

INSPECTION REPORT

**SOWERBY VILLAGE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sowerby Bridge

LEA area: Calderdale

Unique reference number: 133671

Headteacher: Mrs G Bush

Lead inspector: Mrs R Harrison
Dates of inspection: 8th - 10th December 2003

Inspection number: 257526
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll	197
School address:	St Peter's Avenue Sowerby Sowerby Bridge West Yorkshire
Postcode:	HX6 1HB
Telephone number:	(01422) 831971
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Theresa Thorne
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable – new school

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Sowerby Village Church of England Voluntary Controlled School is a new school, formed by the amalgamation of an infant and junior school in September 2002. It is of average size compared with other primary schools. At present, the school has 197 pupils aged between three and eleven years. The area has a significant level of deprivation, and economic circumstances are well below the national average. The proportion of pupils registered for free school meals (26.6 per cent) is above the national average. The number of pupils moving in and out of the area is relatively high, with nine joining and fourteen leaving other than at the start and end of the last school year. There are very few pupils of ethnic minority origin. The school has well above average number of pupils with special educational needs (30 per cent). The number of pupils with statements of special educational need (5.5 per cent) is well above the national average and includes pupils with moderate to severe learning difficulties and a number with behavioural problems.

Attainment on entry to the nursery class is well below that expected for children aged three, with children's communication and language skills, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding being especially low.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18059	Mrs R Harrison	Lead inspector	English Music Religious education Personal, social and health education and citizenship
31718	Mrs D Shields	Lay inspector	
25577	Mr W Jefferson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History
10911	Mrs C Deloughry	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Special educational needs Science Art and design Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **satisfactory** school, where standards are beginning to improve. Pupils are happy at school and enjoy learning. They are well cared for and form good relationships. Opportunities for pupils to enrich their learning are good. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The headteacher's leadership is very good. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education are below average;
- provision for the Foundation Stage is good;
- provision for ICT is unsatisfactory;
- provision for pupils' personal development is good;
- the senior management team and subject co-ordinators have not yet adopted consistent practices throughout the school in the monitoring of teaching, learning and achievement;
- teachers do not always use assessment information well to match work to pupils' needs;
- a significant number of parents do not support their children's learning at home sufficiently and few help in school.

The school opened in September 2002 so there is no previous report.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	Not applicable	Not applicable	E	E
mathematics	Not applicable	Not applicable	E*	E*
science	Not applicable	Not applicable	E	E*

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

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall. Attainment varies considerably from year group to year group because the year groups vary considerably in size and ability. The school has a very high number of lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs, and many of these pupils struggle to retain things they learn from day-to-day without considerable support. An above average number of pupils join the school at times other than at the usual time of starting in the newly established nursery and this also affects the rate at which some progress. The school did not meet its targets in 2003. This is because the school faced three years of serious disruption during the amalgamation of the previous infant and junior schools. Staff absences, due to long-term sickness, and delays in building work resulted in several weeks of teaching time being lost. The school's results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 are particularly weak in mathematics, being in the lowest five per cent nationally, and when compared to similar schools.

Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and make good progress towards the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. However, children start in the nursery class with well below average levels of attainment and so very few children achieve all of these goals by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress, but overall standards are below national averages and below those of similar schools. Standards in the current Year 6 are well below the national average in English, and below average in mathematics and science. However, pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Standards are below average in science and mathematics because pupils' low literacy skills limit their ability to express ideas and explain what they know and understand effectively. Standards of work seen in ICT are below those expected at the end of Year 6 because overall provision for ICT is unsatisfactory. In religious education, standards are below expectations as one or two teachers have insecure subject knowledge and the subject has not been fully developed yet. This is because the new local agreed syllabus for religious education has only recently been adopted. Standards of work sampled in all other subjects are in line with expectations.

Pupils enjoy school, form good relationships and most have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well and are caring towards each other. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance was below average last year, but it is now in line with other schools.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is satisfactory overall and improving as staff become established. Teaching is good in Year 6, resulting in pupils making good progress in this class. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory but the information gathered is not used well to match work to pupils' needs, especially for those who find it hard to concentrate and for lower attaining pupils.

The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for most subjects in Key Stage 1 and 2, with the exception of ICT, where the school has had problems with resources and some teachers are awaiting further training. Enrichment activities are good. The overall quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory. The partnerships with parents, the community, and other schools are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher's leadership is **very good** and overall management in the school is **satisfactory**. Governance is satisfactory. The newly established governing body has begun to monitor the work of the school and set priorities for improvement. Governors are aware that the school does not currently make satisfactory provision for ICT but this is being addressed. The capacity to improve further is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are satisfied with the school, and feel their children are cared for well. Few parents help in school and a significant number do not support their children's learning sufficiently. Pupils are happy at school and feel safe and well looked after.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT throughout the school.
- Ensure all managers and co-ordinators monitor provision rigorously and consistently.
- Make better use of assessment information to plan work that matches the needs of all pupils.
- Involve more parents in supporting the work of the school and in helping their children with schoolwork at home.

and to meet statutory requirements:

- improve the provision of ICT throughout the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' overall achievement is **satisfactory** although standards are currently well below average in English, and below average in mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. With only one year of results, no comparisons can be made regarding national trends.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage and in Year 6 make good progress.
- Standards are improving in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils' low literacy skills restrict progress in other subjects.
- Standards in ICT and religious education are below expectations.
- Assessment information is not always used effectively to plan work for all ability groups.
- Pupils achieve well when carrying out practical activities.

Foundation Stage

1. Children enter the Foundation Stage with well below expected levels of attainment in all areas of learning. The weakest aspects are communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, which are often poor. Although most children make good progress from a low starting point, standards in these three areas remain well below expectations at the end of the reception year. Their creative development is below expected levels by the end of the reception year. However, most children achieve the early learning goals in their physical development and in their personal and social and emotional development. Children achieve well because teaching is consistently good and often very good. Expectations are high and great emphasis is placed on developing children's communication skills. There is very effective integration of children with special educational needs and they achieve well.

Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.5 (n/a)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.4 (n/a)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.7 (n/a)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 20 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.5 (n/a)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.3 (n/a)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.1 (n/a)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In the National tests and assessments in 2003, standards at the end of Year 2 were well below average in reading and below average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, pupils achieved standards that were above average in writing and slightly below average in reading. In 2003, pupils at the end of Year 6 attained standards in English that were well below the national average and the average for similar schools. These low standards at the end of Year 6 and to a lesser extent, Year 2 are largely attributable to the major disruptions the school faced during a period of three years. The re-organisation and amalgamation of the two schools led to serious disruptions in teaching. High staff absences resulted in a number of temporary staffing arrangements. Building works between April and October 2002 led to at least three weeks of teaching time being lost at the start of September 2002. As a result, pupils who sat tests and assessments in May 2003 did not achieve as well as they could have done.
3. New practices and procedures are slowly becoming established to ensure pupils progress well. Overall achievement is currently satisfactory and it is good in Year 6 where the teaching is consistently good. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups make progress in line with their peers. The school faces a number of barriers that at present limit the achievement of a significant number of pupils, but is working hard to address these. There is considerable variation in the ability of successive year groups, further exacerbated by large differences in class sizes from year to year. The school faces high pupil mobility. The school has a well above average number of pupils with special educational needs, with nine pupils having statements for special educational need. In addition, there are a significant number of lower attaining pupils who start from a very low base. Many of these pupils are not adequately supported in their learning at home and, as a consequence, they struggle to retain information successfully on a day-to-day basis. In a few classes, teachers occasionally do not make effective use of the available assessment information to plan work that matches pupils' ability accurately.
4. Standards in reading are currently below average. To address this, the school has placed good emphasis on developing pupils' skills with daily guided reading sessions and opportunities for pupils to be heard reading regularly. Pupils' speaking skills are below average because many have limited vocabulary and find it difficult to express their thoughts fluently, especially as they progress through the juniors where the work becomes more challenging. Pupils achieve standards in writing that are below the national average by the end of Year 2 and are well below the national average by the end of Year 6, although their overall progress is satisfactory and is often good in Year 6 where teaching is good. Literacy is a key area of focus and there is evidence that pupils' skills are improving.
5. In mathematics, the National tests and assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2003 show standards to be well below the national and similar schools averages. Pupils in the current Year 2 are working at well below average levels and in Year 6; pupils are operating at below average standards. Progress in problem solving is sometimes hampered by pupils' limited literacy skills, for example, the ability to use correct mathematical vocabulary when asked to explain the strategies to answer problems. Overall achievement is satisfactory.
6. In 2003, the teacher assessments in science for pupils at the end of Year 2 were in line with national averages and high when compared to similar schools. At the end of Year 6, the National Tests showed results to be well below average, both nationally and when compared to similar schools. Overall standards are currently below average. Because

pupils enjoy practical tasks and engage with these with more interest, many learn new information well, but are held back by their low literacy skills. They struggle to express their understanding, especially as they move through the junior classes where work becomes more complex and demanding. Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory, but good in Year 6 where teaching is conducted at a challenging pace.

7. Standards in ICT are below the expected levels throughout the school because provision is unsatisfactory. During the disruption caused by the re-organisation, for some eighteen months access to computers was restricted. The situation was further aggravated by incidents of vandalism on the site. Not all teachers have received the required training to deliver the subject. As a consequence, pupils have not had full access to the ICT curriculum. Use of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.
8. From the work sampled, standards in religious education are below the expected levels at the end of Year 6 largely because the subject has not been given high priority and one or two teachers have insecure subject knowledge. The limited work seen in other subjects was of a satisfactory standard. Overall achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Behaviour is mainly **good**, although a small minority of pupils behave less well. Most pupils have **positive attitudes** to school. Attendance is **below** the national average but punctuality is **satisfactory**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** and as a consequence their personal development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good behaviour and attitudes in Foundation Stage.
- Good attitudes of most pupils.
- Pupils enjoy school and are interested in the activities provided.
- School promotes good relationships.

Commentary

9. The behaviour in school is good, although a small minority of pupils loses interest in the few lessons that are less well managed. Pupils with special educational needs are totally included in all school and classroom activities. They form good relationships with their classmates, teachers and support assistants. Their behaviour is usually good and they work with enthusiasm. No incidents of bullying or other forms of harassment were observed during the inspection.
10. Children make very good progress in their personal and social development in the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 to 6, most pupils show positive attitudes in lessons and enjoy all that the school offers. They show high levels of enthusiasm and motivation and are keen to achieve well. These positive attitudes are also reflected in the number of pupils that enthusiastically take part in activities after school. Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility, for example, supporting younger children when they first start school and helping with routines such as operating the tuck shop.
11. Teachers set very good examples and there is a genuine sense of care for one another throughout the school, with pupils demonstrating respect for the views and feelings of

others. The children in the reception class, for example, display genuine pleasure and delight at the successes of their peers with special educational needs. Pupils are very friendly towards visitors and speak to them pleasantly and politely, sharing what they are doing and their views about the school with great enthusiasm. Suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to undertake independent study and research, for example, when carrying out investigations in science or planning and constructing models in design and technology. They willingly undertake responsibilities around school, and are thrilled to sing to the elderly in the local residential home. The school organises social events for pupils and their families and a number of trips, including a residential visit for Years 5 and 6. All result in pupils' good social development.

12. The school has good links with the local church and there are regular visits from the local clergy to lead collective worship and thus enhance pupils' spiritual development. Through assemblies and in lessons in personal, social and health education and citizenship, pupils are helped to develop a good sense of morality, which most apply effectively in day-to-day situations, for example in their behaviour towards others at school, and when involved in fund-raising for charities. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory but opportunities to raise their awareness of other cultures are currently limited.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.3	School data :	2.4
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

13. Last year unauthorised absence was very high. This year because of the school's good monitoring systems and the improved focus on promoting regular attendance, there is an improved picture with unauthorised absence significantly reduced. The school works closely with the educational welfare officer to help those families who do not send their children to school regularly. Not all families ensure their children arrive at school on time each day. This puts pupils at a disadvantage because they often miss the introduction to lessons.

Exclusions

There were no exclusions in the first year of the school's establishment.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall but provision for ICT is unsatisfactory. The school offers a good range of enrichment activities. Care, guidance and support, partnerships with the parents and community and links with other schools and colleges are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but assessment overall is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
- Teaching in Year 6 is consistently good.
- Support staff are used well to help raise pupils' achievement.
- The use of assessment information, including marking to guide planning and to set targets, is unsatisfactory in a few classes and pupils are not always made aware of these targets.
- ICT is not used well to support learning effectively in all classes.
- A few pupils' unacceptable behaviour is not always managed well.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6 (17%)	20 (59%)	7 (21%)	1 (3%)	0	0

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

Commentary

14. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and all children make good progress. Most do not achieve all of the Early Learning Goals because many start school at very low levels of attainment. Children have fun exploring and watch carefully when shown how to do new things. Expectations are high for them to work independently, and to learn through their experiences. Staff intervene very sensitively during these activities to talk to children about what they are doing. For many, such constant interactions are a challenge but adults help them gain confidence and encourage them to share their ideas. Children's language, especially their vocabulary, is extended well. However, many struggle to retain learning effectively from day to day because of their poor ability to retain information long term and to apply what they learn in new situations. As a consequence, teachers have to go over the same ground repeatedly and learning is slow for a significant minority.
15. Teachers and classroom assistants work effectively with pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to share the same tasks as their peers. These pupils feel fully involved in all classroom activities. This practice has a positive impact on their progress and they achieve as well as their peers. On a few occasions, in one or two classes, insufficient attention is paid to planning work to match what is identified on pupils' individual education plans. Review and target setting procedures are good but assessment and diagnostic testing require further development.
16. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well but pupils are not always reminded to apply what they learn to their work in other subjects. This occasionally results in poorly presented work with many errors, especially in pupils' independent writing in the junior classes. For a significant number of lower attaining pupils who have low literacy skills, for example in Year 6, learning is sometimes restricted because additional support is not available and these pupils have to rely on the teacher or their peers to help them.

17. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good but learning is only satisfactory because of the high number of lower attaining pupils who struggle to retain new learning from day to day. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Where teaching is good, pupils enjoy their work and achieve well. In these lessons, work is stimulating and expectations are high for good behaviour and good work. Pupils particularly enjoy lessons in practical subjects, such as music, art and design and design and technology. They talk enthusiastically about their investigations in science and their projects in design and technology. The majority of pupils pay good attention, and many are keen to contribute, especially when work is presented in a lively manner and engages their interest fully. A few pupils are very passive in their participation, lacking the confidence to speak in front of others for fear of making mistakes and thus frequently opt out of oral tasks, despite good support from staff and peers.
18. Evidence from pupils' recorded work shows that there is a tendency for teachers to direct learning too much, especially in one or two of the junior classes. For example, opportunities for extended independent writing are limited because teachers are anxious to ensure the curriculum is covered and do not check if pupils of all abilities understand what they have been taught or what they have written down. In a few classes, there is an over-reliance on worksheets, which sometimes not all pupils can follow. In addition, because a few teachers lack confidence in using ICT in their lessons, they do not provide pupils with opportunities to practice their ICT skills regularly.
19. Procedures for the overall assessment of pupils' progress and attainment are satisfactory. However teachers' use of assessment information to plan work for pupils of all abilities to ensure they build on prior learning effectively is unsatisfactory. This is not the case in good lessons where progress, as a consequence, is good. The procedures the head has introduced are still relatively new. Not all staff are fully confident in how to use the information available to them in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. Even here, one or two teachers occasionally do not plan work that matches the needs of all pupils accurately, by ensuring that it is based on what they have learnt previously. For a few, work is sometimes too difficult and for higher attaining pupils there is lack of challenge. In these lessons, lower attaining pupils struggle to sustain concentration. Consequently, the behaviour of a few becomes unsatisfactory when not managed effectively and this results in these pupils making slow progress. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are also relatively new but do identify the areas in which children need additional guidance to help them achieve well.
20. The school acknowledges the need to monitor the achievement of individual pupils more carefully in order to set targets that are accurately based on what pupils can do already, and to ensure pupils understand and work to these targets efficiently. There is inconsistency in the quality of marking from one class to another. In the upper junior class, it is used effectively to guide pupils in their learning and to encourage them to show pride in the way in which they present their work. However, in a few classes pupils' books are often untidy with little attention paid to presentation and completion of tasks. Pupils' understanding of how well they are doing and what they must do to improve is unsatisfactory.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good** for children in the Foundation Stage and is **satisfactory** in most subjects in Key Stage 1 and 2, with the exception of ICT where it is **unsatisfactory**. The pupils are offered a **good** range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Enrichment through extra-curricular activities and visitors who contribute in lessons is good.
- Support staff make a significant contribution to the progress pupils make.
- Procedures for supporting pupils with special educational needs are good, but there are variations in the quality and delivery of individual education plans.
- The playground facilities need improving.

Commentary

21. The curriculum for most subjects in Key Stage 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The school does not meet National Curriculum requirements fully because the provision for ICT is unsatisfactory. The school is aware that resources for this subject are currently inadequate and that not all staff have received the training required to deliver the subject and has plans in place to address this. In addition, the six Year 6 pupils who are in the Year 5 class do not always have full access to the science curriculum followed in the Year 6 class. Provision for religious education and collective worship is satisfactory. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular clubs and enrichment opportunities, particularly for sport. These activities are well attended and appreciated by the pupils. In addition, a wide range of visitors support work in lessons effectively by presenting pupils with good opportunities to explore, for example, other faiths, environmental issues and citizenship.
22. There are good procedures in place for supporting pupils with special educational needs. However, these procedures are not implemented consistently across the school. The school is aware of this and plans are in place to monitor the progress of all pupils even more closely to ensure the targets that are set are worked at step by step. The individual education plans are updated frequently, following regular reviews, and contain well-directed targets, but strategies to meet these often lack precision and detail. As a consequence, teachers and support assistants cannot plan the work with sufficient accuracy to meet pupils' needs fully. These pupils, however, are very well integrated in classes and they receive good individual help.
23. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good, and resources are of good quality. The children are carefully guided and monitored through all the learning areas towards the achievement of the Early Learning Goals and are prepared well to join Year 1. Arrangements for the admission of children into the nursery class are very good and for pupils' transferring to secondary school are good.
24. Pupils like the new school building. It is bright, clean and well maintained. The play area for older pupils, however, is divided by a service road; this sometimes poses a safety hazard, although the school gates are always kept closed during school hours. The area is unattractive and there is little for them to do in the confined spaces. This occasionally

leads to incidents of inappropriate behaviour at lunchtimes. The school is aware of these shortcomings and has plans to rectify them in the coming year. The school has sufficient staff and resources to teach all subjects effectively in all areas other than ICT.

Care, guidance and support

The school's arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **satisfactory**. Pupils receive **good** support, advice and guidance. Staff involve them **satisfactorily** in the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know their pupils well.
- Pupils think highly of the new school council.
- Record keeping for pupils' welfare needs is not yet consistent throughout the school.

Commentary

25. Almost all pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe and well cared for. They say teachers help them with their work and that there is an adult they can talk to if they are unhappy. Pupils' work and effort are valued and celebrated and pupils appreciate this. Most of the school's arrangements to seek pupils' views are very new but pupils talk enthusiastically about the new school council. They know who their class representatives are and are looking forward to being able to express their opinions. There are regular planned opportunities to discuss feelings and opinions in class discussions and a message box system has also been introduced in some classes for pupils to submit any worries they have to staff confidentially. Teachers monitor pupils' personal development well. Relationships are good and when teachers notice or receive information that pupils are having difficulties, they take action quickly to put matters right. The school is aware of the need to increase the opportunities for pupils to talk to adults, especially if they have problems, for instance, about issues linked to possible bullying.
26. Arrangements for supporting children and their parents when they start in the nursery class are good. Home visits help teachers gather information about how they need to help and support children when they first enter school. Because of this, children settle quickly and adjust to the school routines well. This early partnership with families is not sufficiently built upon and strengthened as pupils move through the school. The school recognises the need to foster such relationships in order to involve more parents in helping their children achieve well.
27. Staff usually follow the agreed policies and practices relating to health, safety and child protection. However, many systems are new and consistent practice across the whole school is not fully established. Written records are not always as confidential as they could be, and some records are not always in a suitable format, for instance, in relation to risk assessments on out-of-school visits and records relating to child protection and pupils' behaviour. A few of the adults who work in the school have yet to undertake training in several aspects of care and welfare, in order to avoid inconsistencies in the management of older pupils at lunchtimes.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has worked hard to develop a **satisfactory** partnership with parents. Links and liaison with the community, schools and other education providers are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school welcomes and values parents' views, help and support, but parents are not as closely involved in their children's education as they could be.
- Arrangements to support children starting at the school are very good and arrangements for pupils transferring to the next stage of education are good.

Commentary

28. Parents are provided with a good range of written information about school life and what their children will be learning. There are both formal and informal opportunities for parents to talk to teachers. Most parents appreciate this and the fact that the school tries hard to deal with any suggestions or concerns as quickly as possible. The headteacher, in particular, spends a great deal of her time responding to and following up issues raised by parents.
29. Parents gave tremendous support to the recent 'Christmas Fair' that was organised by teachers and pupils. Reading records, especially of the younger pupils, show that many parents hear their children read at home and are making a good contribution to their children's learning; this has a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve. Parents of children who have special educational needs receive regular information and are invited to review their children's progress and attend annual reviews, and most do so. Parents are fully involved when their children first start school and this ensures that children quickly settle into the routines of school life. The school is working hard to encourage parents to come in to school and take a more active role in their children's education. Regular events are organised to which parents are invited, such as class assemblies, consultation and information events, but attendance is disappointingly low. Parents have been consulted about specific issues such as setting up a home / school association, but the response has been very limited. Despite all the school's efforts, a significant number of parents are not yet supporting their children's learning either at school or at home.
30. Pupils play a satisfactory part in local community life. Links with the local church are developing well and the church itself is often used by the school to host events, such as the carol concert or leavers service. Several sports competitions take place with other local primary schools and many of the pupils are involved in these and this has a positive impact on their self-confidence and esteem. Effective arrangements exist for the transfer of information and for pupils to gain first-hand experience of the schools they will attend when they enter secondary education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The headteacher's leadership is **very good** and governance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher displays very good leadership qualities.
- The senior management team has not yet had time to fully impact on raising achievement.
- The school's provision for ICT does not meet statutory requirements.
- The school has not established consistent and rigorous practice amongst all its managers and subject co-ordinators.

Commentary

31. Very good leadership by the headteacher is driving the school forward effectively. She took up headship of the new school one term before it opened in September 2002. In that time, despite numerous staffing issues that needed resolving, she has worked hard to identify and lead on the key priorities for development. She has a very clear vision and has set a comprehensive agenda for improvement to achieve that aim. Staff morale has been raised and is now good. There is a shared commitment to accepting change and supporting new ideas. Standards are beginning to improve as the new procedures and practices become established.
32. Management by other key staff is satisfactory. The majority monitor planning and gather assessment information to identify developments that are required to support teaching and learning. There has been good monitoring of literacy and numeracy. Monitoring in other subjects, other than by the headteacher, has been limited. Many responsibilities and duties of key staff in the senior management team are new to them. Therefore, practice across the school is still inconsistent and not always in line with the new school policies. Their overall effectiveness as a team is beginning to emerge in terms of raising standards. Extra resources and support have been secured to ensure the training needs of all staff can be fully met to carry out their duties effectively. The role of deputy headteacher is evolving positively. Whilst the procedures to manage the provision for pupils with special educational needs are good, insufficient attention is given to monitoring the progress of these pupils in accurate detail to ensure they achieve well. The co-ordinator does not monitor teachers' detailed planning of the strategies identified on the individual education plans rigorously enough to ensure learning tasks are clearly structured to meet each pupil's needs. The headteacher, in partnership with all the co-ordinators, is beginning to monitor lessons to ensure the agreed procedures are implemented rigorously in all classes.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	379 804	Balance from previous year	0
Total expenditure	366 992	Balance carried forward to the next year	12 812
Expenditure per pupil	1 830		

33. The school's finances are managed well. The headteacher has introduced effective procedures for evaluating the value of spending, for example, in the strategic deployment of support staff in order to raise standards. Best value for money considerations, currently led by the headteacher, are very good. The newly established governing body is

beginning to play a more active role in the overall management of the school. For example, during the recent amalgamation, governors successfully made some difficult decisions regarding developments in the school. They have agreed that the local education authority will finance additional resources to improve the current provision for ICT and provide staff with the necessary training to teach all subjects effectively. The governing body is led well and is now in a position to support and guide the work of the school from the viewpoint of 'critical friend'.

34. The school faces a number of barriers to raising achievement. Most notable are the high proportion of pupils moving in and out of the school other than at the normal times and the previous below average rate of pupil attendance. These barriers are coupled with a high level of social and economic deprivation in the area and year group sizes that vary considerably from year to year thus causing difficulties in the organisation of classes. However, the teaching staff are now settled and committed to raising pupils' achievement. A particular aid to overcoming some of these obstacles is the high level of classroom support recently put in place in order to assist teachers and thus improve achievement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** and is strength of the school. When children enter the nursery their attainment is well below average and for a significant minority it is poor. The good and often very good teaching, the very good leadership and the role played by the high quality teaching assistants, ensure that children of all abilities achieve well.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good.
- Classroom organisation is very good.
- There is a very good balance between directed and independently chosen activities.

Commentary

35. Provision is very good and most children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. This is mainly due to the very good teaching in this area of learning and a strong emphasis is placed on this aspect by all the adult team. Classroom routines and the various working areas are excellently planned and established, so that the children feel very secure and happy in the calm, but exciting atmosphere the teachers have created. Children discover that school is safe and good fun and they become eager to learn. Most children have below average skills on entry but the teachers soon compensate for this. They have a high expectancy of behaviour and provide plenty of very good opportunities for children to make decisions and take the initiative. As a result, children are self-assured and soon become very proficient in choosing toys, activities and materials independently.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good.
- Teachers provide a very good range of learning experiences and resources.
- Children are given a good grounding in reading and writing skills.
- Some children would benefit from more parental support.

Commentary

36. When children start school, their speaking skills and ability to communicate their ideas and needs are poor. In spite of the very good teaching and the lively and interactive methods adopted, most children do not achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of their

reception year when standards are still well below average. Teachers make excellent use of the many opportunities that arise throughout the day to extend children's vocabulary and speaking skills, intervening sensitively as often as possible to engage them in conversations. They provide a very good range of experiences and opportunities for them to talk, listen, recite rhymes, listen to stories and become familiar with good quality books as a basis for the development of their reading skills. Children in the reception class begin to recognise some words and letter sounds.

37. Children are given many opportunities to practise writing. At an early stage, they make marks on paper to convey meaning within purposeful play activities and most learn to write their name and copy letters. By the end of the Foundation Stage, a minority form simple sentences. Many children receive limited help from home in acquiring these skills. Workshops organised for parents as to how they might help more have, unfortunately, been poorly attended.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development **is good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff have very secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.
- Teachers provide children with a good range of purposeful, imaginative and enjoyable play activities.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for children to use mathematical vocabulary.

Commentary

38. Children's mathematical skills are developed well, although most do not achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1 and some children's skills remain poor, because they struggle to retain information confidently from day to day. Standards remain well below average for most. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Counting objects and people is a regular feature of classroom routines and children are provided with many good opportunities to learn a range of songs and rhymes, which reinforce their understanding of numbers.
39. Children engage in a wide range of mathematical activities using interesting resources, for counting, sorting, and for colour and shape recognition, which they thoroughly enjoy. Very good use is made of the outdoor play area where children participate in a variety of games using apparatus, such as number lines, large dice and toys. This purposeful play is well supported by all the adults, who very effectively promote the development of mathematical concepts and language at every opportunity. Children in the reception class gain good understanding of the properties of two-dimensional shapes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- A good range of learning experiences are provided.
- There is a good balance between directed and independent learning.

Commentary

40. On entry to the nursery class, children have poor knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. But through the wide range of experiences offered to them in the nursery and reception years, they make good progress and achieve well, although a large number do not successfully attain the Early Learning Goals.
41. Teaching is good and often very good. The good range of resources, especially the building and construction toys, captivate the interest and imagination of the children and enable them to learn through first hand experiences. In both classrooms, children have access to computers and confidently make use of suitably well-chosen programs to develop their skills. In all these activities a good balance is maintained between allowing children to experiment, discover and problem solve for themselves and skilful interventions by staff to promote children's curiosity, understanding and language skills. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is further enriched during short walks locally and visits to places such as the market.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- The outside play area and hall are used well.
- Children use a good range of wheeled toys.
- There is a lack of large apparatus for outside play.

Commentary

42. The varied, enjoyable activities provided for physical development and the good quality of teaching and learning enable children to achieve well and most reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of their reception year. Very good use is made of the outdoor play area where children enjoy playing with a variety of wheeled toys and become adept at manoeuvring skillfully around the traffic cones. Teachers use the equipment imaginatively. During the inspection week, for example, the transport was gainfully utilised by 'Father Christmas's elves' to deliver parcels. Unfortunately, the play area is unsuitable for large climbing apparatus. Teachers compensate for this by making use of the school hall, where the children are provided with opportunities to travel in a large space to develop control and co-ordination on a good range of apparatus. Children in the reception class are very

well aware of the importance of exercise and recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active.

43. Well-planned opportunities allow children to explore and experiment freely, using a range of small tools, such as scissors, pencils and crayons. They learn to dress, undress and fold their clothes. They are given many opportunities to complete these tasks independently, and adults provide additional help and guidance if necessary.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- A good range of purposeful activities and attractive resources support learning well.
- Children are enthusiastic learners.

Commentary

44. Children's ability in this area is well below average on entry to the nursery class and, although they make good progress and achieve well, many do not attain the Early Learning Goals Good teaching ensures that children have access to a good range of experiences designed to develop their creative skills. They cut and stick paper and boxes excitedly to make models and collages, including some in the style of Klimt, as they make cards and calendars for Christmas.
45. Many good opportunities are provided for the children to sing together in the classroom and join in whole-school assemblies. The songs often help with children's learning of phonics or number concepts and are always performed with enthusiasm because children enjoy these activities. They play a wide range of percussion instruments and have good opportunities for free exploration as well as more guided experiences. The role-play areas are particularly well equipped and used very well to encourage the children to play imaginatively and these activities contribute very positively to their social and language skills.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall standards are well below average.
- Management of the subject is good.
- Pupils' reading skills are being developed well throughout the school.
- A few teachers do not always make effective use of assessment information and marking to inform planning.
- Opportunities for pupils to practise their independent writing skills are insufficient.

- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils' literacy skills.

Commentary

46. The school has established satisfactory provision in its first year, but is aware that practice across the school is inconsistent. Teachers have a good grasp of the literacy strategy but occasionally adhere to it too rigidly. For example, the current Year 2 and Year 4 pupils are very low attaining and the structure of the literacy hour is too confining to hold their interest and concentration. A significant minority struggle to retain learning from one day to the next, and often these pupils do not practise what they learn at home enough to help them make better progress. This results in teachers having to repeat the same work frequently. The overall use of the available assessment information is unsatisfactory. Teaching assistants are available in most lessons and support individual pupils effectively to practise their skills and gain confidence in their ability. Many pupils make very slow progress without this additional help.
47. Reading skills are taught well and are enhanced by daily sessions of guided reading. This daily time is essential throughout the school but sometimes restricts the time available for pupils to make good progress in other areas of literacy. For example, extended writing practice is limited in a few classes. Time is given to listen to all pupils read regularly, and most enjoy this individual attention and are keen to progress. Unfortunately, not all pupils receive the additional help they need at home to make even better progress. Therefore, for these pupils reading becomes a chore because they struggle to retain learning accurately from day to day. Standards for pupils in the current Year 2 are well below average and in Year 6 standards are below average, especially in terms of the range of vocabulary and pupils' ability to infer and interpret from the text presented. For example, teachers sometimes use worksheets and books that are too difficult for a significant number of pupils to follow.
48. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average, although teachers provide them with good opportunities to share ideas and discuss work with others. They model activities effectively and give pupils time to work in mixed ability groups to help them learn from each other. Where such tasks are promoted well, for example, through 'talking partners', most pupils enjoy taking part, although a significant minority are passive and reluctant because they lack confidence and do not want to give an answer which may be incorrect. Staff encourage and support them appropriately to develop these skills in small groups so that they can develop their confidence step by step. Most pupils listen well to their teachers and this enables them to contribute to class discussions.
49. Standards of writing are well below average. Because of pupils' limited skills in reading and speaking, many find it difficult to produce good quality written work. In order to speed up the imparting of information, teachers sometimes give pupils written tasks that are too directed or even copied. This means lower attaining pupils sometimes copy work that they cannot always read or understand fully. Higher attaining pupils enjoy opportunities to work on their independent writing, but these opportunities are often limited. Spelling is a major weakness because word-building strategies are insecure and it is too early to gauge the impact of the phonic activities that have recently been introduced in Years 1 and 2. Although all classes have access to ICT to research and word-process work regularly, opportunities to do so are limited in Years 3 to 6, because not all teachers have the required confidence to exploit ICT fully. Pupils with special educational needs use good basic skills programs to support their learning in literacy. The overall quality of handwriting

is satisfactory for the higher attaining pupils but there are weaknesses in aspects of letter formation and, even in Year 6, there are many pupils who use lower and upper case letters and simple punctuation incorrectly.

50. Teaching is satisfactory overall and in many classes it is often good. Sometimes, especially in Years 3 to 5, lessons lack pace and material is not always matched well to individual pupils' needs. As a consequence, a significant number of pupils find it difficult to follow the tasks set without constant support, especially those who have poor retention skills and need to repeat exercises frequently before they can move on to new work. The school has developed good procedures to set targets for each pupil but teachers often do not refer to these targets. Good strategies are being implemented to monitor the progress of individual pupils more closely and improve target setting so that pupils become better informed about what they are expected to achieve. In addition, marking is inconsistent and does not always help pupils identify what they have done well or how they can improve their work. Where teachers use worksheets extensively, pupils cannot see the progress they make easily because work is not annotated fully nor compiled in any orderly sequence.
51. The subject co-ordinator has monitored teaching and learning well, and analysed test results in order to identify priorities. Since her appointment, she has gained a very good overview of provision and has the knowledge and understanding to lead the subject well. Her leadership and management of the subject are good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their literacy skills in other subjects. Because pupils' reading skills are being developed well, they enjoy researching information about their topics, for example, in history and art, using books and computers. When the subject matter engages their interest, pupils respond enthusiastically and even the few who are hesitant in their ability are keen to ask questions. Opportunities for independent writing are limited and do not always challenge higher attaining pupils sufficiently and they often record the same work as their peers.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good in most classes.
- The numeracy strategy is effectively implemented.
- Teaching assistants provide good quality support.
- Teachers sometimes make limited use of the assessment information available.
- The use of ICT to support pupils' learning is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

53. Currently, standards are below average in Year 6 and well below average in Year 2. The present Year 6 class has a group of pupils that is already working at above average

standards. This is a better picture than that seen in the national test results of 2003 where standards at the end of Year 6 were very low and in the lowest five per cent of school nationally and in comparison with similar schools. Standards were hugely affected by disruptive teaching over the two years whilst the school underwent re-organisation and amalgamation. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory.

54. In the present Year 2, almost a quarter of the small class of fourteen pupils has learning and behavioural difficulties. These pupils find recording and remembering extremely difficult because their concentration and retention skills are very limited. Their attainment on entry to the school was very low in mathematical development. Higher attaining pupils are working at satisfactory levels of achievement in all aspects of mathematics. An increasingly positive pattern of improvement is visible in Years 5 and 6, especially in lessons where teaching is challenging and well organised. However, year group sizes and composition in terms of ability vary considerably from year to year, with every year group having a sizeable percentage of lower attaining pupils who require constant additional support to help them achieve satisfactorily. Many of these pupils struggle to explain the strategies they use to solve problems because of their limited grasp of the correct mathematical vocabulary and their overall low literacy skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support that enables them to be successful at levels appropriate to their different abilities.
55. From the analysis of pupils' recorded work, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Where teaching is good, teachers have high expectations of good behaviour and hard work. They organise lessons well and ensure pupils stay involved at all times. Strategies, such as lively mental activities, encourage pupils to think quickly and apply what they know in a friendly competitive manner, which they enjoy. However, for pupils in a number of classes, opportunities are missed to use ICT to develop their skills, for example, in data handling and recording results from their investigations. Most pupils have good attitudes to mathematics and many say they enjoy it. They co-operate well and nearly all show willingness to succeed especially as relationships are good and they are not afraid to seek help from adults and from their peers.
56. Most teachers are aware of each pupil's capability and oral questions are pitched accordingly. However, assessment information is not always used efficiently to ensure the written activities challenge the higher attaining pupils fully or accurately meet the needs of lower attainers. As a result, in a significant number of cases, the lower attaining pupils do not complete all that is asked of them, because they find it too difficult and make many errors. Whilst staff work hard to support lower attaining pupils, a good number of these pupils are unable to recall work, even as recent as that done the day before, in order to make satisfactory gains from day to day. At the same time, there are a few higher attaining pupils who could achieve more if they were presented with more challenging tasks.
57. The co-ordinator has only recently taken responsibility for the subject. He has the knowledge and expertise to lead the subject satisfactorily. He is aware of the urgent need to monitor pupils' workbooks regularly in order to promote overall consistency, for example, in marking to guide pupils' learning and in the presentation of pupils' work, and thus raise standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Those pupils who have good mathematical skills apply their knowledge confidently, for example, in measuring materials they use in design and technology when they work on their practical activities. However, a significant minority of pupils, whilst they understand why mathematics is important, are hesitant and do not work with accuracy and precision. For example, when handling data gathered in science investigations, pupils do not record information clearly, using tables and graphs, without considerable guidance and support.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average.
- Pupils are enthusiastic because teaching is good.
- The management of the subject is unsatisfactory.
- A consistent scheme of work is not in place across the two key stages.
- Assessment lacks rigour and there is no monitoring of the teaching and learning.
- Year 6 pupils in the Year 5/6 class are not receiving full access to the Year 6 curriculum

Commentary

59. The achievement of pupils of all abilities is satisfactory and often good, owing to the good teaching and high-quality classroom support, which generates much interest and enthusiasm. Pupils show greater aptitude and capability when participating in 'hands-on' activities. They carry out investigations with care and concentration. Despite good teaching and support, overall standards are below average. This is because pupils start from a very low base in their knowledge and understanding of the world when they first join the school in the nursery. Pupils find it difficult to explain what they know and understand clearly. While they enjoy learning scientific terms and often remember the new vocabulary they learn, many do not use it accurately in their written work.
60. Teachers organise and structure lessons well, matching the work to pupils' abilities accurately. They provide plenty of challenge and pupils respond positively and try hard. They are taught to record the results of their investigations in different ways, such as in diagram or table form. However, there is little evidence of pupils making use of graphs, and at times recorded work is incomplete and has errors, owing to a number of pupils having low literacy skills. Teachers use good questioning techniques, which encourage pupils to think and reason for themselves. The teacher in Year 6 does this particularly well, skilfully eliciting definitions of the terminology to be adopted when describing food chains and always insisting that pupils use scientific vocabulary in response to her questions. Many pupils, however, have difficulty in retaining and recalling the knowledge gained. They require a great deal of reinforcement in order to make any permanent gains, resulting in their overall achievement being satisfactory. The best teachers are aware of this and use the sessions at the beginning and end of lessons very effectively for this purpose.

61. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The school has not established an effective curriculum that ensures that pupils are taught the information and skills systematically and rigorously. Although national guidelines are followed throughout the school, these are being augmented by different published schemes in each key stage, so that a consistent approach and a methodical coverage of knowledge and skills are not guaranteed. No special arrangements have been made for the few Year 6 pupils in the mixed Year 5/6 class to ensure they cover the same content as their peers in the Year 6 class, thus denying them equal opportunities in the subject. This situation has only arisen this term and it is addressed, to some extent, by deploying support staff to work with these pupils. Plans are in place to re-organise the curriculum for next term. Assessment also lacks rigour. Tests have been administered in Year 5, but they have not been sufficiently analysed in order to inform teachers' planning effectively. The co-ordinator analyses teachers' planning and samples pupils' books but has not yet had time to monitor teaching and learning formally in the classroom.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall standards are below expectations.
- A significant number of teachers have not received the training required to teach all strands of the subject.
- The co-ordinator has the expertise to bring about improvement.
- Appropriate plans are in place to improve resources in order to support the development of ICT in the school.

Commentary

62. Standards in ICT are below expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. The development of ICT is a priority for the school. Additional resources have been secured to provide further support for the curriculum including the provision of interactive whiteboards.
63. Planning of accommodation for the amalgamated school did not incorporate a designated ICT suite. The process of amalgamation added to other difficulties, including high levels of vandalism during the building works, and resulted in there being no effective means of teaching ICT over a period of a whole year. Although every classroom has a satisfactory number of computers, staff are not all fully confident in delivering an effective curriculum. Three members of staff still have to undergo up-to-date ICT training. Consequently, in these classes it is not possible to have whole-class teaching of ICT.
64. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and this is reflected in the quality of work in Year 6, where she teaches. For example, these pupils have downloaded information from the Internet related to impressionist art, before importing pictures to add to their independent presentations. Completed work is framed and attractively displayed. With limited evidence of teaching in ICT, no judgements about the quality of teaching can be made. The co-ordinator regularly meets with staff in Years 1 and 2 to help them look at ways of using ICT in lessons across the curriculum.

They provide good individual support during lessons for younger pupils who enjoy using computers and look forward to such tasks. Because they are keen to learn, pupils use the mouse confidently to select and complete low-level challenges, and are pleased by the quality of work they produce. Teachers record the skills pupils learn but assessment is at an early stage of development and does not adequately inform planning for all ability groups.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. A few of the teachers who have received the required ICT training and have the confidence to apply their skills, encourage pupils to use ICT to support their work regularly, for example, in literacy when word processing, or art and design for developing computer designs. Pupils in Year 6 have explored the Internet to find information, for example, on their history topics. Pupils enjoy such opportunities, work well with others and make satisfactory gains in their learning. However, this practice is not regular or consistent. In many lessons across other subjects, teachers miss opportunities to guide pupils to practise the skills they have learnt to research or work on tasks using computers in the classrooms independently. The overall use of ICT is unsatisfactory.

HUMANITIES

History and geography

66. Only one geography lesson was observed and no lessons were seen in history. No judgement can be made related to overall standards, achievement or the quality of teaching and learning. The limited work seen in pupils' books and on display was at least in line with expectations. In the good geography lesson inspected, pupils developed their mapping skills well by planning routes and directions using compasses during a practical walkabout of the school site. The impact of this experience was reduced by the ineffectiveness of many of the compasses.
67. Teachers make very good use of the locality when pupils investigate different types of housing and the variation in use of land for different purposes in the immediate area of the school. Regular walkabouts around the grounds and village help pupils reflect on how their surroundings have altered over time. Older pupils make studies of features such as canal transport in relation to both subjects. Pupils in Year 6 have excellent opportunities to study a mountain landscape, when they make a residential visit to Snowdonia National Park. In Year 5, pupils visit Eden Camp to consider the events and impact of World War 2 on people's lives, and the subject links in with a study of literature and music of that period too. Pupils in Year 6 study the Victorian era. Their books show good, detailed coverage of a variety of topics. Because pupils enjoy these subjects, they learn well. Pupils' literacy skills are supported well through opportunities, especially for the higher attaining pupils, for example, to write extensively about school life in Victorian times. This extended writing is marked to a very high standard and gives pupils valuable information about how well they have achieved.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils explore many faiths.
- The subject supports pupils' awareness of being part of a multicultural society.
- A few teachers have insecure subject knowledge.
- Assessment procedures and the monitoring of teaching and learning are not established.

Commentary

68. Standards of work seen are below expectations. Three lessons were observed. Much of the teaching centres around discussions and as a result there is limited written work to examine. However, analysis of the available work, and talking to pupils indicate that pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school.
69. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching. In the three lessons seen, pupils showed an interest in the subject and were keen to ask questions. In Years 1 and 2, pupils enjoyed the discussions and exploring the artefacts. Their confidence in expressing ideas and making good observations was hampered by their restricted experiences outside school. Recorded work is minimal across the school, and is of below average standard, because it is hampered by pupils' low literacy skills. Furthermore, in Years 3 to 6, opportunities for pupils to write independently are few and much of the work is the same for all ability groups, either copied from texts or from teachers' presentations. Opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to reflect on what they learn and to write about their views and feelings. Pupils are often presented with interesting information, and many of the higher attaining pupils retain facts that have captured their interest well. However, lower attaining pupils struggle to make sense of this information, for example, how religions often have common themes that shape the life and behaviour of people who follow these faiths. Their grasp of detail and the vocabulary they learn is very limited.
70. The subject links in well with the school's personal, social and health education and citizenship programme and hence supports pupils' personal, cultural and spiritual development effectively. Assemblies lend effective support to what pupils learn about in religious education, and visits to the local church help pupils understand how places of worship are special, for example, in conducting important ceremonies, such as christenings and marriage. The subject makes an effective contribution to pupils' personal development. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory in that planning is monitored and resources and materials to support teaching have been identified. There have been no opportunities, as yet, to monitor teaching and learning in order to gain a clear picture of standards. Assessment procedures are not yet fully established, although teachers record work they cover and pass this information on as pupils move to the next class.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and Design

71. No art and design lessons were seen and observations are made based on the work seen in pupils' folders and in displays around the school. The work seen is of expected standards.
72. It is evident from talking to the pupils and analysing their work that pupils are provided with good opportunities to utilise a range of materials and work imaginatively with different media. They are taught how to mix colours and use paint in various ways, such as in splash paintings to create firework pictures, and how to create different effects by using a wash or by varying shade and texture. The subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' cultural development as demonstrated in their ability to name and discuss the work of several well-known artists. Good use is often made of artwork to enhance other curriculum areas, for example, making shields in connection with a topic on Ancient Rome. In Year 6, pupils have researched the work of the impressionists and have downloaded examples of these artists' work to produce their own 'impressionist' pictures using watercolours, crayons and computer generated images.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enthusiasm of pupils and teachers.
- Good range of resources, well stored and easily accessed.
- Links with mathematics and science established.
- Positive contribution to spiritual and cultural development.

Commentary

73. Standards in design and technology are at an expected level and the achievement of pupils of all abilities is satisfactory.
74. Pupils understand the importance of design in their model making and there is a clear improvement in their ability to do this as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 2 write basic instructions and list the materials needed before making their felt glove puppets. They construct these well, decorating and sewing them to produce an attractive display. In Year 6, pupils produce clear, detailed designs for their models, using their knowledge of electric circuits for lighting or for incorporating a motor to create a moving mechanism. They work efficiently and safely when building their models, co-operating well in pairs, and are very willing to reassess and modify their original plans should an initial structure fail, thus learning well from their mistakes.
75. The teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the subject and provide high levels of challenge. Although they provide information and support as needed, they encourage and guide the pupils very effectively to solve their own problems. Pupils respond well to the challenges, discussing and testing alternative solutions until they achieve success, when they, and those around them, display great excitement. They take

pride in the finished product and work very carefully to produce well-finished, attractive models. Because the work requires pupils to apply practical skills and work with others to plan and make, pupils enjoy the subject. They are happy to share ideas and learn from each other. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. However, assessment procedures and monitoring the teaching and learning in the classrooms require development.

Music

76. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision as only one lesson was observed. In this very good lesson in Year 1, the teacher used her musical skills effectively to help pupils grasp elements of pitch and time. The work was matched well to pupils' capability and interest levels and by the end of the session all pupils achieved well. They enjoyed listening to the keyboard and worked hard at explaining what they could hear, although some of those who struggle to sustain concentration found it difficult to explain their observations confidently. Pupils' low levels of speaking skills and their ability to use the vocabulary they learn in music accurately to express their understanding limit their overall progress. The quality of singing in assembly was tuneful and pleasant with pupils as young as those in the reception class joining in with enthusiasm. Pupils have good opportunities to perform in front of others and the school choir enjoyed entertaining in a nearby home for the elderly during the inspection.

Physical Education

77. In the one lesson observed, the pupils and the teacher worked with enthusiasm and enjoyment as they practised travelling, dodging and throwing and catching skills for playing netball, reaching satisfactory standards and levels of achievement. Links with outside bodies are good.
78. Facilities and resources for physical education are good, both indoors and out, and all aspects of the subject are taught, including swimming in Key Stage 2. A professional football coach works with all the pupils, from reception to Year 6 and runs an after-school club once a week. There is also a popular dance club, which is very well led by a support assistant. Students from the nearby sixth form, studying for their 'Sports Leadership' qualification, work with a class of pupils each week to develop skills, for example, catching and throwing techniques used in netball. This partnership is very productive for all those involved. Good opportunities are provided for competitive sporting activities, through the 'Sowerby Bridge Large Schools' Sports Association'. Pupils participate in inter-schools competitions in many disciplines including cross-country, netball, athletics, football, tag rugby, swimming and rounders.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about overall provision.

Commentary

The school recognises pupils' personal development as an important part of its work. However, at this early stage of its establishment, the school has not had time to evaluate the impact of its

overall provision. There is a satisfactory programme of activities, including work on diet, health, sex, drugs and personal safety in place and every class has lessons where they work through such issues with their teachers. Where appropriate, outside agencies, for example, road safety experts, are invited in to help pupils learn the importance of such matters as road sense. The programme helps pupils consider a safe and healthy life style, gain confidence and interact with others. The programme is suitably linked to work in science and physical education with regard to healthy eating and exercise, and to religious education with matters pertaining to moral and social issues. There are a number of pupils in the school who find it difficult to express their ideas and thoughts confidently in front of others. To help address this, the school has introduced useful features, such as boxes where pupils can post their concerns, and the school council who can relay messages on behalf of their peers. There is a strong need to develop more opportunities for 'talk time' in more lessons from an early age to help pupils' gain confidence in voicing their views and opinions more confidently.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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