interpersonal skills or use the system of sanctions and rewards effectively to maintain good order and learning. Pupils made unsatisfactory progress because they did not do what was required. The consistency of teaching is an issue for the school to address.
23. Pupils' learning is significantly enhanced when teachers use resources creatively to enliven their teaching. Most pupils of all ages and abilities have positive attitudes to learning and work co-operatively and collaboratively in small groups and pairs. Pupils generally show good levels of interest in lessons.

24. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is satisfactory overall and is sometimes good or very good. Pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily overall in these subjects. In individual lessons, where teachers extend pupils' thinking, they achieve well. However, in science, pupils' breadth of experience is narrow, and many have difficulty in recalling their previous learning. This means that teachers often have to revisit topics before they can move on to new work. Overall, there has not been enough revision of pupils' knowledge in science. Teachers make limited use of homework to raise pupils' achievement in, for example, English.
25. The use of assessment to plan the next stage of the children's learning is generally satisfactory. In mathematics and English good use is made of the analyses of national test results to highlight strengths and weaknesses in teaching, learning and provision. Assessment systems in science are currently unsatisfactory. Too little information about pupils' progress is recorded. This is a factor that explains pupils' lower attainment. In all other subjects the systems, and use made of assessment information, are satisfactory.
26. The special educational needs co-ordinator liaises effectively with teachers to ensure that targets set in pupils' Individual Education Plans are appropriate and support pupils' learning. The assessment of pupils' needs is thorough and accurate. Well-deployed teaching assistants are used to support pupils with special educational needs. Where pupils have statements of special need, teaching assistants are used well to ensure that their learning is effective but that pupils also participate in all class activities. Classroom assistants have a good understanding of the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and use a variety of ways of teaching to help them.
27. Teaching of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is good and pupils are well supported and progress well. Pupils' programmes encourage them to learn English from pupils around them, through well-chosen games and other activities. The school has four pupils who require support at present but it is well placed to cope should demand increase because it is well informed and uses available advice and guidance well.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. The accommodation and resources for pupils to use in lessons are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers make good links between subjects.
- Visits to places of local interest support and enliven the curriculum.
- The library areas are not resourced well enough.
- There is a good new outdoor play area for young children.

Commentary

28. At the last inspection planning for lessons in the subjects was good. Planning for the curriculum is now satisfactory. There have been many changes of staff and therefore new teachers have had little time to find out what is happening throughout the school.

29. A recent strength has been the way in which the school, under the leadership of the acting headteacher, has begun to develop a more flexible approach to lesson planning. This change has been introduced as a trial and involves teaching some subjects in blocks of time that are longer than normal. This initiative has been carefully planned and introduced. Good links are often made in curricular planning between work in different subjects, for example literacy skills are developed in history and mathematical skills in science.
30. The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Although the requirement for the school to provide swimming lessons for pupils during Years 3 to 6 has not been met this year, pupils have had courses of swimming lessons in previous years. There are adequate arrangements for pupils to swim next year. The provision for religious education meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Overall, the school ensures that pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum overall. However, some pupils in Year 5 are withdrawn from lessons at the same time each week. When pupils have extra support for mathematics, they regularly miss important parts of their science lessons. This unsatisfactory arrangement means that pupils do not have their full entitlement to the science curriculum.
31. A satisfactory range of out of school and extra-curricular opportunities makes the curriculum more interesting for pupils. Visitors to the school have included a theatre company, puppet show and a brass trio. Pupils have made visits to places such as a local hop farm, Dover castle and a zoo. The use of visits raises pupils' interest in schoolwork. There are well attended after school clubs for cricket and netball, and a local professional football club provides coaching sessions. There are several other clubs available during and after school. These include mathematics, ICT, friendship and karaoke clubs. Through the clubs, the school involves pupils and reinforces their commitment to the school. A senior teacher has recently been appointed with specific responsibility for promoting out of hours learning. This is a good response to the need to develop this important area of the school's work. The development plan that the teacher has already devised is relevant and identifies some interesting and exciting possibilities for all pupils.
32. Teachers provide children with a satisfactory curriculum in the Reception classes. Children develop skills through a range of activities based on the national Foundation Stage curriculum. Adults sensitively encourage children to talk about what they are doing, for example, as they play in the 'Beach Café'. The emphasis on speaking helps children develop their language skills. Children have a range of picture fiction and non-fiction books and children have easy access to them. This provision encourages pupils to like reading. Children's early writing is encouraged effectively, often through role-play. Games and puzzles, specifically designed to support children's understanding of number, are available and teachers use them effectively. Teachers set the classrooms out to interest children. Consequently they make satisfactory progress. The new outdoor area for young children is a major improvement in the provision.
33. Overall, staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory. They were all judged to have been good at the time of the last inspection. Many recent changes in teaching staff have resulted in a less consistently good curriculum across the school, because new staff are not as familiar with the school's planned curriculum as experienced staff. There is a strength in the number, quality and deployment of the teaching assistants. They support and encourage pupils well and have a positive impact on the standards pupils attain. Strengths in the accommodation are the recently built toilet area for disabled pupils, the

spacious and useful playing field and grassed areas and the new outdoor play and activity area for children in the Foundation Stage.

34. There are accommodation and resource shortcomings that affect the provision for literacy. The acting headteacher correctly identified that the provision of better library facilities was a priority. Two small areas were created. The library areas, which are located in the corridors in different parts of the school, are not large enough and few pupils can use them to explore books, learn library skills and develop a love of reading.
35. Teachers identify pupils who have special educational needs early and make thorough assessments of pupils' needs. Teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator then set realistic targets for them to attain and together with the support staff regularly check how well pupils are doing. They make sure the work teachers give pupils is relevant and helps pupils to reach their targets, in the context of what the rest of the class are doing. Pupils who need extra help are not always taught with all the class. When they work in smaller groups or individually outside the classroom, teachers plan the work so that pupils do not miss the work the other pupils are doing in the classroom. The support staff provide good support for pupils and teach the additional programmes well, such as for reading. In individual sessions, pupils have sufficient opportunities to make good progress.
36. The provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is good and pupils are well supported and progress well. The school is well informed and uses available advice about lesson planning and guidance from the local education authority effectively.

Care, guidance and support

The school's provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is very good. The provision of support, advice and guidance is good. The school seeks and values pupils' views.

Main strengths and weakness

- The school has close and trusting relationships with most pupils.
- There are very good procedures for pupils' day to day care.
- The school values pupils' views and their involvement in the life of the school.

Commentary

37. The school is very caring. Adults, even those who have been at the school for a short time, have formed close trusting relationships with most pupils. As a result, pupils report that they know they are cared for, and know whom to turn to should they need help, comfort or advice. Pupils like and value their school. The school in turn celebrates pupils' achievements well through praise in the classroom and good achievement assemblies.
38. There are good arrangements for child protection. The designated teacher works effectively with outside agencies and a member of the governing body to ensure pupils who are or may be at risk are well supported and cared for. Training is undertaken each term and all adults are reminded to remain vigilant.
39. There are several initiatives that help pupils to integrate well and feel included. The Friendship Club (circle of friends) helps pupils who are new to the school or find it difficult to make friends. This very good initiative helps make pupils' lives better. The 'Cascade' coffee mornings provide opportunities for parents to discuss their worries. The Breakfast Club meets pupils' dietary and social needs early each day. Some members of staff have been trained in moving and handling children with disabilities safely. The complex needs of particular children are well understood. For example, during a physical education lesson, one pupil had very good one to one batting practice. She enjoyed success and gained confidence from the lesson. Teachers draw on specialist support from outside agencies and pupils' needs are carefully assessed and met.
40. The school makes satisfactory use of assessment information to improve pupils' academic and personal development. Teachers work effectively with pupils to help them evaluate their own work and to take the next steps in their learning in lessons. Pupils are just beginning to understand the new system where teachers set them targets to reach. Teachers mark pupils' work adequately in some ways but there is wide variation in the degree to which teachers write comments that explain to pupils what they need to do to improve.
41. The provision for health and safety and first aid is very good. The health and safety policy is comprehensive and includes detailed risk assessments and a section about classroom safety. The school is aware of and acts upon the needs of pupils with medical conditions. Appropriate safety assessments are carried out before school trips. There are proper safety arrangements to guard against the dangers of the Internet.
42. The school council provides good opportunities for pupils to put forward their views and ideas and teachers value pupils' views. The chair of governors takes a deep personal interest in pupils' well being and she oversees the work of the council. The pupils' fundraising activities, along with the fun packed Students' Gazette produced by pupils, are good initiatives that benefit all.
43. The induction arrangements for children entering Reception are satisfactory. There are close links with the private nursery attached to the school, whose children visit the school and participate in many school activities, such as special assemblies.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are satisfactory. Links with the community and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weakness

- Most parents have confidence in the school, but some do not.
- Procedures for dealing with parents' concerns and complaints are very good.
- Some statutory requirements about the information sent home to parents have not been met.

Commentary

44. Most parents and carers support the school. They are aware of the difficulties the school has faced in the recent past and of the improvements that have been made this year. However, few parents responded to the inspection questionnaire or attended the meeting for parents. Most who attended the meeting said that they appreciated the school's open door approach and the way the school responds to their questions and concerns. They are pleased their children are encouraged to do their best and to work hard. However, a few parents expressed their frustration and discontent about the direction the school had taken in the past. Inspectors judge that many of their concerns have been addressed and that the school is improving. For example, the school's leadership and management have improved and pupils' behaviour is satisfactory in lessons. The school intends to provide a much wider range of extra-curricular activities for pupils next term, which is intended to improve pupils' commitment to their school further.
45. The school does not make best use of homework to help pupils achieve better and parents are correct to raise this issue. Some parents do too little to ensure their children's good attendance each day. Poor attendance has a negative effect on these pupils' attainment. A few parents reported that some teachers do not complete the home-school communication books. There is wide variation in the use of this communication, from very good to unsatisfactory.
46. The newly formed parent teacher association is active and has begun to involve parents in events. The school held a 'design a flag' competition and the winning pupils were pictured with the Mayor. The school is receptive to parents' views through the school's own questionnaires and suggestion slips attached to newsletters. The general information given to parents in newsletters and on the school's website is clear, informative and friendly in tone. The acting headteacher meets with parents to talk through concerns and spends considerable time communicating with parents and external agencies to find solutions to issues raised. Parents have welcomed this very good change of tone.
47. Some parents feel they are not well informed about their children's progress. The school plans to make the curricular information it gives to parents each half term more informative. The governors' annual report to parents and the school's prospectus are informative but omit clear information about pupils' test results compared with national figures. The annual report to parents from the governors does not have a section on the success of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. These errors are an oversight on the part of the school. The pupils' individual annual reports are satisfactory. However, they do not always show clearly what pupils have learned and what they can do to improve. Some of pupils' targets for the next year in the reports are not specific enough and do not encourage pupils' to strive to do better in areas where they need to improve.

48. The school has good links with the local and the wider community. The school works closely with organisations that use the site for a wide range of activities, such as sports events. Pupils from the school and elsewhere benefit from this provision. The links provide opportunities for pupils to broaden their interests. The school has effective links with other schools and colleges. For example, a nearby secondary school provides equipment for the oldest pupils to use in ICT lessons. Parents are informed of the choices for secondary education and pupils spend an informative taster day at their chosen schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership and management skills of the acting headteacher are very good. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher and staff have moved the school forward considerably in the last year.
- The local education authority provides consistent and in-depth support for the school.
- The chair of governors provides good leadership and support.
- School development planning identifies issues for improvement very well.
- Subject leaders manage English and mathematics very well.
- ICT, religious education and the provision for pupils with special needs are well managed.
- Some co-ordinators do not have a good overview of their subjects.
- There is a substantial surplus of money for the new headteacher to use to raise standards.

Commentary

49. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They know that low standards have been an issue for the past four years. Governors have correctly invited the local education authority to assist them with staffing the school and to help raise standards this year. Committees of governors bring their expertise to meetings and make good use of it. As a result, for example, the school's finances are now well run and there is a large surplus of money for the new headteacher to use to raise standards. There are areas where the school is not well resourced, such as library facilities. There are subjects that have few books and equipment and teachers sometimes have to rely on finding their own resources to use in lessons at times. Not all statutory requirements are met. Two documents for parents do not have all the items in them that are required.
50. The school has not dealt thoroughly with the two key issues identified at the time of the last inspection. In consequence, the school's improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. However, other improvements evident this year are good. The acting headteacher was appointed to the school to address several important issues. For example, there has been a high turnover of staff and this instability has had a negative effect on the overall quality of provision. Staffing is at present more settled. The acting headteacher and school staff, with the strong support of the local education authority's consultancy staff, have moved the school forward significantly in a short time.
51. The acting headteacher provides very good and effective leadership. This year she has led the school with a clear vision, in order to maintain open channels of communication with all and bring about necessary changes. She established key goals for the school to meet and put into place the sequence of "small steps" needed to meet these goals. The acting headteacher and deputy headteacher have recorded and analysed evidence of pupils' progress this year and many pupils have made significant gains in English and mathematics. There is clear evidence that initiatives started in the past have not always been carried through thoroughly. Some weaknesses, as in the provision of outdoor resources for Reception children, have been addressed well this year.
52. The acting headteacher and staff work well together and the staff under her leadership has quickly become a more effective team. She has an extensive knowledge of

approaches to school improvement and has motivated staff well and managed their roles effectively. Many of the staff now look for ways to improve the provision further. Senior teachers are having a good impact on the school's work. For example, English and mathematics are now very well organised. The effects of their work are evident in pupils' better progress and achievement this year.

53. Weaker teaching has been addressed and the school reports that there has been significant improvement in the quality of teaching. However, there is still some unsatisfactory teaching that has not been addressed well enough in all instances.
54. Some subjects are managed well but some subject leaders new to the school do not yet have a thorough overview of their subjects. Subject co-ordinators who have worked in the school for some time have good plans for improvement as a result of what they have learnt from monitoring their subjects.
55. There is a very good school development plan that highlights most of the main areas that need improvement. It is well focused and reflects teachers' intentions to make good those aspects of the school that have not so far been well provided for. The layout of the plan is easy to follow and priorities are clear. The school makes many checks on its performance. The school seeks best value for its purchases appropriately.
56. The efficient administrators successfully help to organise the school and day to day the school runs smoothly. Their work to ensure that all pupils' whereabouts are known and recorded is very good. The school does not have an attendance problem because the office staff is vigilant and maintains a high standard of care. However, unauthorised absences remain higher than average.
57. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well. The special educational needs co-ordinator is relatively new to the job. She does not have a teaching commitment. She uses all the available help from the local education authority effectively. The special educational needs co-ordinator keeps extensive records of all pupils' provision. The extra support for individual pupils and groups outside class lessons provided by teaching assistants is well organised and has helped to raise pupils' standards of work.
58. The provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is good. It is well managed. The school works closely with the education authority and there are further good plans to tackle the attitudes of all pupils to cultural differences.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1 072 404
Total expenditure	1 064 656
Expenditure per pupil	3 001

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	114 631
Balance carried forward to the next	*122 379

**The under spend has been saved for the new headteacher and staff to use from September 2004.*

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Pupils in the Reception classes receive a sound start to their education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and some good and very good teaching was observed during the inspection. The teaching has benefited from effective advice and support from the local education authority. As a result, the improved quality of planning and organisation of the classes has increased the effectiveness of the provision. Although children's standards on entry cover a broad spectrum, most children are assessed as being well below average. During their time in the Reception classes, children make satisfactory progress in all Areas of Learning. By the time they move into Year 1, only a few children attain the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum, or are close to doing so because of their limited knowledge on entry. Children have good attitudes to school and behave satisfactorily because teachers work to improve these aspects effectively. Children's achievement is satisfactory in all Areas of Learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are learning to work collaboratively and independently.
- Children's concentration is fostered well by adults.
- A few children misbehave regularly and have limited powers of concentration.

Commentary

59. Teachers promote children's personal, social and emotional development effectively. Most children develop confidence and establish suitable relationships with one another, their class teachers and classroom assistants. Their behaviour is satisfactory and all adults encourage them to be considerate towards others. A few children have difficulty doing as they have been asked. Children's interest and attention are captured well when adults are enthusiastic. The use of varied resources supports children's learning effectively through a range of tasks and activities. All children receive plenty of praise and encouragement and those with particular needs are suitably supported with extra adult attention. Teachers encourage children to be self-reliant. Most children cope well with the routines of the day and with changing for physical activity lessons.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's communication skills are poor.
- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed effectively.
- Early reading and writing skills are well supported by adults.

Commentary

60. Teachers provide children with opportunities to extend their speaking skills through all Areas of Learning. Their communication, language and literacy skills are often poor, but the development of these skills is promoted through a range of activities in lessons. Adults sensitively encourage children to talk about what they are doing, for example as they play in the 'Beach Café'. A classroom assistant entered into the role of a customer with enthusiasm, and some productive play and language resulted. When questioning is used effectively, adults encourage children to combine their words and short phrases into sentences. Adults are patient and give children time to think about what they want to say, and help them to explain their thoughts. Children enjoy listening to stories and the classrooms have a range of picture fiction and non-fiction books, which are stored where children have easy access to them. Early writing is encouraged effectively, often through role-play. More able children are beginning to write their own names legibly.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's recognition of shapes is good.
- Teachers plan a wide range of activities to develop mathematical understanding.
- Children are beginning to use numbers with confidence.

Commentary

61. Children make sound progress in their early understanding of number, shape and measure. Some can handle simple 'one more than' calculations with numbers to five and above, and most count to five or ten with some understanding. Games and puzzles, specifically designed to support children's understanding of number, are available and teachers use them effectively. Children programmed a 'roamer' floor robot to visit consecutive and individual numerals on a number mat successfully. Children are learning the names of simple and some more complex shapes. Their use of mathematical vocabulary, such as 'bigger' or 'smaller' is fostered well by adults.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in this area is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many children have a limited general knowledge.
- Children have many opportunities to learn about the world around them.
- They are curious and show interest in their work.

Commentary

62. Pupils have opportunities to experience a wide range of activities. Many children have a limited general knowledge. Most children show a curiosity and interest in everything presented to them, and make suitable gains in their learning. Expeditions around the school and its grounds

make them aware of the wider world. Children learn more about their world by handling and discussing a variety of objects and by making classroom displays. For example, a seaside theme encouraged their interest and curiosity effectively. Children quickly learn to use computers and are developing their control of the mouse. They use a range of other information technology equipment, such as programmable floor robots called 'roamers' to support their learning about controlling things. They used a microphone and tape recorder to record weather reports. Adults make appropriate use of classroom computers to help with children's early reading, writing and mathematical skills.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for this area is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children benefit from the newly developed outdoor area.
- Children develop hand skills effectively.

Commentary

63. Children have regular, planned access to their own spacious outdoor area adjacent to their classrooms. This is a recent good addition and contains much attractive wooden adventure equipment that allows children to climb, crawl and swing. Physical development is planned and organised as an integral part of the overall curriculum in a variety of ways. Children use the school hall for music, movement and dance. A very good lesson was observed where children responded to music by being robots, and then erupting volcanoes. They effectively combined elements of many curricular areas. The lesson focused on children's listening skills as well as drama, and was extended well to promote their early writing skills. Children used chalks and pens to create abstract pictures whilst listening to the music. Children develop other hand skills effectively through the use of pencils, brushes, scissors, and small construction apparatus.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good opportunities to use their imagination through role-play situations.

Commentary

64. Children have an adequate range of artistic experiences. They use a variety of pencils, paints, chalks and collage materials to create simple images. Many examples of children's work are on display in the classrooms. They handle malleable materials appropriately, using a variety of tools, and have made seashells from plaster of Paris. They learn and sing a number of songs and rhymes, and have opportunities to listen to music as well as playing percussion instruments. They have good opportunities to use their imagination through role-play situations and enjoy using the classrooms' 'seaside shop' and 'Beach Café'.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' standards of work are below average in Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils' attitudes to work are good.
- Lower attaining pupils find reading and writing difficult.
- Teaching assistants help pupils learn effectively, including pupils with special educational needs.
- The development of English is improving because of the very good quality of leadership and good management of the subject across the school.
- Books and equipment for literacy lessons have been well chosen, but library provision is unsatisfactory.
- Homework tasks are not used consistently by teachers to raise standards.

Commentary

65. In national tests in 2003 standards were very low in Year 6. However, across the wider range of skills seen during the inspection, standards seen were below average this year, rather than typically well below average. Some individual pupils achieve higher levels in both reading and writing. Standards have declined since the previous inspection and teaching is not as good, therefore improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. The school, nevertheless, has made an upward turn this year in the quality of provision for English. This year, 61 per cent of pupils in Year 6 gained two or more sublevels within the National Curriculum, such as from 3B to 4C. Other assessments teachers have made show that many pupils have made faster than expected progress. There is good achievement in classes where the teaching is good. The combined effect of the teaching across the school is that pupils make good progress in some years and satisfactory in others. There is a degree of inconsistency in the teaching but the school is working effectively to improve matters.
66. Children's attainment on entry to the school is well below average and is drifting downward year on year. There are areas of weakness in all aspects of pupils' work in English but there is evidence of improvement and pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory. The achievement of boys and girls is similar and boys often contribute well in class. Pupils' attitudes are good because, while being taught how to read and write with confidence, teachers also encourage pupils to be imaginative and to work well together. The promotion of skills in reading is effective and pupils' imaginative writing is taught well. The National Literacy Strategy has been effectively introduced and there are good systems for checking what is taught and for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
67. Although overall standards are below average, pupils are improving their skills in speaking and listening because they have many opportunities for discussion in lessons. In all years speaking and listening skills are developed well in 'circle time' discussions and 'show and tell' sessions. Some pupils speak confidently to adults because they have many opportunities to gain confidence in expressing their ideas and opinions and because teachers use and value their contributions. The highest attaining pupils explain their ideas clearly when talking about their favourite books. Many pupils in all years have a good understanding of rhyme and poetry is used often because it is very popular and motivates pupils. Teachers provide many opportunities for listening and the Year 2 'travel agencies' provide good opportunities for conversation. Teachers give work on the sounds of letters high priority to help pupils learn to read.

68. The teaching of reading is well managed. Although overall pupils' skills in reading are below average, there are competent readers in all year groups and the achievement of many pupils is good. Pupils enjoy books and the higher attaining pupils read with confidence and expression. Lower attaining pupils find reading difficult. They use a variety of ways to read their books effectively, including reading words by joining the sounds of individual and groups of letters and using picture clues. However, the library does not provide an adequate choice of books or opportunities for pupils to develop the full range of research skills. The school has not yet succeeded in ensuring that all parents participate fully in their children's education, although pupils make noticeably better progress when their parents are actively involved in homework tasks. Most pupils can explain how to use an index and glossary because these skills are well taught in class lessons. In Year 6 the achievement of boys is particularly good because of the use of interesting and exciting books, including those by Michael Morpurgo.

69. Standards in writing are improving although overall standards are below average. Individual pupils produce high quality, detailed and accurate work and pupils have regular lessons in handwriting, spelling and punctuation. By the end of Year 2, most pupils use joined up writing appropriately. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, write sentences and simple stories because they have frequent opportunities to write and because these skills are well taught. Some parents feel that their children are taught joined writing too young. Inspectors judge that the teaching of joined handwriting to younger pupils is correct and it will benefit pupils' writing style as they grow older.
70. Year 6 pupils write for different purposes, including letters and reports, and for different types of readership. Their letters about television programmes for children are clearly expressed and convincingly written. The teaching in Year 6 causes pupils to make good progress because tasks match pupils' capabilities closely. Lower attaining pupils need more help with their writing. Adults provide this help. They prompt pupils and repeat points in other words so that pupils can understand what they have to do and therefore make good progress. This approach allows many pupils to make better progress in lessons than they do in formal tests.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and some very good teaching was seen. Teachers vary in their expectations of pupils and in some lessons behaviour is not managed well enough. Most teachers check how pupils are getting on effectively. Pupils' work is assessed and marked accurately and this information is used in the planning of future lessons for groups within the classes. Pupils have targets to reach although not all pupils really understand how they can improve or progress. In some lessons there is a very good match between the teaching and the needs of the pupils and this helps them to succeed very well. Pupils with special educational needs are usually given the support that enables them to make good progress. Lessons are planned well and in the most effective lessons learning is very good because of the quality of questioning, the effective use resources and the quality of support staff. In Year 6 pupils benefit from particularly effective teaching in preparation for English lessons at secondary school. A small number of lessons are not successful because some pupils do not behave well and they make little progress. Teachers have different expectations of pupils' behaviour. Teachers do not always apply the school's rewards and sanctions consistently. Therefore, pupils are not always sure what is expected of them.
72. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and has a very good understanding of the necessary priorities for development. The co-ordinator has a clear focus on raising standards through monitoring and developing teaching and learning. Management of the provision for English is good because teachers work as teams in year groups. In most years experienced teachers support those who are new to teaching. However, not all years have an experienced teacher to call on and the provision is noticeably less effective where this is the case. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress and lesson planning are improving. Book and other resources for use in lessons have been chosen well and they are used effectively in classes.
73. Provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is good and pupils are well supported and progress well. The school has few pupils who require support at present but it is well placed to cope should demand increase because it is well informed and uses available advice and guidance well.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

74. Pupils' skills in literacy are below average and this is affecting standards in all subjects that require basic competencies in English. The school has a good clear focus on raising standards in speaking and listening and in writing. There is a flourishing drama club and Year 4 pupils have produced their own newspaper. Literacy skills are being developed in most subjects through research, discussion and written tasks, but standards are still too low. Teachers are not using the full potential of homework to promote pupils' literacy standards. Computers are used to develop literacy skills but inadequate library provision is impeding pupils' progress. The school has made good efforts to establish fiction and non-fiction libraries and to train pupils as librarians. Provision has clearly improved. However, the two small libraries have a limited range of books, particularly for higher attaining and older pupils, and there are limited computer resources for the development of research skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' standards of work are below average by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and is good in some years.
- Teachers give constant praise to pupils, which encourages them to try hard.
- Teachers plan lessons thoroughly.
- Tasks for pupils to do are well matched to their abilities in most classes.
- Teachers and teaching assistants take positive steps to include all pupils in lessons.
- In a small number of lessons teachers allow pupils to disrupt learning.
- The co-ordinator manages the subject very well.

Commentary

75. At the time of the last inspection standards in mathematics were judged to be average. Standards are now below average overall. There are several reasons for this change, in keeping with the changing pattern of attainment generally in the school. Children's attainment on entry to school is well below average and it is drifting downward. There have been many changes of staff and many pupils arrive at or leave the school at different times in the school year. These factors have had a negative effect on standards.
76. Over the past four years Year 6 pupils' standards in mathematics in national tests have been well below average. However, there are now signs of an upward trend in teachers' assessments. The acting headteacher, co-ordinator for mathematics and staff have pulled together effectively this year and standards are rising. In most classes pupils make at least satisfactory progress with the tasks they have to do. In some classes there is good progress in lessons, particularly in Years 1 and 2. The combined effect of the teaching across the school is that pupils make good progress in some years and satisfactory progress in others. There is a degree of inconsistency in the teaching but the school is working effectively to improve matters. The school groups the oldest pupils into 'sets' of pupils of similar ability in mathematics. This arrangement improves the match of work to pupils' abilities and is a reason why standards are beginning to improve.

77. A quarter of pupils in Year 2 have moved up one whole level in the National Curriculum this year. In Year 2, pupils were observed successfully extending simple number sequences. Higher attaining pupils worked with numbers up to 100 and lower attainers worked with problems with numbers up to 10. In this lesson pupils learned to count forward and back in twos, threes, fives and tens with increasing speed. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils solved problems using ratio and proportion. They plotted the position of objects using positive and negative numbers and solved problems by interpreting information in charts and tables.
78. The teaching is satisfactory. In lessons where pupils progress well, the teachers genuinely praise and encourage pupils. This results in pupils learning effectively and they change from one activity to another without wasting time. Teachers also manage behaviour well in most classes so that pupils stay on task with good levels of commitment and concentration on their work. Teachers plan their lessons carefully so that all pupils carry out tasks that are matched to their abilities. Practical activities are also used to help pupils learn. In a very good lesson in Year 4, pupils learned about protractors by pretending to be protractors themselves. They were then able to transfer what they had learned into the correct use of real protractors on their tables.
79. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as they are well supported by teaching assistants. Teaching assistants give appropriate clues and prompts about the tasks pupils have to do, without giving pupils the answers.
80. In a small proportion of lessons the learning was unsatisfactory. When teachers do not correct those pupils who are disrupting lessons then the learning of all is adversely affected. Pupils become unclear about what they have to do and why they are doing it. Sometimes the teacher does not demonstrate obvious enthusiasm for the subject, which results in pupils becoming restless and losing concentration.
81. This year the school has worked successfully to raise standards in mathematics. This has been a major focus and the local education authority has been positively involved in this undertaking. The National Numeracy Strategy forms a firm basis for lesson planning and this ensures that all areas of the National Curriculum are taught. There is a comprehensive system of assessment that makes it easy to see if any group or individual needs extra attention.
82. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject very well. She is enthusiastic and monitors learning and teaching effectively across the school with the acting-headteacher. This helps her to have a good understanding of what is happening in the teaching of mathematics and to support colleagues where necessary. Standards have begun to rise as a result of this work.

Mathematics across the curriculum

83. Pupils use mathematics appropriately as part of their work in other subjects and consequently they develop an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills. For example, pupils use graphs and tables to record data in science or measure components in design technology. In Year 6 pupils have linked their mathematical skills to control technology in order to make a model vehicle follow a prescribed route.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average at the end of both Years 2 and 6.
- There is a good emphasis in the teaching on practical work.
- The co-ordinator has a good perception of how the subject should be developed.
- Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is unsatisfactory
- Pupils are not set individual targets to reach.

Commentary

84. Pupils' standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 are well below average. Inspection findings mirror the standards in last year's national test results. Pupils' attainment when they join Year 1 is well below average, and from this starting point, pupils of all ages and abilities make satisfactory and steady progress as they move through the school. Their achievement is satisfactory. In individual lessons where good teaching extends pupils' learning, they often achieve well. However, pupils' overall achievement is hampered by their lack of ability to recall and build upon their previous learning. The new pattern of teaching science units in longer blocks of time means that there are longer gaps between science lessons. This new arrangement will be evaluated by the co-ordinator to see if it is a more successful way of teaching. The quality of provision in science is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection.
85. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 undertake a satisfactory range of experimental work, but their ability to undertake the work methodically, independently and logically is limited. By the end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils make sensible predictions and understand the idea of a fair test. However, most pupils struggle with this investigative aspect of their science work, and lack the skills to carry out independent investigations successfully and to report in different ways on their findings.
86. Pupils throughout the school take part in a satisfactory range of science activities and, superficially, have a secure knowledge and understanding of the topics they cover. However, their knowledge lacks depth, and pupils' learning is often adversely affected by their lack of experiences outside school and poor general knowledge. Whilst higher attaining pupils across the school have a reasonable recall of what they have learned, lower attaining pupils often have difficulty in recalling their learning and applying it to new situations. Teachers do not revise the many facts and ideas pupils need to learn often enough. In some lessons pupils' information and communication skills are used purposefully but, overall, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use ICT to support their learning.

87. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall although examples of good and weak teaching were observed. Good teaching has a positive effect on pupils' standards and on pupils' achievement. Some teachers use questions well to reinforce learning, and lesson targets are explained well to pupils so that they know what their teachers' expectations are. Pupils discuss their tasks in small groups and most pupils respond enthusiastically and are keen to share their ideas. Regular opportunities for group and paired work have a positive impact on pupils' personal and social development.
88. Lessons are mostly well planned and often place good emphasis on developing pupils' experimental skills. Pupils enjoy taking part in practical tasks but younger pupils sometimes lack concentration. Pupils with special educational needs receive suitable classroom support from teaching assistants, their teachers and classmates. In the main, tasks are appropriately matched to pupils' individual levels of ability. There are times when higher attaining pupils do not have work that is hard enough for them and they do not develop their independent investigative skills as fast as they might.
89. Leadership and management of science are satisfactory. Although relatively inexperienced, the co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject and knows what needs to be done to raise standards and improve the overall provision. Checks on pupils' work are underway, and plans are in place for these checking activities to be extended further. Although pupils' attainment and progress are regularly assessed, tick sheets are not a sufficiently rigorous system for recording pupils' progress. The information recorded is not detailed enough and does not have a positive effect on teachers' planning and therefore on standards generally. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is not informative and pupils have little idea of what they need to do to improve. The subject is adequately resourced.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain standards that are below those expected for their ages.
- Teachers use ICT increasingly to explore work in other subjects.
- Each class has a laptop computer for teachers and pupils to use.

- In some lessons, there are too few computers for pupils to use.
- The subject leader co-ordinates the provision well and runs a good club for pupils to attend.

Commentary

90. In Years 2 and 6, pupils' ICT skills are below national expectations. Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 6 are completing work that is typically intended for pupils a year younger. This situation has arisen because in the past the school had too few computers. The teaching now allows pupils to make steady progress and achieve satisfactorily and pupils are catching up. In Year 6, pupils are confident in many aspects of the subject.
91. Since the last inspection the school has received funding from the government's National Grid for Learning. This has meant that resources for the subject have improved. Most computers are modern and there are at least three in each class. The school does not have a computer suite where a whole class can work on the same ICT lesson, but it is looking into the possibility of creating one by drawing on some of the money not spent in previous years. Teachers' confidence and expertise have improved through the training provided by the New Opportunities Fund, initial teacher training courses and through the school's own response to teachers' needs. Most teachers have an adequate or better level of personal knowledge of ICT.
92. Teachers use national guidance as the basis for lesson planning. The curriculum and procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are satisfactory. Pupils' work shows they are learning to use ICT for word processing, to draw pictures, find information from the Internet, handle data and make interesting multi-media presentations that combine pictures and sound.
93. The teaching and learning were satisfactory in the lessons seen. In Year 1 the teacher made some very good tracks that pupils used to navigate table robots. In Year 6 pupils learned about the dangers of 'chat rooms.' There were too few computers in the room to allow many pupils to work on the program on computer in this lesson. However, the teacher set other pupils a good questionnaire to complete that covered the key points of the lesson. In Year 2, pupils learned how to draw a picture in the style of Mondrian effectively. The teacher used a digital projector and pupils soon understood how to use the drawing program. Few pupils had the chance to use their new skills immediately because there were too few computers to use.
94. The subject is co-ordinated well. Teachers plan lessons to include ICT activities as a matter of course in many subjects. The school's plans for the future are well founded. The co-ordinator has ensured that the full range of ICT activities are taught. Where the school cannot meet an aspect of the curriculum, such as in controlling devices for the oldest pupils, the school has established a good link with a secondary school so that pupils can complete this work. Each class has a laptop computer. This good provision means that teachers can use them to plan lessons and prepare resources to make lessons interesting for pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

95. Pupils' use of ICT to help them learn in other subjects is satisfactory. Pupils use computers in lessons to consolidate numeracy skills in mathematics, for writing tasks in

English, and to learn about the lives of artists. For example, in Year 2 pupils used computers to help them learn to spell a set of words and in another lesson to investigate number patterns. Computers are used to gather, store and analyse information in science lessons. Pupils in Year 4 used a digital camera to take photographs of animal habitats and creatures they could find. The use of information and communication technology is improving in most subjects. It is routine now for groups of pupils to explore the content of lessons using ICT.

HUMANITIES

96. Insufficient work was seen during the inspection for inspectors to form an overall judgement about provision in history and geography. As well as the observation of a small number of lessons, pupils' work and teachers' planning were scrutinised, teachers interviewed and the content of classroom displays noted.
97. An examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning in **history** indicates that pupils study an appropriate range of time periods. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 know details of the life and times of Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes and they know about features of life in Britain during the 1940's. Pupils develop an adequate understanding of time as they notice how toys and homes have changed over the years. Topics in Years 3 to 6 have been taught to a good depth. For example, in their work on the Tudors, pupils in Year 6 have considered the impact of explorations, famous Tudor ships, the life of Francis Drake and the lifestyle of people in those times. Other periods studied include the Ancient Greeks, the Ancient Egyptians and Victorian Britain.
98. Across the school, teachers develop pupils' reasoning and deduction skills well and good links are made with their personal and social development. For example, when considering the life of Louis Braille, younger pupils thought about what it might be like to be blind and how blind people could be helped. Older pupils compare and contrast the reasons for explorations between Tudor and modern times. Teachers provide some good opportunities for pupils to develop literacy skills in this subject as they write about, 'My Life as a Tudor sailor,' and, 'What it was like to be a child in a Victorian school.'
99. In **geography**, there are suitable curricular plans that outline which themes pupils are to explore from class to class. They set out the skills to be developed in each class. The curriculum is sufficiently detailed and identifies in outline how literacy, numeracy and ICT skills can be taught through the subject. The subject is organised in unit blocks where several lessons are pinned together over a short period. Parts of two lessons were observed in which the teaching was satisfactory and good respectively. Year 6 pupils are studying the island of St Lucia, although not in any great depth as yet. There was little evidence of other geography work, but the school's focus this year has been the development of mathematics and literacy.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain standards that are below those expected for their age.
- Pupils have a good appreciation of the important elements of some other world faiths.
- Leadership and management of the subject are good but the co-ordinator does not yet have a clear whole school view of the subject.
- There are effective links between work in religious education and pupils' wider social and moral development.
- Resources are good and the subject has a high profile in the school.

Commentary

100. Across the school pupils reach standards that are below those expected for their age, but most make steady progress in their learning and they achieve satisfactorily. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be in line with expectations at both key stages. The main factor that limits standards is pupils' weak literacy skills. Pupils lack the skills and confidence to write with sufficient accuracy and depth about what they know or to confidently talk about their feelings and ideas.
101. Across the school, pupils are taught a good range of topics to an appropriate depth. Overall pupils have a satisfactory understanding of important elements of Christianity. For example, younger pupils know the events of Easter and Christmas and some of the stories that Jesus told, such as the 'Good Samaritan.' Most older pupils know why the Bible is a special book for Christians and about the importance of features such as the cross, candles and the font. Pupils have a good appreciation of the importance of different world faiths. Younger pupils know why Shabbat is a special day for the Jews and what is special about a synagogue. Older pupils know why the Qur'an is important to Muslims and about details of the life of Mohammed. A further strength in pupils' achievement is the way in which effective links are made with pupils' wider moral and social development. Younger pupils consider in what ways they are special and older pupils consider challenging questions such as, 'Why did Hitler hate the Jews?' and, 'How can I cope with strong feelings?'
102. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory across the school. Some strengths and areas of weakness were evident in lessons observed. In one effective activity a local parish church leader talked about how his Christian beliefs affected his work, and answered pupils' questions. This meeting was well managed by the teacher and sensitively led by the visitor. Pupils asked worthwhile and searching questions, such as 'How often do you pray?' and 'How did you become a priest?' As a result of this event, pupils' appreciation of the application of Christian beliefs was developed well. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, pupils were not encouraged well enough to be committed to the lesson and too many were unwilling to take a constructive part in activities. This limited the quality of the learning of the whole class.
103. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has helped to develop a high profile for the subject. Interest in the subject is promoted well through several good colourful displays around the school. Procedures for checking the quality of pupils' work, assessing pupils' attainment and recording the progress they make are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is in the process of introducing further, more detailed recording procedures. A shortcoming in the leadership of the subject is that the co-ordinator has a limited view of the standards pupils attain in Years 3 to 6. Resources are good. However, the school does not make good use of the contributions that other local church groups might offer, although appropriate links are made with the parish church.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

104. Insufficient work was seen during the inspection to allow inspectors to form secure overall judgements about provision in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. A small number of lessons were observed, pupils' work was scrutinised, teachers interviewed and the content of classroom displays noted.
105. There was little **art and design** work on display in classrooms or around the school and no three-dimensional work because the subject receives greater attention at other times

of the year. Teachers' planning indicates that art is used to support work in many subjects and that skills are taught in specific lessons. In Year 2 pupils talked about mixing paint, using different types of brushes to obtain various effects and about different types of collage work. A higher attaining pupil in Year 6 showed good knowledge of Ancient Egyptian art and about the work of Leonardo da Vinci. Teachers use the work of famous artists such as Lowry and Matisse to help pupils understand and then follow the techniques they used. Most pupils have limited knowledge of the work of artists and of styles of painting. Pupils use sketchbooks mainly for design technology work but good use is made of computer software, for example, to support study of the work of Mondrian in Year 2. The recently appointed co-ordinator is planning a focus week to develop pupils' skills in art further early next year.

106. The work seen in **design and technology** shows that many pupils' skills of planning, making and evaluating their work are satisfactory. Pupils use words and labelled sketches to communicate the details of their designs. All pupils have useful sketchbooks in which they develop their planning and evaluation skills. In the lesson seen, effective learning was taking place about pneumatics. Pupils were beginning to learn how to move objects remotely using compressed air. The teacher used a variety of different ways to encourage pupils' interest about their work, such as through an inspiring wall display.
107. Pupils have linked music and design and technology effectively in their work on making simple musical instruments. There are good links with a nearby secondary school, which has provided Year 6 pupils with the resources and teachers to complete a more advanced unit of work on control technology. The school's parent-teacher association has also encouraged pupils by sponsoring a competition to design a flag. Since her arrival in September the co-ordinator has worked hard to organise the subject better. She has improved and organised resources for pupils to use. She has a clear idea of how she wants the subject to develop in the future.
108. The school does not have a **music** co-ordinator and music has a low priority. Currently, there is no pianist in the school. Until Easter the school had a music specialist who ran guitar, recorder and percussion groups. Pupils remember these lessons and talk fondly of them. From September there will be a pianist in assemblies who will also have the musical expertise necessary to support staff who lack confidence in teaching music. There are also plans for a parent to re-establish the guitar and recorder groups. These changes are intended to improve pupils' musical experiences. In spite of the present difficulties, Year 6 teachers are preparing a musical production with pupils later this term.
109. Teachers provide an adequate curriculum for pupils in **physical education**. The school has a good full size hall for indoor games, dance and gymnastics. The field is good. Many classes can use it at the same time comfortably. Several parts of physical education lessons were observed. In Year 6, pupils learned about co-operative fielding effectively. The teacher showed pupils a way to return the ball to base by linking with a fielding partner to make a very long throw for one pupil into two shorter ones for two pupils. In Year 4, the teacher made sure there was a good ball to pupil ratio, so that pupils had plenty of opportunities to improve their hitting skills. In Year 5, pupils exercised vigorously as they completed a circuit-training lesson. Pupils counted the number of times they stepped up and down onto a low bench in a given time and tried to beat their previous best. Year 1 pupils hit a ball along the ground successfully to each

other. The school offers pupils clubs or representative games during and after school for: football, netball, rounders and cricket.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

110. There was insufficient evidence for an overall judgement about standards of work and the quality of teaching and learning in PSHE. However, indications are that provision is good. The school places a high priority on this area.
111. There are good links between PSHE and pupils' wider personal and social development. Work in the subject follows a scheme of work (ideas for a series of lessons) that has been recommended by the local education authority. The scheme of work gives teachers a good framework of ideas and skills to explore with pupils of different ages. PSHE lessons link well with 'circle time' discussions, where pupils sit together and discuss sensitive issues in a controlled and managed way. Several 'circle time' lessons were observed during the inspection. These dealt with important issues such as 'being special', 'making people happy' and 'being a friend.' Most of the activities were managed well and pupils' appreciation of important personal qualities was developed well. However, when the teacher did not manage pupils well, pupils did not take the tasks seriously and they were not sufficiently engaged in the activities.

112. The provision is managed well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator, who is currently working towards a further qualification in the teaching of this subject. She is also responsible for the work of the school council and the 'trouble busters,' who support pupils in the playground. Pupils' appreciation of citizenship and health issues is developed well through community links with the police and welfare services, through the recent 'medicines awareness day' and the school's work in gaining a 'Healthy Schools' award in 2003.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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