

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SEVEN FIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Swindon

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 126242

Headteacher: Mr A Nye

Lead inspector: Mrs M Gough

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 26th February 2004

Inspection number: 257430

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	263
School address:	Leigh Road Penhill Swindon Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN2 5DE
Telephone number:	01793 723833
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr N Price
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in a housing estate on the edge of Swindon. Although there are relatively high levels of employment in the area, many pupils come from homes where there are high levels of deprivation. The school is involved in the Leadership Development Strategy, and is in receipt of Sure Start funding and funding from the Children's Fund. There are currently two hundred and sixty three pupils on roll between the ages of 3 and 11. Almost all pupils are of white ethnicity, and with the exception of the 2 asylum seekers, no pupil has English as an additional language. Seventy six pupils are on the school's special educational needs register. This represents 29 per cent of the pupil population and is above the national average. No pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Mobility is average, with eleven pupils joining other than at the usual point of entry, and twenty seven pupils leaving other than at the usual point of transfer. Pupils' attainment on entry is very low.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22361	Mrs M Gough	Lead inspector	science, information and communication technology, music, physical education, English as an additional language
31729	Mr B Harrington	Lay inspector	
22556	Mr E Morgan	Team inspector	mathematics, religious education, geography, history
10911	Mrs C Deloughry	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, citizenship, special educational needs
22990	Mr C Furniss	Team inspector	English, art and design, design and technology,

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The standard of education is **unsatisfactory** for the vast majority of pupils. Standards in English, mathematics and science are very low when pupils leave school at the age of eleven, and could be much higher. Many pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. Overall, leadership and management are poor. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the headteacher is poor. The leadership and management of key staff and the governing body are unsatisfactory.
- Throughout the school, standards in English, mathematics, science, religious education and information and communication technology are too low.
- Many pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 do not achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Although teaching has satisfactory features, it is not good enough to raise standards, and is unsatisfactory overall.
- The school provides very good levels of care for pupils, many of whom have difficult home circumstances. The ethos of the school is good.
- Pupils of all ages have positive attitudes and their behaviour is good.
- The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is unsatisfactory.
- The school's use of assessment information to highlight strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning is poor.
- Attendance is poor.

The school's improvement since the last inspection is poor. Not enough has been done to raise standards, especially in English, mathematics and science, and to ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve their potential. In information and communication technology and religious education standards have declined since the last inspection. Teaching is not as effective as it was, and pupils are not achieving as well as they were. The use of assessment information to raise standards is now poor, and not enough has been done to address this issue since the last inspection. Because of the time given to the core subjects in recent years, there is now an imbalance within the curriculum, and not enough time is allocated to some subjects. Although there has been some recent improvement in aspects of leadership and management, the impact has yet to be seen.

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

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E*	E*	E*	E
Mathematics	E	E	E*	E
Science	D	E	E*	D

*Key: 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.*

Pupils' achievement is **unsatisfactory** overall. On the basis of the 2003 end of Key Stage 2 national tests, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is very low, placing the school in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. Standards in English have been very low for the last three years. Standards in mathematics were well below average, before dropping further in 2003 to their current very low position. Standards in science have deteriorated steadily over the last three years. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance is well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Although the school sets targets, they are not accurate and are insufficiently high. The 2003 end of Key Stage 1 test results show that standards in reading and mathematics are well below the national average. Standards in writing are very low, placing the school in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. In comparison with similar schools, standards are well below average. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently well below the national average for the last three years. Standards in writing dropped even further in 2003. The teacher assessments show that standards in science are well below the expected level.

The inspection findings show that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is well below the expected level in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and religious education, although standards are satisfactory in physical education. Standards are too low overall, and could be higher. Many of the average and higher attaining pupils are not achieving the standards of which they are capable.

The children's attainment when they start school in the nursery is well below the expected level. They make good progress and achieve well in the nursery class, and their achievement in the reception classes is satisfactory. By the end of the reception year, the children attain the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, and in physical development. Most do not attain the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are generally well behaved. Attendance is well below the national average and is poor.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **unsatisfactory**. Teaching is **unsatisfactory** overall. Although teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage, they are unsatisfactory for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils. Assessment is poor. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is satisfactory. It is unsatisfactory for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils. The school provides very good levels of care for the pupils, and links with parents and the community are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **unsatisfactory** overall. Although the school provides a very caring learning environment, not enough attention is paid to improving standards and there is no clear educational direction to the school's work. The leadership of the headteacher is poor, and that of other key staff is unsatisfactory. The governance of the school is unsatisfactory.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents' views are mixed, but most parents are positive about the school, and appreciate the easy accessibility of the headteacher and staff. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have high levels of confidence in their teachers and in the headteacher.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- improve the leadership and management of the headteacher, key staff and governing body;
- ensure that all pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 achieve the standards of which they are capable;
- improve standards at the end of both key stages in English, mathematics, science, religious education and information and communication technology;
- improve the quality of teaching throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2;
- ensure that there is better breadth and balance in the curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils;
- improve the use made of assessment, and the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress and attainment;
- improve the levels of whole-school attendance.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve **satisfactorily**. The achievement of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is **unsatisfactory** overall. Standards are **well below the expected level** in most subjects when pupils leave school at the age of eleven. Standards could be higher than they are currently.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is well below national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and could be much higher.
- Many Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Standards in information and communication technology and religious education are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection, and are well below the expected level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Nursery children achieve well and make good progress from a very low starting point.
- The use of language, literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology across the curriculum is unsatisfactory for pupils throughout the school.

#### **Commentary**

1. The children's attainment when they start school is well below the expected level. Very few children are working at a higher level than expected for their age. This continues to be the pattern as pupils move through the school. Although the school is often effective in the way in which it supports the lowest attaining pupils, it does not do enough for the average and higher attaining pupils, and many of these pupils therefore do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. The under-achievement is mainly the result of low expectations of teachers, the poor use of assessment information, and insufficient focus on raising standards.

#### **Foundation Stage**

2. Overall, the achievement of the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The children get a good start to their education in the nursery class where they achieve well because of good teaching which focuses on the progressive development of basic skills of language, number and personal and social development. As they move through the reception classes, their achievement is satisfactory. By the end of the reception year, the children attain the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. However, most do not attain the Early Learning Goals in their mathematical and creative development, or in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and their overall attainment in these areas of learning is below the expected level. In communication, language and literacy, the children's attainment is well below the expected level by the end of the reception year. Children with special educational needs are quickly identified enabling the teachers to provide good levels of additional support for these children which ensure that they progress at a similar rate to their classmates.

## Key Stage 1

### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.1 (13.2)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	11.2 (11.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.2 (13.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. On the basis of the 2003 end of Key Stage 1 national test results, the pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is well below the national average, and their attainment in writing is very low, placing the school in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. This has been the overall picture for the last few years, and standards in writing have dropped over the last two years. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' attainment is well below average. The 2003 teacher assessments show that the pupils' attainment in science is well below the expected level.
4. The inspection findings paint a very similar picture to the test results, and show that pupils' attainment is well below national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Overall, the pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Not enough is done to challenge the higher and average attaining pupils, although pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils often benefit from good levels of additional classroom support. Poor use is made of assessment information, and work is not sufficiently closely matched to pupils' levels of ability. The pupils' use of literacy, language and mathematical skills in their work in other subjects is unsatisfactory. Standards in writing are especially weak, pupils' investigative skills are poor.
5. In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment is well below the nationally expected level at the end of Year 2, and standards are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are not achieving the standards of which they are capable. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their work in other subjects. In religious education, pupils' attainment is well below the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and pupils of all abilities are not achieving their potential. In physical education, pupils' attainment is at the expected level in dance and gymnastics, and their achievement is satisfactory overall. The inspection did not focus on art and design, design and technology, history, geography and music, and no judgements can therefore be made about standards or achievement in these areas.

## Key Stage 2

### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	21.9 (23.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	21.5 (24.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	24.5 (26.0)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 37 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. The 2003 end of Key Stage 2 test results show that pupils' attainment is very low in comparison with the national picture in English, mathematics and science, placing the school in the lowest 5 per cent of all schools nationally. Standards are at their lowest for four years in mathematics and science, and in the case of science, show a steady decline over the past three years. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance is well below average in English and mathematics, and below average in science, indicating that the pupils have not made enough progress between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2. Although targets are set in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, they are not sufficiently accurate, because the assessment information on which they are based is unreliable.
7. The inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are well below national expectations, and are too low. Overall, the pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory, and many pupils are capable of achieving higher standards than they are currently. Average and higher attaining pupils are often not sufficiently challenged, especially in their writing, where there are missed opportunities for them to practise and enhance their skills in other subjects. Pupils' use of mathematics in their work in other areas is unsatisfactory. Throughout Key Stage 2, low teacher expectations, and the poor use of assessment, lead to low levels of achievement.
8. Standards in information and communication technology are well below the nationally expected level at the end of Year 6, and are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning across the curriculum. In religious education, pupils' attainment is well below the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, and standards have declined since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards in dance and gymnastics are at the expected level, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall. Pupils have **good** attitudes to learning and are generally **well** behaved. Attendance is well below the national average and is **poor**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most pupils of all ages and abilities have good attitudes to their learning.
- Behaviour throughout the school is good. There have been no exclusions for the past twenty years.
- Relationships are good throughout the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good across the school.
- Attendance is poor and not all parents make sufficient effort to send their children to school regularly.

### **Commentary**

9. The vast majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They make sensible and good contributions to whole-class discussions, and are keen to answer questions and to take part in assemblies. Pupils are keen to take part in practical activities, and are co-operative when sharing resource and when working in pairs and small groups. Most pupils listen well to their teachers' instructions, and try hard to do what they have been asked.

10. Behaviour is good overall, and most pupils are well behaved in lessons, assemblies and at breaktimes. Teachers generally manage behaviour well, and pupils respond positively to the expectations of their teachers. Pupils are mostly polite and courteous, and move around the school in a well-ordered manner. Discussions with pupils indicate that there are no problems of persistent or systematic bullying or racial harassment, and that minor incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively. The school caters well for the small number of pupils who have difficulties in managing their behaviour, and there have been no exclusions for the last twenty years.
11. The pupils mature significantly during their time in school, and personal, social and moral development is good. Older pupils set a good example for younger pupils, and are keen to take on responsibility for jobs around the school. Residential trips for Key Stage 2 pupils promote good levels of independence and social skills, and pupils talk enthusiastically about these visits. Relationships amongst pupils are good, and pupils are friendly and sociable. Pupils of all ages have a good sense of the difference between right and wrong, and their involvement in formulating the class rules has led them to understand the need for societies to live within a set of agreed parameters.
12. Pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness and understanding are satisfactory. The school is effective in the way in which it broadens the pupils' experience through visits and visiting speakers, but many pupils have little on which to draw from their own experience of life. Pupils have access to a good range of books and displays which help them to gain an understanding of a range of cultural traditions. Teachers effectively pick up opportunities for pupils to reflect on aspects of their lives during the course of the day, and assemblies often provide opportunities for pupils to consider their place in society and to frame some searching questions about their own existence
13. Attendance is poor and is well below the national average. Despite the frequent and very good efforts of the school to remind parents about the need and benefits of good attendance, not all parents make sufficient effort to ensure that the children come to school regularly or that they arrive on time.

#### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.8	School data:	0.3
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.

#### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **unsatisfactory**. Although teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall in the Foundation Stage, they are **unsatisfactory** for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils. Assessment is **poor**. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is **satisfactory**. It is **unsatisfactory** for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils. The school provides **very good** levels of care for the pupils, and links with parents and the community are **good**.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is **good** in the nursery. The quality of teaching and learning is **unsatisfactory** overall in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, although there are pockets of good practice in Key Stage 2. Assessment is **satisfactory** in the Foundation Stage, and poor in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in the nursery class.
- Teachers' expectations of what the pupils can and should achieve are too low in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Assessment is poor, and teachers do not make enough use of assessment information when planning the next stage of pupils' learning.
- In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 teachers often have good skills of classroom management, and organise lessons well.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not always sufficiently secure to enable them to advance the pupils' learning.
- Support staff are used well to ensure that pupils with special educational needs take an active part in all activities.
- The overuse of worksheets as a means of recording in some classes constrains the pupils' learning and prevents them from developing their literacy skills.
- Teachers have good relationships with the pupils which promote a positive learning environment.

### Commentary

#### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3)	3 (8)	9 (24)	19 (51)	5 (14)		

*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.*

14. Although the grades of the lessons seen during the inspection suggest that teaching was of satisfactory quality, these grades do not paint the complete picture. The overall judgment that teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 takes account of further evidence, including discussions with pupils, and extensive scrutiny of their written work. Good teaching was seen in only a small number of classes and involved a small number of teachers. Much of the good teaching was seen in the nursery class, and in Year 3 and Year 5. There have been some very recent changes within the teaching staff, and so the work of pupils in their books does not necessarily show the influence of the teaching of their current classteachers. At the time of the inspection the Year 6 teacher had only been in post for six weeks, as had the newly qualified teacher in Year 1. During the inspection, one of the Key Stage 2 classes was taught by a supply teacher.
15. One of the significant weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is the lack of challenge for average and higher attaining pupils. This arises because teachers make poor use of ongoing assessment to highlight what the pupils have learned, and where they are experiencing difficulties. As a result, the planned activities do not always match the pupils' abilities, and do not take enough account of pupils' prior learning and previous experience. Tasks are often the same for all class members,

and this means that lower attaining pupils find the work too hard, and higher attaining pupils find the work too easy.

16. In some classes, teachers effectively share learning objectives with pupils so that they know exactly what is expected of them. However, this good practice is not consistent through the school, and where teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils do not receive sufficiently clear explanations to enable them to complete their tasks. Question and answer sessions are often used well to probe pupils' thinking and to help them to recall their previous learning, but in some cases, these sessions lack focus and purpose, and are too long, leaving insufficient time for pupils to complete their work.
17. A weakness throughout the school is the promotion of pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. The lack of computers in the nursery class prevents the children from getting off to a good start in terms of developing confidence in working with computers. Although most Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes have regular slots for information and communication technology in the computer suite, there are too few opportunities for them to practise their skills in their work in other subject areas. This is also true for the promotion of literacy and numeracy skills, and opportunities for pupils to use these skills are not systematically planned. In some classes in both key stages, there is an overuse of worksheets for recording purposes. Some worksheets are set at a very undemanding level, and are little more than colouring exercises. Others require the pupils to answer in very brief terms, and prevent them from thinking new ideas through for themselves.
18. Most teachers throughout the school have good skills of classroom organisation and management. This is especially the case in the nursery class, where very good use is made of other adults who work with the children individually and in small groups, systematically extending and advancing their learning. During the inspection, excellent classroom management skills were seen in a Year 5 physical education lesson, where the teacher used the time exceptionally well, placed high demands on the pupils, and very effectively combined whole-class work with group work and individual work.
19. The expectations of the nursery staff are high, and as a result, the children achieve well and make good progress. However, throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 there are times when teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve are too low. This arises because teachers are not always sufficiently familiar with the levels of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. As a result, some teachers do not know what the pupils should be achieving in relation to their age.
20. Throughout the school, the good relationships that exist between pupils and staff have a positive impact on pupils' learning, and on their personal and social development. Teachers create a positive learning environment where pupils feel confident about expressing their views. Staff work hard to raise the pupils' levels of self-esteem, and to build up their confidence when they are experiencing difficulties. Good support from classroom assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs take a full part in all activities, and staff show good levels of sensitivity as they help pupils to overcome their fears and difficulties.
21. The use of assessment in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory overall. It is better in the nursery class than in the reception classes because there are more staff to make and record ongoing evaluations of the children's progress and attainment. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 assessment systems are poor, and teachers are not accurately able to track and monitor pupils' progress as they move through the school. The school has very recently begun to use data from national tests and optional tests to track and plot pupils' progress and attainment, but staff are not sufficiently

competent in understanding the trends in the results, or in calculating the amount of progress pupils should be able to make within a given period of time. Teachers' expectations of the progress pupils can make between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2 are too low.

22. Overall, the standard of teaching in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has declined since the time of the last inspection, and this decline has led to unsatisfactory achievement for many pupils.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes is **satisfactory**. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils lacks breadth and balance and is **unsatisfactory**. The school provides a **satisfactory** range of additional activities that enrich and enhance the statutory curriculum. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall, and **good** for the Foundation Stage children.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum for the nursery children is good, and this gives them a good start to their education.
- The computer suite is a very good resource.
- In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, too much time is given to English and mathematics leaving too little time for the remainder of the curriculum to be taught in sufficient depth.
- The curriculum is not systematically monitored and evaluated, and there has not been enough improvement since the last inspection.
- The outdoor secure play areas for the nursery and reception children positively enhance their learning.
- Internally the school is very well maintained and very clean, but some parts of the outside of the building are in poor condition.

### **Commentary**

23. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory, and fully reflects the national guidance for this age group. The curriculum for the nursery children is good, and children have access to a wide range of stimulating and exciting activities that successfully promotes their learning and that captures their imaginations. The outside play areas are used well by nursery and reception children, and the regular access to wheeled toys and other large play equipment has a positive impact on their physical development.
24. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 too much time is given to English and mathematics. As a result, the time available for other subjects is very limited, and topics are not covered in enough depth. Because lessons in subjects other than English and mathematics are often very short, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their skills of literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology in their work in other subjects. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects, but there is no systematic monitoring of the curriculum across the school, and as a result, some topics are covered at the same level in different year groups. This is especially the case in the mixed age classes where pupils from different year groups cover the same work. There has not been enough curriculum development since the last inspection, and overall improvement is unsatisfactory.

25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. A strength of the provision is the support provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator for small groups of pupils who are withdrawn from lessons. In these sessions, work is well focused and carefully matched to the targets of their individual education plans. However, the picture in class is more variable. There are times when teachers do not make enough reference to individual education plans when planning work for the pupils, and as a result, pupils sometimes struggle to do what has been asked of them.
26. The curriculum is supported by a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, including breakfast club, drama, information and communication technology and football. Both boys and girls play football in a league with considerable success, and much credit for this is due to the school caretaker. Visits and visitors are used effectively to further enrich the curriculum, and the residential visits to the Brecon Beacons are good, and involve pupils from the upper part of Key Stage 2.
27. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall and are good in the nursery. Parts of the outside of the building are unattractive and are in need of repair. Internally the school is very well maintained and cleaned by a committed and hardworking caretaker and cleaning staff. The computer suite is a very good resource, and this has been installed since the last inspection.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Pupils are **very well** cared for at school and are provided with **good** levels of support and guidance. The school **effectively** seeks the views of the pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are effective child protection procedures in place which are understood by all staff.
- The headteacher takes a strong lead in ensuring that pupils are very well cared for and is approachable and easily accessible to the pupils.
- There are very good induction arrangements for parents and their children who are joining the nursery.
- Good attention is paid to matters of health and safety.
- Pupils' personal development is effectively monitored on an informal basis.
- The School Council has not yet been developed to a level where it influences school life.

### **Commentary**

28. Child protection procedures are good, and there is a nominated member of staff who has responsibility for this aspect of the school's work. The responsible staff member has received recent training and she has shared the information with other staff, all of whom are confident about the school's escalation procedures.
29. Discussions with pupils indicate that they feel comfortable about sharing any problems or concerns with any member of staff. Teachers know the pupils well, and informally monitor their personal development. The headteacher is regularly on the playground at breaktimes, and as a result pupils confidently chat to him about their aspirations and concerns, and find him to be very approachable and sensitive to their needs. The headteacher sets a strong lead for other staff in the way in which he relates to the

pupils and their families, and is highly committed to ensuring that all pupils feel valued and fully included in the life of the school.

30. The school's systems for ensuring the pupils' health and safety are good. The governing body plays a good role in monitoring the site and in identifying and dealing with hazards. Risk assessments are undertaken, and teachers are effective in reminding pupils about matters of health and safety in lessons such as physical education and science. Three members of staff have received recent training in first-aid and the school has clear routines for dealing with children who are unwell or hurt. The school addresses pupils' specific medical needs very well. In conjunction with parents, the school nurse has drawn up individual medical plans and has provided staff with specific training to meet these needs.
31. A breakfast club provides good support for those pupils whose parents go to work early, and is popular with older pupils. Some of the Year 5 pupils have been trained as 'play leaders' by the Local Education Authority, and in this role, they provide additional support and care for the youngest pupils at break and lunchtimes. The School Council provides an opportunity for pupils in Key Stage 2 to make a contribution to the daily organisation of the school. However, their role is in the early stages of development and they could be even more effective in influencing some aspects of school life. Formal questionnaires, assemblies, tutorial periods and informal opportunities during the day enable pupils of all ages to present their views to their teachers.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has **good** links with parents and the community. Links with other schools and colleges are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Information for parents is of good quality.
- The headteacher is readily accessible to parents and provides very good support to families who are experiencing difficulties.
- A small number of parents do not work sufficiently closely with the school in ensuring that their children attend on a regular basis.
- Visitors to school and school visits make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

32. The school has good links with parents and provides them with good quality information about the school's life and work. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents provide formal information about the school, whilst weekly newsletters and the school calendar provide timely information about day-to-day events. The headteacher is very accessible to parents, and his presence on the playground at the start and end of the school day makes it easy for parents to approach him in an informal way.
33. The headteacher seeks and responds positively to parents' views about important whole-school matters such as the behaviour policy and the home/school agreement. Parents of nursery children appreciate the good information they receive about their children's work which enables them to support their children at home. Although a number of parents support their children's learning well at home, some do not. Some parents do not work closely with the school to improve the levels of attendance. The school has successfully run family numeracy and literacy projects in recent years and

the school promotes the Helping School course which carries an external accreditation. These courses are generally not well supported.

34. The school has good links with the community and makes a significant contribution to the local area through annual plays put on by the drama club, and music and dramatic productions performed at Christmas-time. The local vicar is a regular visitor, taking assembly and contributing to the religious education curriculum. The school makes good use of local resources, such as the local church where pupils have looked at records, and held a 'mock' christening, and has good links with local agencies, such as the Fire Service, who during the inspection brought a tender to school for the nursery children to explore. Pupils have made good use of the information and communication technology facilities at a local Football Club.
35. The school makes good use of the facilities of a neighbouring primary school for staff development. There are secure arrangements in place to support pupils' transfer to the high school. Older pupils are aware of the arrangements and are pleased that consideration is given to friendship groups.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **unsatisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher is **poor**, and the leadership of other key staff, including co-ordinators is **unsatisfactory**. The governance of the school is **unsatisfactory**. The management of the school is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is no clear vision for the school's future educational development.
- Not enough emphasis is placed on raising standards and in ensuring that pupils achieve their potential.
- The headteacher has not been sufficiently proactive in leading the school forward since the last inspection, and as a result, the rate of improvement has been poor.
- The headteacher promotes a warm and very caring ethos in the school where all pupils are valued as individuals.
- The leadership and management of most subject areas are unsatisfactory.
- The role of the recently established Senior Management Team is unclear, and its impact on whole-school development is currently very limited.
- The governing body is not sufficiently aware of the weaknesses of the school and governors have only limited influence on the school's life and work.
- The School Development Plan is a very recent document, and is of limited value in terms of showing how the school can move forward.
- The school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

### **Commentary**

36. The leadership of the headteacher is poor. Although he has created a very warm and caring learning environment for the pupils, and ensures very good levels of pastoral care, he is not sufficiently rigorous in promoting high levels of academic achievement. There has not been enough improvement since the last inspection, and most of the issues that were identified at that time have still not been addressed. On the basis of national test results, standards in English, mathematics and science have dropped further at the end of Key Stage 2, and many pupils are not achieving the standards of which they are capable. The headteacher's monitoring of the school's work is

insufficiently rigorous to bring about the necessary improvements in teaching and learning, and weaknesses in important aspects, such as assessment, have not been identified and resolved. The deputy headteacher has a full-time teaching commitment and her leadership and management role is unsatisfactorily developed.

37. Curriculum co-ordinators are in place for all subjects and for other important aspects of the school's work, including special educational needs and assessment. However, the leadership and management provided by most co-ordinators are unsatisfactory overall. This is partly because co-ordinators have too little non-contact time in which to monitor teaching, learning, and standards in their areas, and partly because some of the co-ordinators have only very recently assumed their roles, and do not yet have a sufficiently clear whole-school overview. Individual co-ordinators are working hard to bring about improvement in their areas of responsibility, but are hampered by the lack of a whole-school framework within which to work, and by their lack of knowledge of the budget share that is available to them. The monitoring role of co-ordinators is unsatisfactory, and the little monitoring that has taken place has been insufficiently focused and rigorous to highlight areas for development.
38. The school has recently set up a senior management team. Whilst in principle this group has the capacity to bring about improvement, its work does not have a sufficiently clear focus. Agendas for meetings are not set, and no minutes are kept. Membership of the senior management team is not absolutely clear to some staff, and key staff, such as the Foundation Stage co-ordinator are not members of the team. The School Development Plan is a very recently produced document that relates only to the current academic year. Although the plan highlights some pertinent issues, it has no success criteria against which progress can be measured. The governing body and staff are not sufficiently involved in the formulation of the School Development Plan and as a result, some key staff feel no real ownership for the plan.
39. The governance of the school is unsatisfactory. The governing body is supportive of the school but is not sufficiently well informed about its strengths and weaknesses. The governing body has not been effective in setting targets for the school, nor has it held the school to account for its lack of progress since the last inspection, or for the lack of drive in raising standards. There is no systematic programme for governors to monitor the work of the school, and the governing body is too reliant on the headteacher's reports about the school's work.
40. The school satisfactorily manages its budget, and expenditure and income are closely aligned. The school maintains a prudent surplus, and seeks the best value when purchasing goods and equipment. However, in the light of the low standards attained, the unsatisfactory teaching and the unsatisfactory leadership and management, the school is providing unsatisfactory value for money.

### Financial Information for the year April 2002 – March 2003

Income and Expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total Income	685 136	Balance from previous year.	25 908
Total Expenditure	678 734	Balance carried forward to the next	32 310
Expenditure per pupil.	2 167		

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** overall.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision in the nursery class is good and is a strength of the school.
- Relationships between adults and children are good and provide a good basis for the children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Resources and accommodation are good and enhance the children's learning.
- Teachers enjoy the good support of experienced and well-qualified classroom assistants.
- The co-ordinator does not have enough non-contact time to enable her to fulfil her monitoring role, and the overall leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- The induction arrangements for children joining the nursery are very good.

#### **Commentary**

41. The children's skills when they join the nursery class are well below the expected level, and a significant minority of children are quickly identified as having special educational needs. Achievement is good in the nursery and satisfactory overall in the reception classes. By the time the children transfer to Year 1, they attain the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development, and in their physical development. In their mathematical development, creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world, the children's attainment is below the expected level by the end of the reception year. In communication, language and literacy, the children's overall attainment is well below the expected level by the end of the reception year. Provision is similar to that found at the previous inspection.
42. Children attend the nursery class on a part-time basis for one year, and then enter one of the two mixed reception and Year 1 classes, for a further year. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. In the nursery, teaching is good and has some very good features. Overall, teachers make satisfactory use of assessment to monitor the children's progress. Teachers maintain good partnerships with parents, enabling the Foundation Stage children to feel confident about coming to school. The induction arrangements for nursery children and their parents are very good.
43. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has no regular non-contact time, and because of her own full-time teaching commitment, has little opportunity to observe teaching and learning in the reception classes. As a result, her overview of the work across the Foundation Stage is very limited. The co-ordinator does not have enough input into the senior management team, and is not sufficiently involved in decisions about the provision for the Foundation Stage children, such as the decision to create two mixed age classes for the reception children.
44. Levels of support staff are generous, particularly in the nursery where, on occasions, the children are very effectively supported on a one to one basis. The teachers in the mixed reception and Year 1 classes plan effectively and utilise the time of teaching

assistants efficiently to organise the curriculum to meet the needs of the different age groups. Resources are very good in the nursery and good in reception. The ample accommodation in the nursery enables the specific learning areas to be clearly delineated. The reception teachers use the more restricted space in their classrooms well to provide good and suitable learning experiences. A particular strength is that the school provides two attractive outside play areas for the Foundation Stage children, so that all of the children can take part in regular physical activity in complete safety.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

The provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is **good** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good relationships between the children and the staff create a warm and supportive learning environment.
- As the children progress through the Foundation Stage they become increasingly mature and independent.
- Staff know the children well and are sensitive to their personal, social and emotional needs.
- Very good induction systems for children entering the nursery ensure that the children have a secure and happy start to their education.

### **Commentary**

45. Most children achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development and attain the expected goals by the time they transfer to Year 1. Teaching is good across the Foundation Stage, and teachers and support staff set a good example to the children and promote good relationships that are based on mutual respect and trust. The very good induction systems adopted in the nursery prepare the children and their parents very well before entry, so that the children are confident and keen to begin their school life. The consistent, classroom routines promote a secure, atmosphere, which enables the children to gain in confidence and independence. The children in the nursery class are stimulated well by the wide range of interesting and exciting experiences that the teacher provides, and this has a very positive impact on their desire to learn and grow. Although some of the tasks set in the reception classes lack variety and sufficient challenge, the children generally concentrate well, try their best and behave well. They respond enthusiastically and work well both in pairs and independently when they are given the opportunity to choose their own activities. Children, in all of the classes, are very willing to share resources and to take turns, and in this aspect of their learning they make significant gains.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

Provision in this area of learning is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers and support staff very effectively promote and develop the children's speaking and listening skills in a wide range of contexts.
- The children do not have enough opportunities to develop their writing skills in the reception classes.

## Commentary

46. By the end of the reception year, most children do not attain the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy. Their overall attainment in this aspect of their learning is well below the expected level. The children's achievement is satisfactory overall, and they achieve well in the nursery class.
47. When they start school, most of the children have difficulties in speaking and listening, some of which are severe. The staff work very hard and with considerable success to improve these skills. Very good use is made of the incidental opportunities that arise throughout the day to extend the children's vocabulary, either in whole class discussions, or when an adult works with a small group or an individual child. The adults listen attentively, and encourage the children to express their ideas and needs clearly. Most children listen well to instructions, and by the end of the reception year, begin to express themselves in complete sentences.
48. The children are less well motivated in learning to write. In the nursery the children sometimes make marks on paper as part of their role-play, and most recognise their name, which some attempt to write for themselves. In the reception classes, there are weaknesses in the teaching, with only a minority of children writing a few basic words unaided. The reception children do not have enough opportunities to write for themselves.
49. There is a good range of attractive books in each classroom, which the children handle carefully and use with interest. They soon become familiar with print, know that it conveys meaning and that it is read from left to right. A small number of reception children understand that books have named authors and illustrators, and some can use the contents pages efficiently. The children are introduced to the basic vocabulary from the early books in the school reading scheme and a minority have begun to read the books. Although they are making a satisfactory start, however, standards are well below the expected level by the time they transfer to Year 1.

## Mathematical development

Provision for children's mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of opportunities to use mathematical language throughout the day.
- Children are provided with a good range of opportunities for practical experience.
- In the reception classes there is an over-reliance on worksheets as a means of recording.

## Commentary

50. Overall, the children's achievement is satisfactory. It is good in the nursery class. The children's attainment at the end of the reception year is below the expected level, and only a small number of higher attaining children achieve the Early Learning Goals.
51. Throughout the Foundation Stage, teachers and support staff make good use of the opportunities that arise throughout the day to reinforce the children's mathematical understanding and their use of subject specific vocabulary. The children learn how to count at least up to ten through a variety of activities and singing games and rhymes. Nursery activities are well planned to capture the interest of the children, and good first-hand experiences encourage the children to explore capacity as they work in the

sand and water areas, and to learn the properties of simple shapes. Reception teachers conduct whole-class sessions well. These move at a good pace and the children respond well to the mathematical ideas and activities undertaken. They are very keen to participate and good learning takes place, which is reinforced well, in different ways by the teacher. A scrutiny of the books, however, demonstrates an over-use of worksheets as a means of recording. There are too few opportunities for the children to record their numbers and discoveries independently and in their own way. In all classes there is a good range of puzzles and apparatus which effectively help the children to learn how to sort, count and match. Practical activities make a good contribution to the children's understanding of mathematics, and present mathematics as an enjoyable activity.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are given a good range of experiences to help them to discover the world around them.
- Regular visits and visitors enrich the children's learning.
- There is no computer in the nursery classroom, and this prevents the children from developing early information and communication technology skills.

### **Commentary**

52. The low starting point for most children means that, in spite of the good provision and good achievement, most do not attain the Early Learning Goals in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they enter Year 1. Teaching is good in both the nursery and reception classes.
53. When they start school, many of the children have little experience of the world beyond their immediate environment. Few have experience of visiting different localities such as the countryside or the seaside, and staff work hard to compensate for this by providing a good range of visits and visiting speakers. The home corners are changed frequently to encourage imaginative play and increase the children's understanding of a particular topic. The children in the Foundation Stage are developing a growing awareness of the world and cultures outside their immediate environment. Statutory requirements are met in respect of teaching religious education to those children who are of compulsory school age.
54. A good variety of construction toys is available for the children to experiment with and through structured and free play activities they learn how to build, adapting their ideas if necessary. In the reception classes, the children find out about the natural world by planting sunflower seeds and testing their need for light and air. In the nursery, the children play with an array of wild animals in a very attractive 'jungle', and a few of the higher attaining children refer to a suitable set of books to match and identify the different species.
55. Children in the reception classes have regular access to computers and are becoming adept at manoeuvring the mouse, and using the different programs. In this aspect of their learning, the children's attainment is broadly at the expected level. The lack of a computer in the nursery classroom prevents the children from developing early information and communication technology skills.

## Physical development

Provision for children's physical development is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The separate outside play areas for the nursery and reception children provide a very good resource for learning.
- The children have access to a good range of equipment, which effectively promotes their knowledge, skills and understanding.

### Commentary

56. Overall, the children's achievement is satisfactory, and in this area of learning, most children are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they transfer to Year 1.
57. The good opportunities provided for children to play regularly with a variety of wheeled toys and small equipment in a well-designed outdoor play space enables them to make good progress in developing body balance and control. The climbing apparatus in the nursery area is impacting positively in the development of the children's confidence. Adults work closely and effectively with the children when they are using the climbing apparatus, encouraging them to increase their skills and to talk about what they are doing so that they extend their vocabulary. Reception children have the advantage of working in the school hall where they benefit from the good example set by the Year 1 pupils in the same class. They are energetic and use the available space well as they travel around the floor, but the lack of adult intervention and guidance prevents them from improving their work further. Fine motor skills are well practised in both the nursery and reception classes, with plenty of opportunities for the children to use malleable materials such as clay and play-dough. Frequent opportunities for the children to use scissors and glue enable them to learn how to cut and stick neatly.

## Creative development

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with a range of experiences to stimulate their learning.
- Skills are well taught in the nursery.

### Commentary

58. Although the children achieve well in the nursery, and satisfactorily overall, most do not attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they complete the Foundation Stage because of their low starting point. Teaching is good in the nursery class and satisfactory overall in the reception classes.
59. The good planning and organisation of the support in the nursery means the children receive a great deal of individual help in developing skills. They are, for example, given personal assistance when observing the detailed features of a fire engine before they paint one of their own, with very good results. Painting skills are developed successfully in the reception classes, as the children are taught how to mix paint and create their own self-portraits. A good range of creative experiences is organised in all

classes, so that the children learn how to print, tie-dye, cut out paper patterns, and use chalks and crayons to illustrate their work. A wide variety of materials is used for collage work and for making models to enhance the learning in other development areas. Role-play is a regular feature and good resources and regular changes in focus successfully encourage imaginative and collaborative play. The children memorise the words and enjoy singing rhymes and jingles. There is a good range of percussion instruments, which are used by all of the classes as they engage in music making activities.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision for English across the school is **unsatisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well below national expectations at the end of both key stages and are too low.
- Many pupils throughout the school are not achieving the standards of which they are capable.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory overall, and is not good enough to bring about the necessary improvement.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.
- Not enough has been done since the last inspection to raise standards.
- The use made of assessment to inform planning and to track pupils' progress and attainment is poor.
- The school has good strategies for encouraging parents to support pupils with their reading.
- Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning, and their use of language and literacy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

#### **Commentary**

60. On the basis of the 2003 end of Key Stage 1 national test results, pupils' attainment in reading is well below the national average, and their attainment in writing is very low, placing the school in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. This has been the picture for the last few years. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' attainment is well below average. The 2003 end of Key Stage 2 English test results show that pupils' attainment is very low in comparison with the national picture, placing the school in the lowest 5 per cent of all schools nationally. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance is well below average, indicating that the pupils have not made enough progress between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2.
61. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is well below national expectations at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The inspection findings are slightly more positive than the national test results, mainly because pupils perform at a lower level when they are working under test conditions. Many pupils in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are not making the progress of which they are capable, and average and higher attaining pupils in particular are often under-achieving. This is mainly because of low teacher expectations, lack of challenge, and the poor use of

assessment to identify the next stage in the pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs often achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment, because of good support from classroom assistants, and input from the special educational needs co-ordinator.

62. Pupils throughout the school use only a limited vocabulary to express their ideas, but often take a good part in class discussions. Pupils listen well to their teachers and to one another. There are some signs that standards of reading are beginning to rise, but this improvement is not yet reflected in the test results. The school has worked hard and successfully to involve parents at home, and their support, along with the regular opportunities for pupils to read in school, are starting to have a positive impact. Pupils mostly have very positive attitudes to reading and enjoy books. Writing is the weakest area of pupils' learning in both key stages. Although regular attention is paid to developing pupils' handwriting skills, they do not consistently transfer these skills to their written work, which is quite often poorly presented. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length, and many pupils have difficulty in sequencing and developing their ideas.
63. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. Although teaching in the individual lessons seen during the inspection was satisfactory overall, there are weaknesses which are evident over time, and which are more apparent through the scrutiny of pupils' written work than through lesson observation. A critical factor in the under-achievement of some pupils is the teachers' poor knowledge and understanding of assessment. Assessment information is poorly used to track pupils' progress and attainment, and is not used well enough when planning the next stage of pupils' learning. As a result, lessons do not systematically build upon and extend the pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Teachers' expectations of what the pupils can and should achieve are sometimes too low, and although teachers often prepare work for the different levels of ability in the class, the match is often inappropriate. In lessons, teachers tend to direct support staff to work with pupils who have special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make satisfactory progress, but higher attaining and average pupils do not receive the individual support they need to help them to improve their work further. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils, and create a positive learning environment where pupils are not afraid to give their views and to take part in discussions. Pupils generally respond well in lessons, even when they are not sufficiently challenged and when the tasks are insufficiently interesting. Currently, very little use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in English, and this means that they have too few opportunities to practise word-processing skills, or to use features such as spell checkers.
64. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory, and not enough has been done since the last inspection to raise standards, to improve assessment, and to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. The current co-ordinators have begun to implement a good range of strategies to raise standards, but have too little non-contact time to monitor the impact of new initiatives on teaching and learning. Some monitoring has taken place through classroom observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work, but it has not been sufficiently rigorous, and has not clearly identified the key issues for development.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

65. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use their language and literacy skills in their work in other subjects, and the promotion of language and literacy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Although class discussions are a regular feature of many

lessons, teachers do not always focus enough on the development of pupils' subject specific vocabulary. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills across the curriculum, and the over-use of worksheets in some classes for recording, prevents pupils from practising their writing skills in a meaningful context.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well below national expectations at the end of both key stages, and are too low.
- Many pupils are not achieving the standards of which they are capable.
- The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall.
- The use made of assessment to highlight strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning is poor.
- Pupils make insufficient use of information and communication technology to support their learning.
- Pupils' numeracy skills are unsatisfactorily promoted across the curriculum.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

66. The 2003 end of Key Stage 1 test results show that pupils' attainment is well below the national average, and well below average in comparison with similar schools. This has been the picture for the last few years. The 2003 end of Key Stage 2 test results show that pupils' attainment is very low in comparison with the national average, placing the school in the lowest 5 per cent of schools nationally. Standards have been well below the national average for the last few years, but dropped still further in 2003 to the current very low position. Based on prior attainment, the pupils' performance is well below average, indicating that the group of pupils entered for the 2003 tests made unsatisfactory progress between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2.
67. The inspection findings indicate that standards are well below national expectations at the end of both key stages. This was the picture at the time of the last inspection, and not enough has been done by the school to raise standards in the intervening period. Many pupils in both key stages are not making the progress of which they are capable. This is particularly the case for higher attaining pupils who are capable of achieving better standards in their work. Lower attaining pupils, and pupils with special educational needs, often make satisfactory progress and achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. This is because of good levels of in-class support from support staff.
68. By the end of Year 2 higher attaining pupils have satisfactory number skills, although the lower attaining pupils need help with simple addition and subtraction, and are working at a much lower level than usually found. A significant number of pupils in Year 2 make basic errors in their number work and have difficulty writing numbers correctly. The pupils' understanding of shape, space and measure is very insecure. The majority of pupils in Year 6 attain satisfactory standards when making straightforward written calculations, but their mental arithmetic skills are limited, and the majority of pupils require considerable time and prompting to answer basic numerical questions. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of two- and three-

dimensional shapes is weak, and only a small number of higher attaining pupils can reliably calculate perimeter and area. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of data handling are unsatisfactory.

69. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. In the individual lessons seen during the inspection, teaching and learning were often of a satisfactory standard. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates some significant weaknesses in teaching linked to poor use of assessment, low expectations and lack of progression in the pupils' learning. Although teachers often demonstrate satisfactory skills of classroom management in terms of the way in which they organise pupils, involve them in discussions, and manage their behaviour, their expectations of what the pupils can and should achieve are too low. Daily planning is not sufficiently detailed, and does not show clearly what the pupils are expected to learn and to achieve. Poor use is made of assessment to highlight areas of strength and weakness in the pupils' learning, and as a result, activities are not sufficiently closely matched to the pupils' abilities. This means that higher attaining pupils especially are often not stretched enough in their mathematical thinking and therefore do not achieve the higher standards in their work of which they are capable. Numeracy lessons are often too long, and at times pupils lose interest. However, where the teaching is good, as in Year 3, the good use of questioning and varied tasks successfully maintain the pupils' interest and motivation. Teachers across the school do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in mathematics. As a result, few older pupils have an appreciation of the capacity of computers for sorting and representing data, making calculations, and enabling the easy handling and manipulation of very large numbers.
70. The leadership and management of mathematics are unsatisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinators have too little non-contact time to effectively monitor the curriculum, and to ensure good quality teaching and learning. Although there has been some monitoring of classroom practice and the pupils' work, it has not been sufficiently rigorous, and has not identified the key areas of strength and weakness across the school. The rate of improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

71. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is unsatisfactory overall. Although individual teachers pick up and use incidental opportunities that arise during the course of the day, there is no whole-school planning to ensure that pupils' mathematical skills are systematically promoted and developed.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have slipped in recent years in Key Stage 2, and higher attaining and average pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils' investigative skills are at a particularly low level at the end of both key stages.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory and does not take sufficient account of pupils' previous learning.
- Assessment is poor.

- Support staff are used well to work with pupils with special educational needs enabling them to achieve well.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

72. On the basis of the 2003 end of Key Stage 2 national test results, the pupils' attainment is very low, placing the school in the lowest 5 per cent of schools in the country. Standards have dropped steadily over the last three years. Based on prior attainment, the pupils' performance is below average. The 2003 teacher assessments for Key Stage 1 pupils show that their attainment is well below the expected level.
73. The inspection findings indicate that standards are well below national expectations at the end of both key stages, and that they could be much higher than this. Although lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs often attain satisfactorily because of the good levels of support they receive from classroom assistants, higher attaining and average pupils often do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. This is partly because teachers' expectations are too low, and partly because insufficient use is made of assessment information to highlight strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' learning so that activities can be closely matched to pupils' levels of ability.
74. A particular weakness in pupils' learning across the school is their lack of understanding of the investigative process. By the time they leave school at the age of eleven, very few pupils have a clear idea of what constitutes a fair test, and the vast majority of pupils do not know how to go about setting up their own investigations. Throughout the school pupils find it difficult to make predictions that draw on their previous knowledge, and to explain their ideas using appropriate scientific vocabulary. Pupils of all ages show a lack of method when carrying out practical tasks, and older pupils do not pay enough attention to ensuring that their results are reliable and valid. Pupils' scientific knowledge is weak, and older pupils have great difficulty in applying what they know to new and different contexts.
75. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Some teachers lack subject knowledge, and this is reflected in the sometimes poor explanations given to pupils, and the lack of challenge in some activities. Teachers do not set a good example to pupils through their own use of scientific vocabulary. The teaching of investigative work is a main weakness, and during the inspection, Key Stage 1 pupils were asked to record the outcomes of an investigation before they had actually carried out the practical work. Higher attaining pupils are often given too little adult support in lessons, and as a result, they do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. In some classes worksheets are used too readily as a means of recording. This practice prevents pupils from devising their own recording methods, and results in missed opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills. The use of assessment to plan the next stage of pupils' learning is poor. There are times when pupils in different year groups are covering work at the same level. Teachers are not sufficiently clear about how to use assessment information to ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged. Teachers are not confident about the National Curriculum level descriptors, and work is not always age appropriate. Too little use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in science, although there are occasions when older Key Stage 2 pupils use computers for research.
76. The leadership and management of science are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinators do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards, and their overview of the work that is being carried out in different year

groups is poor. Although they have made a start in monitoring classroom practice and pupils' work, the monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous, and important strengths and weaknesses have not been identified. For example, where classes are covering the same topic, there are times when different age groups are working at the same level, and insufficient account has been taken of their previous learning. Since the last inspection standards in Key Stage 2 have steadily dropped to their current very low level, and the rate of improvement since the last inspection is poor.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

The quality of provision for information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils of all ages and abilities do not achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory, and some teachers lack confidence and subject expertise.
- The computer suite is a very good resource, but it is under-used.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.
- There is no whole-school assessment system, and teachers do not make enough use of ongoing assessment when planning the next stage of the pupils' learning.
- Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

77. Standards are well below national expectations at the end of both key stages, and many pupils throughout the school do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. There has been too little progress since the last inspection, and standards are now lower than they were four years ago. Although the school has a very good computer suite, it is not used on a sufficiently regular basis by some classes. Not enough time is given to the teaching of information and communication technology skills, and in both key stages there are significant gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding because aspects of the curriculum are not covered in enough depth.
78. Pupils' keyboard skills are often poor at the end of Key Stage 1 and most pupils have difficulty in controlling the mouse, opening programs, and printing and saving their work. Although higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2 are reasonably confident when using word-processing applications, their knowledge of how computers can be used to control, monitor and model events is very poor at the end of Year 6.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall in both key stages. Although individual teachers have secure levels of expertise, some lack confidence and do not have enough knowledge to advance the pupils' learning. Although there are regular slots when classes can use the computer suite, some teachers do not take advantage of these opportunities, and in some key classes, including Year 2 and Year 6, pupils do not have regular lessons in the information and communication technology suite. Some good teaching was seen in one lesson during the inspection, and in this session, clear planning that built effectively on the pupils' previous learning led to good achievement for all ability groups. There is currently no whole-school assessment system to enable teachers to measure and track pupils' progress and attainment in information and communication technology, although individual teachers are putting together their own assessment sheets so that they can record the skills pupils have

acquired. As a result, teachers do not, in the main, take enough account of the pupils' previous learning when planning lessons, and tasks are not sufficiently well matched to pupils' levels of ability.

80. The leadership and management of information and communication technology are unsatisfactory. Not enough progress has been made since the last inspection, and standards have actually deteriorated over recent years. The co-ordinator does not have enough non-contact time to monitor classroom practice or to work with colleagues who are experiencing difficulties.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

81. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their work in other subjects. Although they sometimes produce graphs on the computer, and occasionally complete research tasks, they rarely use computers for editing and drafting their written work. Few pupils see computers as 'tools for learning'.

## **HUMANITIES**

**Religious education** was the main focus of the inspection within the humanities group, and this subject was inspected in depth. Not enough evidence was collected to make secure judgements about standards and achievement in **geography** and **history**, or to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects. Discussions with pupils and co-ordinators indicate that not enough time is given to either history or geography, and that the monitoring of the school's work by the co-ordinators is unsatisfactory.

### **Religious Education**

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well below those expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus and are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory and leads to unsatisfactory achievement for many pupils.
- Although coverage of Christianity is satisfactory, there is not enough emphasis placed on pupils learning about other world faiths.
- Too little time is given to the subject in some classes.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

82. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are well below the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection. This is partly because the school does not allocate enough time to the teaching of religious education, and partly because not enough emphasis is placed on the teaching of religions other than Christianity. Many pupils across the school do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. The rate of improvement since the last inspection is poor.

83. The pupils' knowledge of Christianity is limited at the end of both key stages. Pupils often have difficulty in recalling their learning and need considerable prompting to recall stories from the Bible or important Christian events. Older Key Stage 2 pupils have very little understanding of how symbols represent aspects of the Christian faith, and their understanding of how religion affects the lives of its followers is poor. Although pupils study Islam and Judaism as they move through the school, their knowledge of these faiths is poor. Some pupils recall a visit to a mosque, but have no real understanding of its importance as a sacred building and a place of worship.
84. Although the teaching of the individual lessons seen during the inspection was satisfactory, the overall picture of teaching across the school, as reflected through pupils' work, and discussions with the pupils, is unsatisfactory. A major weakness in the teaching is the very limited amount of work recorded in pupils' books. As a result, pupils have no prompts to help them to recall their previous learning. Pupils have too few opportunities to consider and record their own response to issues raised during lessons, and teachers do not place enough emphasis on pupils learning from religion. Too little time is given to the subject, and lessons are often rushed. Pupils often do not have time to record their ideas in enough depth. The teachers' expectations of the pupils are often too low, and as a result, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in their thinking. Some tasks are low level, such as those which require pupils to colour worksheets.
85. The leadership and management of religious education are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has not had regular non-contact time to enable her to rigorously monitor and evaluate the curriculum, and there are no whole-school procedures in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress. The teaching is not systematically evaluated and the co-ordinator has had limited opportunities to support the work of colleagues.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

The inspection focused on **physical education**. No firm judgements can be made about the quality of teaching and learning, or pupils' attainment and achievement in **art and design**, **design and technology** or **music**. Discussions with pupils and staff, and the scrutiny of timetables and teachers' planning, indicate that not enough time is given to art and design, design and technology and music, and that these subjects are not covered in enough depth. Although schemes of work are in place, teachers' weekly planning does not show sufficiently clearly how pupils' learning is to be systematically built upon. There are no whole-school assessment systems, and although teachers make informal observations, there are no formal mechanisms for tracking pupils' progress and attainment as they move through the school, or for identifying those pupils who are especially talented. Individual co-ordinators are keen to develop their areas, but have very little non-contact time to enable them to develop their monitoring role. Co-ordinators do not have enough involvement in whole-school development, and do not have a clear idea about the budget that is available to them so that they can develop and improve resources. Overall, the leadership and management of art and design, design and technology and music are unsatisfactory.

### **Physical education**

The provision for physical education is **unsatisfactory** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject is taught on a regular basis in all classes, and during the course of the year, pupils experience a good range of activities.

- The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Although teaching is satisfactory overall, there is too much variation and pupils make inconsistent progress.
- There is no whole-school system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and attainment.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory overall.

### **Commentary**

86. Pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations in gymnastics and dance at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although within individual lessons, achievement varies because of inconsistencies in teaching. There has been too little development in the subject since the last inspection, and the provision is not as good as it was. This is because there has been too little time for the co-ordinator to develop her monitoring role, and she has not therefore had the opportunity to observe classroom practice and to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory overall.
87. Physical education receives a good amount of curriculum time, and during the course of the year, pupils cover a good range of activities. Pupils' learning is effectively enhanced by a good range of after-school activities, and pupils have good opportunities to take part in inter-school competitions. Pupils who are in the school teams show a good level of commitment, and regularly attend the training sessions, many of which are led by the school site manager, who is also a member of the governing body. Opportunities for the pupils to take part in competitive sports have a very positive impact on their personal and social development, and enable them to gain a good understanding of the notion of 'fair play'.
88. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but there is too much variation in the quality of teaching from class to class. During the inspection, the teaching ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory. There has been little staff development in physical education in recent years, and some teachers lack confidence. Where teaching is at its best, it is characterised by very good and thorough planning, resulting in the systematic development of pupils' skills. There are very good opportunities for pupils to plan, perform and evaluate their work and that of others, and teachers provide very good individual support for pupils, enabling them all to achieve their full potential. Conversely, where there are weaknesses in teaching, they are linked to low expectations of what the pupils can and should achieve, and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to be creative and imaginative in their work. In the main, pupils throughout the school enjoy physical education lessons and respond positively and with good levels of enthusiasm. Most pupils put a good amount of effort into their work and try hard. Where teaching is excellent, pupils enthusiastically take on board their teacher's demanding suggestions for improvement and as a result, the quality of their work improves significantly even within the space of one lesson.
89. The school currently has no whole-school system for assessing the pupils' progress and attainment, and as a result, pupils with a particular talent or difficulty are only identified by chance. The lack of ongoing assessment means that teachers do not always take sufficient account of what the pupils already know and can do, and this in turn sometimes leads to low expectations.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

90. No lessons were seen during the inspection, and it is therefore not possible to make judgements about the overall quality of provision. However, discussions with staff indicate that this is an aspect of the school's work that is a current focus for development. The newly appointed co-ordinator is taking a good lead in putting together a whole-school scheme of work which will ensure greater progression in the pupils' learning.
91. Good links with external agencies ensure that pupils receive age appropriate guidance about the dangers of drug abuse, and sex education. The school is currently participating in the 'Healthy School Award' initiative and pupils from reception to Year 6 take part in a Life Education programme, which emphasises the need for them to take care and responsibility for their own health and well-being.
92. Teachers are effective in the way in which they pick up incidental opportunities that arise during the course of the day, and whole-school assemblies are used well as a vehicle for drawing pupils' attention to important matters relating to social skills and relationships. On a daily basis, the headteacher very effectively supervises the pupils in the playground, and positively promotes their personal and social development as he engages in one to one discussions in a very informal and relaxed way which puts the pupils fully at their ease.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>5</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	6
Value for money provided by the school	5
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>6</b>
Pupils' achievement	5
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>5</b>
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	6
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>5</b>
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	6
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	5

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