

INSPECTION REPORT

ROWSLEY CofE (CONTROLLED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Matlock

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112820

Headteacher: Mr D C Lewis

Lead inspector: Mr D A Hill

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd December 2003

Inspection number: 257367

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: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 75

School address: Rowsley
Matlock
Derbyshire
Postcode: DE4 2ED

Telephone number: 01629 733727
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr J E Mellor

Date of previous inspection: December 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This very small rural primary school is situated in the village of Rowsley, midway between Matlock and Bakewell in the Derbyshire Peak District. There are 75 pupils on roll, 30 boys and 45 girls. At the time of the inspection there were eleven children in the Foundation Stage who are included in a mixed reception Year 1 and Year 2 class. There are two other classes, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. All pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. Many of the pupils travel to school from other settlements. They come from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds and free school meal eligibility is below the national average. Sixteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. Attainment on entry to the reception year is broadly average. In 2002, the school received the Government's School Achievement Award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

	Members of the inspection team		Subject responsibilities
3692	David Hill	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, English, history, geography, physical education, religious education, special educational needs
9003	Bryan Findley	Lay inspector	
23453	Carole Cressey	Team inspector	Mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, music.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is providing a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good for some year groups. The school has a strong ethos of care, which has a positive impact on the personal development of the pupils. The leadership of the school is affected by the heavy teaching load of the headteacher, but it is satisfactory. Although costs are high in relation to all schools, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Though standards are at least satisfactory, they could be higher through better monitoring and evaluation of work covered;
- The more able pupils are not challenged consistently enough in some classes;
- Leadership and management need strengthening with the development of a strong and detailed school improvement plan and greater involvement of the governing body.
- The curriculum is broad and interesting but not enough emphasis is given to recording learning;
- In the Foundation Stage, the teaching is good and the children do well but they do not have enough opportunities for outdoor learning and physical development is limited;
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they behave well;
- Pupils have very good relationships with each other and their personal qualities are developed well;
- Teachers know the children well but the children have few opportunities to contribute their views on the development of the school;
- Certain issues from the last report have only been partially addressed;
- Homework is not applied consistently throughout the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Since the school was last inspected in 1998, the rate of improvement has been satisfactory. The building of the new classroom has improved the working conditions. The school has responded satisfactorily to the key issues in the last report but there is still work to be done to raise standards further in English, mathematics and science, and in monitoring, evaluating, assessing and recording.

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

The standards indicated in the table do not fairly reflect the current position. Because the number of pupils in each year is generally less than ten, a small variation, for example the presence of one or more pupils with special educational needs, can lead to a large change in the grades from year to year. In 2003, a third of the pupils in Year 6 had a statement of special educational needs. Judging largely by standards seen in Year 2 and Year 6 **pupils achieve satisfactorily.**

Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is average. Through good teaching most children will reach the levels expected of them by the time they reach their statutory school age. In the 2003 national tests, standards at the end of Year 2 were well below average in reading and mathematics

and average in writing. The work pupils were doing during the inspection indicates much higher standards. Pupils now in Year 2 should reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of the year and those in Year 6 should be close to, or better, than the national average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' competence in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) is good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress but the progress of more able pupils is slower than it should be because work is not sufficiently adapted to their needs.

At all stages, pupils behave well, have sound attitudes to work and relationships with each other are good. The school does not have school council as a forum to enable pupils to contribute to the development of the school. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** Attendance is well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education, and of teaching and learning, are satisfactory. Some good lessons were observed in all classes, teaching being consistently good with reception children and with Years 3 and 4 pupils. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory but there are insufficient opportunities for writing. Pupils use ICT very effectively. All teachers expect good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils share good relationships with each other and are willing to take on responsibility. Support staff make a very positive contribution, particularly to the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils enjoy their work but more could be expected of them, with a better match of work to take account of their varying aptitudes and learning needs. The topic based approach results in science not being taught frequently enough, especially in Years 1 and 2. The school provides a good range of sporting activities. Music is provided for well for those pupils who take up extra provision.

The school does not evaluate its work critically. Performance monitoring and assessment strategies are not used sufficiently to provide clear patterns for future curriculum developments. Relationships with parents are satisfactory but the school should do more to seek their views and take action when justified.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. At present, the headteacher has a full-time class responsibility but this has just been rectified by the temporary appointment of a 0.5 teacher. This will allow for monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school. Staff development opportunities are good. The majority of the governors, including the chair, are newly appointed. Governance of the school is developing well. Statutory requirements are fulfilled.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents feel that their children make good progress and that they are expected to work hard and do their best. A significant minority of parents feel that the school does not sufficiently seek their views and does not explain how they can help their children at home with homework and that they should be better informed about how their children are getting on at school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- make better use of marking, assessments and evaluation of pupils' progress in all subjects;
- plan a better match of work to the aptitudes and learning needs of the pupils, especially the more able;
- critically monitor and evaluate the work of the school more frequently and produce a development plan to overcome weaknesses;
- take greater account of the views of parents and pupils in the provision made by the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards and pupils' achievement are satisfactory throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make good progress in reading, speaking and listening from the time they enter the school and standards are above average when they enter Year 1.
- Standards are above average in information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education and pupils achieve well in these subjects.
- Children achieve well in reception and in Years 3 and 4.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well when receiving additional teaching support.
- The achievement of the more able pupils should be better.

Commentary

1. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage in five of the six areas of learning. The limited space available restricts their physical development and by the end of the reception year standards are below those expected. Almost all children are expected to reach the early learning goals in the other five areas by the time they enter Year 1 and half will have exceeded them.
2. The numbers of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are historically very small **so any interpretation of national test results must be treated with great caution.** Account should also be taken of the variable numbers of pupils with special educational needs and of the number of pupils who enter or leave school, a higher percentage than found nationally. In 2003, a third of pupils with a statement of special educational needs took the Year 6 tests.
3. The trend over time for Year 2 pupils is of above average attainments but with a dip in standards in 2003. Year 6 pupils' attainments are generally above average, except for 2003 when the composition of this year group contributed to a marked decline with results in English, mathematics and science being below average.
4. Evidence for the performance of the youngest pupils in Year 1 indicates that the good progress made in the Foundation Stage continues. In Years 1 and 2 standards in reading are above average. Great emphasis is placed on teaching pupils the skills to pronounce unfamiliar words and to build up their word knowledge. The expectation for pupils to read regularly at home, and the reading dialogue between home and school, assist the level of reading. In addition, the help given to pupils by classroom assistants and volunteer helpers makes a valuable contribution. Writing standards are at the national level of expectation, but not enough opportunities are given to pupils to express their thoughts and emotions in this way. Standards in mathematics are average but more could be expected of the pupils. Their mental mathematics skills are developing well with standards which are above average. Opportunities to apply number skills across the curriculum are limited for this age group but are well developed for the older pupils. Standards for Year 6 pupils are average but could be higher if planning took account of the different rates of progress of pupils.
5. Standards in science in Year 6 are average but there is insufficient regular time allocated to this subject with some work that is repeated. Provision for ICT is good. Pupils develop key skills, which are taught directly and which are used regularly in other subjects. In history and geography, evidence was not available to demonstrate that pupils develop their knowledge and skill over a period of time. Work seen in geography in Years 3 and 4 was good and in history in Years 5 and 6 it was satisfactory. Standards in music are at least satisfactory with good standards being attained by pupils who participate in specialist music teaching. Singing is good.

Religious education benefits from good links with the local clergy. Physical education standards are good, being higher than those expected nationally.

6. Interesting material is presented to pupils in ways that appeal to them and, consequently, they often learn effectively. Good use is made of PowerPoint production but at times too much emphasis is placed on discussion and not enough on recording. Greater rigour in assessing and monitoring work would ensure that work is set which more consistently matched the needs of individual pupils. Teaching assistants are usually well briefed and make an important contribution to meeting the needs of pupils, especially those with special educational needs. Individual education plans clearly lay out suitable targets and these are supported well by parents. There does not appear to be any significant difference between the performance of boys and girls, but more able pupils are not being challenged enough.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They behave well and there are no exclusions. Most pupils mature well during their time at the school and overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils concentrate well and are interested in their work.
- Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good.
- Relationships between pupils and with members of staff are good.
- Pupils' are willing to take on responsibility.
- There are consistently very high levels of attendance.
- Strategies for pupils' cultural development are too narrow.

Commentary

7. This remains a strong area of the school. Pupils enjoy their schooling and attendance rates are consistently well above average. Each day starts well; pupils busy themselves getting ready for lessons with little need for intervention from members of staff, who place high levels of trust in pupils to behave well and take responsibility for themselves. Daily activities are well supported, for example by older pupils who establish dinner numbers for each class and arrange for the appropriate number of meals to be provided. Behaviour is good because pupils understand and comply well with routines as a matter of course, so that dining sessions, for example, are socially comfortable events. Pupils also take good care of their environment with no problems of litter from break time snacks. Pupils behave well and co-operate in the classroom, so that time is used well for learning with few interruptions to impede progress.
8. Most pupils develop well during their time at the school and take on increasing responsibilities as they grow older, for example in the supervision and organisation of younger pupils at dining tables at lunchtime. These duties are carried out diligently and the authority of the pupils is readily accepted by the younger ones so that all pupils develop a sense of living in a community. Assemblies and lessons in personal, social and health education are used well to teach right and wrong and to recognise the achievement of individual pupils. This was ably demonstrated in a Years 1 and 2 lesson during which pupils discussed moral issues of selfishness and greed and were given the opportunity to reflect on their own responses to different situations. The school can cite examples of areas of cultural development for pupils but the overall provision in this area is not sufficiently embedded in development planning, especially for preparing pupils for life in a multicultural society.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

Exclusions

There were no exclusions in this reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory with some good features. The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory but assessment is unsatisfactory. There is effective provision for pupils with special educational needs.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but assessment is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is some good teaching in all year groups.
- Teaching is consistently good for reception children and pupils in Years 3 and 4.
- Learning support assistants are used well and give good support to pupils with special educational needs.
- Marking is not used enough for assessment purposes.
- Monitoring of pupils' progress is not rigorous enough.
- In Years 5 and 6, not enough is expected of pupils' recorded work and homework.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	5	16	1	0	0

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

9. Judgements on the quality of teaching are made on the basis of a scrutiny of pupils' work as well as observation of lessons.
10. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress as a result of the well-planned teaching they receive from the nursery nurse. Planning is jointly undertaken with the Years 1/2 teacher and is effective in helping pupils meet the early learning goals. Levels of work are pitched appropriately and the children are challenged well.
11. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are at present taught by an experienced supply teacher. The work is designed to meet the needs of all pupils in the class but some of the work for a few pupils does not challenge them sufficiently. They acquire good ICT skills through careful teaching and,

because of the emphasis given to mental mathematics, they are acquiring a quick recall of simple number operations. Emphasis on teaching pupils to become effective readers results in most pupils becoming fluent. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. They have a suitable programme of learning which is well matched to meet their needs.

12. In Years 3 and 4, the teaching is good. The work is planned well and the topics are stimulatingly presented. Activities are planned carefully to match the learning needs of groups of pupils, for example in geography, when pupils were examining photographs relating to weather and climate, questions they had to answer were matched well to their ability. The teaching of Years 5 and 6 pupils, carried out by the headteacher is stimulating and pupils find the topics interesting. However, there is not always an appropriate match of work to the abilities of the pupils. In a lesson on Shakespeare's 'The Tempest', a number of pupils found the story difficult to understand. In this class, not enough attention is paid to following the agreed scheme of work in subjects in order to cover what is expected. A lack of adequate record keeping leads to some repetition and insufficient structure in the accumulation of knowledge and skills. Planning is not robust enough to provide good assistance. ICT skills are well developed and there is an emphasis on discussion as a feature in all lessons. Questioning of pupils is well focused but marking of work is not used enough for assessment purposes.
13. The assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. It lacks thoroughness and is not giving an accurate picture of how well pupils are achieving against national norms. Consequently, the needs of individual pupils, except for those with special educational needs, are not consistently met. Pupils are given targets in English and mathematics but the English targets are not specific enough for them to understand how they can improve further. The assessment information the school has does not have sufficient impact on their work.

The curriculum

The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory overall. ICT, music and sport are used well to enrich the curriculum. The provision for out-of-school activities is satisfactory. The accommodation and the use of resources, including the strategic deployment of staff, are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are generally interesting for pupils but do not provide sufficiently for the varying aptitudes and learning needs of pupils.
 - Strong links are made between subjects, with ICT used well to support them.
 - The topic based curriculum results in science not being taught frequently enough in some year groups
 - The curriculum emphasis on nurturing high quality personal and social skills has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to learning.
 - A good range of sporting activities enhances pupils physical skills and personal and social skills.
 - Accommodation has improved since the last inspection.
14. In general, the school uses nationally recommended schemes of work to help them plan the curriculum and the LEA guidance to meet the needs of mixed-age classes. However, these are not consistently implemented and in Years 5 and 6 insufficient attention is given to ensure that work is well matched to the different ages and attainment levels within the class. There are examples of Year 6 pupils repeating the science work they did in Year 5 and of Year 5 pupils having great difficulty in understanding a complex mathematical idea which is more suitably challenging for older pupils. As a result the more able pupils in these year groups do not always achieve as well as they could and do not reach the standards they are capable of. History and geography are arranged in blocks of time and this adversely affects teaching and learning and limits pupils' achievements and attainment in some classes. At the time of the inspection, Years 1 and 2 had done very little work in science and in Years 5 and 6 the scheme of work had not been sufficiently adapted to take account of the different levels of ability and age of pupils. The

curriculum for ICT is very good and pupils use their skills well to enhance their learning in most other subjects.

15. The curriculum is fully inclusive. Pupils with special educational needs have clear individual educational plans, which include achievable and measurable targets. Booster classes and additional literacy lessons provide support for pupils who learn at a slower rate.
16. Pupils and parents value the good range of sporting activities, which enable the school to be successful in local inter school competitions. All clubs are very well attended and staff give very generously of their time to extend pupils' interests and skills. The school is successful in providing opportunities to promote the arts, particularly through music.
17. The accommodation has improved considerably since the previous inspection and staff use the building well. Additional rooms have provided more space to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the governors have further plans to improve.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes satisfactory care of pupils. The monitoring of care, guidance and support for pupils with special educational needs is good but is unsatisfactory for other pupils. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to influence the work and development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction arrangements for pupils are good.
- School looks after the welfare of pupils well.
- Procedures for child protection are effective.
- The school does not actively seek or value sufficiently the views of pupils.

Commentary

18. Pupils get off to a good start at the school because of the close working arrangements that exist with the pre-school playgroup, with whom it shares accommodation at the village hall. Other newcomers have an opportunity to visit the school before they start. The vast majority of parents are pleased with arrangements to settle their child into the school.
19. Child protection arrangements follow recommended procedures and staff are aware of their responsibilities. Pupils express confidence in teachers to deal with any personal problems and supervision levels are high so that help is readily at hand. Accident records are used well to show any emerging areas of concern and to record how incidents are dealt with. Pupils have very good access to drinking water during the day. The school has taken good care to ensure the site is a safe place for pupils but health and safety arrangements are insufficiently rigorous in documenting inspections and risk assessments. There are effective arrangements for the safe use of the Internet.
20. Pupils are familiar with the group targets they are provided with to help them improve in English and mathematics and teachers get to know pupils well, because of the small school environment, but unsatisfactory monitoring of progress means that support is not as effective as it should be. Advice to parents on the support they can give is not always sufficiently focused on subject weaknesses. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good, especially from teaching assistants, whose time is used well.
21. The school has responded positively in the past to requests from pupils, such as making lunchtime arrangements more efficient to provide more time for play. It also consulted with pupils on arrangements for play when there was friction over the use of footballs. It does not, however, actively seek the views of pupils or provide them with a regular voice in general school arrangements. A substantial minority of the children we spoke to felt that they get too little say

about decisions. There were too few questionnaires returned from pupils to make any firm conclusions about their overall views of the school but discussions showed views to be generally positive. Older pupils would, however, like a greater variety of break time activities, such as adventure play equipment and activities for wet play.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school promotes a satisfactory partnership with parents but some have a number of significant concerns about what the school provides. Links with the community and other schools are satisfactory and with the playgroup are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does not make enough effort to seek the views of parents.
- There is an active and supportive parent /friends group.
- Sporting links with other schools are good.
- Liaison with pre-school playgroup is good.
- Reports on pupils at times are too brief about minor subjects.

Commentary

22. The school has a satisfactory relationship with parents who think positively of the school but expressed a number of significant concerns during pre-inspection consultations. The vast majority of parents believe the school expects pupils to work hard and encourages them to become mature and independent. They also think their children like school. The inspection findings agree largely with these positive sentiments, except that work is not always sufficiently challenging, especially for higher attaining pupils.
23. A concern for a significant proportion of parents is the lack of consultation by the school and that their concerns are not listened to or acted on. An almost equal concern is the way homework is used. Some parents also feel they do not get enough information about how their child is getting on. The concern over consultation is largely justified, because the school does not routinely seek the views of all parents on school developments, although there are good examples where the school has responded to concerns about the safety of pupils. The staff are always available to discuss individual parents' views. The concern about homework is also justified. It is used well for younger pupils but is not used effectively enough to support learning for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
24. Information about progress is judged to be satisfactory with good detail and clear statements of progress in English and mathematics. Information in other subjects is inconsistent and they do not always identify the areas in which pupils should improve. Parents are also provided with useful interim reports showing broad progress in English and mathematics. Other information about the school is very good with formal publications and newsletters of very high quality.
25. Parents give good levels of support to school activities and there is a very active friends group, which organises events for the wider school community and raises substantial funds for school improvement, such as specialist equipment and craft materials. A football tournament involved around 150 children from schools in the area as well as boys and girls from Rowsley. Parents help regularly in the classroom, for example, to hear pupils read and support work on computers. Parents also receive encouragement to help at home with reading.
26. Community links are similar to those that existed at the time of the last inspection and mainly through the group of friends. Links with other schools are satisfactory and good for sporting links with like schools in the area. Links are also good with the pre-school playgroup over transfer arrangements, joint use of facilities and liaison over the early years curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governance and leadership are satisfactory and the management effective. At present, the headteacher has a full-time teaching commitment and this restricts his management role. This has been acknowledged by the local authority who recently approved the appointment of a teacher for half-time to assist the headteacher in carrying out his roles.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the school have been affected by the full-time teaching commitment of the headteacher.
- There is a good level of professional development followed by all staff.
- Approaches to financial management have helped the school achieve its educational priorities.
- The school's self evaluation is weak. Monitoring performance data by the school is unsatisfactory.
- The headteacher shows great care and concern for the welfare of the staff.

Commentary

27. There has been some improvement since the last inspection. Policies and schemes of work have been developed further and overall standards over time have improved. The major development has been the building of a new classroom, which is of great benefit in providing more classroom space. There are, however, some issues from the last report which have only partially been attended to. Planning has been developed but is not monitored effectively. There is no structured timetable for monitoring and evaluation, and assessment and recording of pupils' attainment need strengthening. The headteacher has had a very heavy teaching load with too little time available for monitoring the work of the school.
28. The governing body has a majority of new members, including a recently appointed chairman. It is quickly assuming its responsibilities and becoming more involved with the direction of the school. It ensures that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities and inclusion issues are addressed well. Governors have a strong understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and know what needs to be done to further improve standards. The governing body is challenging and questions the headteacher and staff of the school. It is also supportive of the work being carried out by the staff in the day-to-day management of the school. At present, the vision of how the school is to develop has not been formally stated. The very good quality of the annual report to parents is a marked improvement. The governing body has agreed a written policy on race equality but this requires reviewing.
29. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to overcome previous difficulties. The school development plan covers a four-year period but it does not show who is responsible for planned action, timelines for completion, financial implications and success criteria. It is, therefore, of limited help in charting the future direction of the school. Regular visits by the LEA representative have helped the school to keep abreast of developments and to give sound advice on what the school needs to develop further.
30. With so few teachers in the school, the responsibility of each for monitoring, evaluating and developing their curriculum areas is considerable. The teacher responsible for language and literacy is on long-term absence and this has added to the workload of others. Under the circumstances, the teaching staff are satisfactorily monitoring mathematics and science but not most other subjects
31. Support staff are deployed well to meet the needs of the pupils. The nursery nurse is especially effective in her work with reception age children. All support staff work well with the classes they are assigned to. Administrative and premises staff are very efficient and give valuable support to

the teaching staff.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	173,111
Total expenditure	177,028
Expenditure per pupil	2,392

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	11,480
Balance carried forward to the next	7,563

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children join the mixed reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class in September with a further intake in January. Currently, there are eleven children of reception age. Induction procedures are good, reflecting the close links with the nearby pre-school which most children have attended. Attainment on entry is generally at an average level. Progress in almost all areas of learning is good with most children expected to achieve the early learning goals in all areas except physical development by the time they are of statutory school age.

Children receive a good start to their education in this stage. Almost all teaching is carried out by a fully trained nursery nurse who has successfully developed her skills through professional development opportunities. Teaching is good in all areas of learning. The curriculum is planned well, and carefully compiled records are kept of the progress children make.

Leadership of the Foundation Stage is a joint activity. The teacher of the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils gives a good level of support, help and guidance to the nursery nurse who is fully included in all staff meetings. The smallness of the room in which the children are taught is acknowledged and opportunities are taken occasionally to use the larger classroom space. There is a lack of outdoor play area for reception children but plans are well advanced to rectify this.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children achieve well.
- Relationships between children and adults are developing successfully with children working confidently in groups.
- Opportunities for role-play are limited.

Commentary

32. The children quickly settle down to the various school routines, enjoying lunch with the rest of the pupils and participating in school assemblies. They are all able to dress themselves. Their teacher has successfully introduced a range of strategies to help them to gain good social skills. They know the value of healthy eating and the necessity of drinking water regularly. They have been taught the importance of personal cleanliness, which they practise well. Due to the small area which they normally occupy, opportunities for role-play are limited, their imaginative play being restricted.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Language development is given high priority.
- Listening and speaking skills are enhanced through the use of story tapes, many being made by the children.
- There is a very good range of books.
- Children are quickly acquiring a knowledge of key words.

Commentary

33. The classroom is a language rich area. Almost all children are able to read simple text and know that reading is from left to right and top to bottom. The quality of books available for children to browse is good with a wide selection of both fiction and non-fiction. The children speak with clarity of expression and with confidence. They are acquiring a love of poetry through an increasing range of rhymes and poems. Writing is developing, with the children gaining greater control of pencils so that their letter formation is becoming clear. They understand how communication is developed through writing and through signs. Most are able to write their own names.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good variety of activities are used to enhance mathematical learning.
- Good use is made of investigation work.
- There is a strong partnership with parents in helping children understand number.

Commentary

34. The clear lesson planning following the format from the National Numeracy Strategy in the reception teaching programme ensures that the approach is progressive. All children are able to count to ten and most beyond. They accomplish simple number operations and are beginning to record using conventional symbols. Games are used well to interest and challenge children to solve problems. The teacher's enthusiasm for mathematics has a clear effect on children's own attitudes to mathematics, which are positive. Parents are closely involved with the mathematics programme. The majority of children will at least reach the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. Opportunities in the use of ICT are being missed to further develop the skills of the more able. Provision in mathematics since the last inspection has shown a good level of improvement.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are keenly interested in developing their knowledge of the wider world.
- Good use is made of the local environment to develop understanding.

Commentary

35. There is a considerable variation in the general knowledge of children when they enter the reception class. The teacher understands fully the importance of first-hand experiences for the children and takes every opportunity to develop their awareness of the environment. In work connected with 'harvest', they visited the local corn mill, planted seeds, harvested corn, winnowing the grain from the chaff and grinding the grain to make flour. They then made cakes with the flour. Other work has centred on observing a wormery, changes in trees through the seasons, trees as homes and participating in activity days at the local environmental studies centre. Resources, including the computer, are used well to support these activities. By the time the children start in Year 1 they will have achieved the early learning goals.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are limited opportunities for play, both indoors and outdoors.
- Children's physical development is limited.

Commentary

36. Most children enter the Foundation Stage with physical skills which are at an expected level for their age. Space limits play activities; the nearby Parish Hall is used, but facilities for extending physical development are very limited. There is no designated early years outdoor play area, this being noted at the time of the last report. Plans are well advanced to create such an area in the near future, the development of which will go some way to aiding the physical development of the children. At present, activities are severely limited and the range of equipment for use is unsatisfactory.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are expected to create their own designs, mix paint and select fabrics appropriately for collage.

Commentary

37. Most children enter the Foundation Stage with creative skills which are at an expected level for their age. Resources for creative development are good and are used well. The children show considerable skill and enterprise when making Christmas cards, cutting with care and using colours appropriately. They are encouraged to mix their own paint and have produced some creditable pictures.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed and are above average.
- There is a good standard of reading with pupils taught effective strategies to read and pronounce unfamiliar words.
- Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in their writing but standards could be higher.
- Assessment of English requires improvement as progress is not tracked effectively and the marking of pupils' work is not helping them to raise their attainment.
- Standards of poetry writing are good.

Commentary

38. In national tests for pupils in Year 2 over the last three years, standards in reading have been average and standards in writing above average. In Year 6 standards have been average. The

2003 results show a decline over 2002 but this is due to a third of the pupils in Year 6 having a statement of special educational needs.

39. The good start made by the children in the reception group is being built upon successfully, especially with the development of speaking and listening skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils listen carefully to their teachers, other adult helpers and other pupils. They speak clearly and articulate their thoughts and ideas well. By the end of Year 6, pupils' spoken contributions are given thoughtfully. In school assemblies they respond well to questions, speaking audibly and with clarity, using spoken standard English. Although they are keen to contribute to discussions, they take turns and respond to other's contributions in an appropriate manner. Throughout the school, drama is used insufficiently to further develop pupils' speech in role-play. Pupils all participate in an annual dramatic production, but the use of role-play is limited. The setting up of a school council would aid this area of English.
40. Standards in reading are close to the national average. Almost all pupils sound out letters and combinations and have a good grasp of phonics when faced with unfamiliar words. The home to school reading records are used well in Years 1 to 4, but there is no such record in Years 5 and 6. The record forms a valuable dialogue between home and school and is a useful record of reading progress. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 choose books themselves to read, but with more guidance on choice of text, their range of interest and capability would improve.
41. There is a good range of books, both in the library and in classrooms. Older pupils know how to find non-fiction books relating to particular subjects. The books are colour-coded and it is the intention for the school to classify books in the school according to a simplified Dewey system. Group reading sessions are used to assess the achievements of individuals and to share in the pleasure of reading but, as all pupils in Year 5 and 6 read from the same book, some of the text is either too easy or too difficult for some of the pupils. A reading record is not used consistently across the school, with older pupils not recording books read or writing a critique of those books. The role of teaching assistants and adult volunteers is particularly helpful in developing reading ability with younger pupils.
42. Standards in writing are at the national average level in Year 2 and above in Year 6. In Years 5 and 6 more could be expected of pupils, both in their English lessons and in their use of English in other subjects. The lack of regular homework is having a detrimental effect on the development of their capacity to write quickly and concisely. In some classes there is an over-emphasis on discussion with too little time available for recording. Pupils are beginning to plan, draft and revise their own writing, many presenting their work using the computer. Spelling is developing well, particularly in those classes where spelling lists are given regularly for homework. Most pupils are gaining a good understanding of spelling connections. Attention is paid to language structure and the grammatical function of words and phrases. However, there are too few examples of lively and thoughtful ideas being expressed clearly, particularly in personal first-hand writing. When pupils are given the opportunity to write in this way, they produce creditable results. Poetry writing is well developed with pupils expressing their ideas concisely and in sequence. Handwriting and presentation are satisfactory.
43. In the lessons observed during the inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory, with two good lessons. Lessons are planned using national guidance, but recording of pupils' progress is not rigorous enough. Planning and outcomes are not monitored. The literacy co-ordinator is at present on maternity leave and this has placed an additional burden on the staff. It is of great importance that a structured timetable be adopted in order to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning. At present, not enough is expected of pupils, particularly with their writing. The lack of formal monitoring against national criteria does not indicate to staff where pupils could do better.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. Work in other subjects is supported by the pupils' acquisition of literacy skills. As part of their

religious education writing about the 'Nativity through the eyes of ...', some imaginative writing developed well, for example through the eyes of a spider in the stable or through the eyes of a donkey. In work on Tudor times, the plays of Shakespeare are being studied. Computers are used well for word processing and also for finding information from the Internet; this is developing pupils' literacy skills. However, expectations are too low in subjects such as geography, science and religious education for pupils to develop their writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment, including marking, is not used effectively to track pupils' progress.
- Teachers' planning in Years 5 and 6 does not take enough account of the needs of mixed-age classes.
- Teaching is very good in Years 3 and 4 and pupils achieve well and reach higher than expected standards.
- Number skills and problem solving are given a high priority.
- Mathematics is used well in other subjects.

Commentary

45. Standards in mathematics are average in Years 2 and 6 but could be higher with more rigorous assessments and the consistent implementation of the school's own guidance to meet the needs of mixed-age classes. Over time standards fluctuate due to the small number of pupils in school and the impact of increased numbers of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups. However, a scrutiny of pupils attainment in Year 2 tests and their attainment in Year 6 shows that the more able pupils are not making the expected progress and do not achieve as well as they could.
46. Assessment is not used well to track pupils' individual progress to ensure they are reaching the National Curriculum levels they are capable of. An insufficient number of pupils who reach above the expected levels in Year 2 fail to make sufficient progress and reach higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2. Marking is not used effectively to help pupils understand how they can improve their work and move on to the next higher level.
47. Teaching overall is satisfactory. Three lessons were seen; one was very good and two were satisfactory. Although teaching in Years 5 and 6 is often challenging for older pupils it does not build sufficiently well on pupils' prior learning. Insufficient attention is paid to planning for the mixed-age range and younger pupils are sometimes confused and frustrated because the work is too difficult for them.
48. Where teaching is very good, for example in Years 3 and 4, the lessons are very well planned to meet the needs of the different ages and attainment levels in the class. Whole-class mental starters include a range of challenging mental calculations carefully directed to extend the learning of each year group at the appropriate level. Individual tasks are planned to reinforce new learning and as a result pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in their knowledge and understanding of, for example, data handling.
49. In all classes most pupils present their results in an organised way and are reminded and encouraged to explain clearly the strategies they use to arrive at an answer. Across the school, teachers place emphasis on ensuring pupils understand and use precise mathematical vocabulary when answering questions or discussing their work. Emphasis is placed on helping pupils to apply their mathematics knowledge to solve problems in practical situations. Lessons include regular opportunities for mental arithmetic, encouraging pupils to become competent in the quick and accurate recall of numbers.

50. The role of the co-ordinator is satisfactory and has been effective in introducing a scheme of work to cater for the demands of the small school with mixed-age classes. The co-ordinator recognises the weaknesses in monitoring and assessment and is working with the LEA to provide a manageable tool to track pupils' progress and attainment to ensure all pupils reach their full potential and achieve well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. Pupils have good opportunities to use, consolidate and extend their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, in science information from experiments and observations are recorded using tally charts and graphs.

52. There is very good use of ICT to help pupils' learning in mathematics. For example, pupils in Year 4 used ICT to extend their understanding of data handling and Year 6 pupils increased their skills in shapes and measures through the use of a screen turtle.

SCIENCE

53. Because of the organisation of the timetable, no lessons were seen in the infants and one only was seen in the juniors. There was no work available to sample from Years 1 and 2. As a result, an overall judgement about provision cannot be made. Although standards are average, a significant number of pupils could do better and reach higher levels. Science is taught in separated blocks of time, which mean some pupils, for example those in Years 1 and 2, are not taught science for a whole term. As a result, there are long gaps between previous learning and valuable time is spent on helping pupils to recall their previous learning.

54. A scheme of work is used effectively in Years 3 and 4 but in Years 5 and 6 it is not adapted sufficiently well to meet the needs of the different ages and attainment levels or to build successfully on what pupils already know and can do. Pupils in different year groups often complete similar work and learn similar skills and knowledge with little evidence of a progression in their learning. Assessment is not being consistently applied as an effective means of monitoring the progress of pupils against the key learning objectives and National Curriculum levels.

55. Teaching and learning appear to be satisfactory overall. In an unsatisfactory lesson in Years 5 and 6 the lesson plan lacked detail on how previous learning on the phases of the moon was to be built on and how the needs of pupils of different attainment levels were to be met. As a result Year 6 pupils were engaged in a similar task they had completed twelve months ago as Year 5 pupils. However, a sampling of pupils' work in the juniors shows that when the subject is taught in detail pupils develop a sound understanding of scientific materials, processes and investigations. They investigate using fair tests, classification, problem solving, research and association. Their recording includes pictograms, tally charts, pie charts and word processing skills. The subject leader needs to monitor this subject with greater stringency.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

56. Due to the school's timetabling it was not possible to see any direct teaching of ICT but judgements are made from a discussion with pupils and a scrutiny of their work in ICT and other subjects.

57. Good provision of equipment in each classroom and a high degree of staff expertise support high levels of confidence and enthusiasm among pupils. Basic skills are taught well and, as a result, effective use is made of ICT to support learning in all other subjects. However, there are no effective systems to check on pupils' learning.

58. Pupils achieve well and attainment in Year 2 and in Year 6 is above the level expected for pupils

of this age. Pupils use digital cameras, scanners and CD-ROMs, radio, video and listening centres throughout the curriculum. Teaching very obviously motivates and encourages pupils to try hard and succeed and as a result pupils are very enthusiastic, confident and skilled users of ICT in all subjects.

59. Year 6 pupils demonstrate high standards as they create their own multi media presentation using PowerPoint; access the web to research ancient civilisations, such as the Greeks, and confidently select, store and retrieve relevant information to create their own documents. E-mail is used as an effective tool to promote links with a school in London. Pupils have experience of control technology as they plan and design burglar alarms using magnetic sensors.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. The use of ICT across the curriculum is good. There are examples of ICT use in literacy and religious education as pupils use pictures and texts to create a journalistic report of the events in Bethlehem at the time of the Nativity. A digital microscope provides pupils with detailed views of plants, animals and phenomena which can be examined using different procedures to enhance and extend pupils scientific understanding.

HUMANITIES

61. Only one lesson was seen in geography. No lessons were seen in history. However, inspectors analysed samples of pupils' work and had discussions with pupils and their teachers.
62. Standards are similar to those at the last inspection, but the scheme of work implemented since then is not being followed closely enough with the result that there is no coherent progression of studies. The time interval between the study of geographical and historical topics is too great with pupils having too few opportunities to develop skills progressively. In Years 1 and 2, much of the work centres on the local environment with visits to places of interest. Pupils are developing an increased environmental awareness. The link with the local flourmill is particularly valuable where pupils have participated in a range of activities. They have also visited a local environmental studies centre which has provided increased learning opportunities. In a very good lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils discussed the effect of climate on human activity. The lesson was successful because it had been planned carefully and good quality resources had been provided. Years 5 and 6 pupils are studying Ancient Greece, gaining a range of understanding of the life, beliefs and achievements of the people living then and of the influence on present day society. In work on the Victorians, research has been carried out well, for example, in examining the role of pigs in Victorian times. A good feature, aimed to develop an understanding of different cultures, is the day visit to a North London primary school in alternate years with that school coming to Rowsley. In this way, pupils are helped to understand the rich multicultural diversity of life in Britain.
63. There is insufficient evidence of following an agreed programme of study. Pupils had only hazy recollections of what they had studied previously. In history they had only a vague idea of events in time. Mapping skills are satisfactory. Knowledge of localities more distant is weak. The Internet is used well to further knowledge and understanding, but acquisition of information is not systematic.
64. There is very little record keeping of work in history and geography and the acquisition of skills and knowledge is not recorded. The headteacher has subject responsibility for history and geography. Regular monitoring has not taken place.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links with the local clergy.
- Pupils are acquiring a sound knowledge of Christianity and other major religions.
- Assemblies reinforce learning effectively in religious education lessons.

Commentary

65. Standards are similar to those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are gaining a sound knowledge of key Bible stories and are able to see how these guide their lives and actions. They know that the Bible contains the Old and New Testaments and the significance of, and difference between, the two. Older pupils are learning the importance of symbols used in different faiths, for example the Hanukkah in the Jewish faith linked with lighting candles in the Christian faith to symbolise the light of the world.
66. Much of the present work is naturally associated with the Nativity. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have produced good quality newspaper style reports on events in Bethlehem with headlines, such as 'New Boy in Bethlehem' or 'A star shines where the baby was born', and the 'Nativity through the eyes of...'. Discussion of the star of Bethlehem led to a well researched lesson on bright stars as a 'super nova', linking this to the story of RA, the sun god, with other examples linked to passages from characters in novels, for example Tom Sawyer in Huckleberry Finn. However, this lesson demonstrated the danger of being diverted from the main theme to other areas and thus not covering the essential aspects of the syllabus. The Year 3/4 teacher undertakes satisfactory subject leadership.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

67. Because of the constraints of the timetable, and the limited availability of pupils' work it was not possible to make a judgement about provision. In the juniors one lesson was seen in music, two in art and design and none in design and technology. No lessons were seen in the infant class.
68. Of the two lessons seen in **art and design** one was satisfactory and one was good and attainment was similar to that expected for the pupils' ages. In the good lesson in Years 3 and 4 the methods and organisation were good. There was a good emphasis on the development of skills relevant to the subject as pupils planned, designed and made Christmas wrapping paper. Materials were well prepared and a skilful combination of demonstration, exposition, questioning and discussion led to pupils quickly acquiring the knowledge they needed for the lesson. Pupils were well motivated and concentrated on the practical work throughout the lesson, with the teacher monitoring their skills and intervening to improve them where necessary. By the end of the lesson the pupils had achieved the objectives and shown how quickly they can learn.
69. The one **music** lesson seen was satisfactory and appropriately developed the composition skills of pupils in Years 5 and 6. Standards were similar to those expected for their ages. Pupils learn to play the recorder, sing in the choir at festivals and are taught to read music.
70. Parents have the opportunity to choose specialist music teaching for those pupils who are talented or show an interest in developing their musical skills. This has a positive effect on music across the school and the whole school benefits from their skills and confidence. The subject leader is keen to promote music in the life of the school.
71. It was only possible to observe one lesson in **physical education**. In this lesson good standards were achieved. Evidence from discussion with pupils, parents and teachers indicates that the school places a high priority on all aspects of physical education. The school uses the nearby

village hall for indoor activities and a local playing field for field events and most team sports.

72. In a lesson for Years 3 and 4 pupils on gymnastics, pupils developed a good level of control. They were able to mirror movements accurately, working with partners and, in a wider group setting, undertake the importance of electing a leader. Work was discussed quietly and agreement quickly reached on the form the movement should take. Pupils from other groups were quick to praise and also suggest where improvements might be made. Good teaching encouraged all to participate fully and there was good support for pupils with special educational needs.
73. The school has a good curriculum plan for physical education that covers all aspects. Both boys and girls participate on equal terms in all sports, including team games. Matches are held regularly with other local schools in both football and netball. Almost all Year 6 pupils are able to swim to a good standard.
74. The school is a keen participant in the current national sports initiative which links sports co-ordinators in secondary schools with their feeder primaries. The headteacher is the current primary link teacher. The initiative is proving beneficial to the pupils of this small primary school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

75. Arrangements for pupils' **personal, health and sex education** are good. There are agreed policies for health, sex and drugs education and good quality time is made available within lessons to develop these areas in ways which are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils. A very good lesson with Year 1 and 2 pupils helped them reflect on characteristics such as cruelty, dishonesty and selfishness. The school has adopted the Cycling Proficiency Scheme and is participating in the Healthy Eating Campaign. The scheme of work is well used and this area of the curriculum is effectively led. It makes a good contribution to the health and well being of the pupils.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
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	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	5
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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