

INSPECTION REPORT

ST FRANCIS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bedworth

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125706

Headteacher: Mrs Debbie Huxtable

Lead inspector: Mrs Pat Cox

Dates of inspection: 5 – 8 July 2004

Inspection number: 257645

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 Aided
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 201

School address: Rye Piece Ringway
Bedworth
Warwickshire
Postcode: CV12 8JN

Telephone number: 024 7631 5279
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Noel McCann

Date of previous inspection: 28 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Francis Catholic Primary School is very close to the centre of Bedworth, but draws pupils from a wide area, serving two parishes. Almost all pupils are of white British ethnic background and speak English as their first language. Forty seven pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, of whom three have statements of special educational needs. The pupils' needs are mainly learning or behavioural and emotional difficulties. This proportion is above the national average. About six per cent of pupils have been identified as being entitled to free school meals, a proportion that is below the national average. The children's attainment on entry to the reception class is, overall, higher than that usual for their age.

The quality of religious education and collective worship will be inspected separately by a diocesan inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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22856	Mr Kath Campbell	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Special educational needs
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

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, since it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. The pupils are underachieving in many subjects throughout the school because the quality of teaching is poor and the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The headteacher's leadership and management are good, and governance is satisfactory, but the school gives unsatisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are not high enough, particularly in the reception class, and in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology throughout the school.
- Teaching is poor overall, although it is good in Year 6.
- The headteacher, who is relatively new in post, provides good leadership.
- The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school are good and have been used to take the appropriate action for improvement.
- The balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory throughout the school.
- Assessment of the pupils' attainment and progress is unsatisfactory and not used well enough to plan lessons.
- The senior management team and subject co-ordinators do not yet carry out their roles effectively.
- The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.
- The school provides well for the pupils' moral development.
- The school has worked hard to raise attendance, which is now above average.

Although there has been good progress in acting to tackle the school's shortcomings recently, there has been insufficient progress since the previous inspection and many of the issues identified at that time had not been addressed until the past year. Consequently, some are still in need of improvement, such as the pupils' listening skills and the attainment of the more able pupils. Achievement, teaching, the curriculum and the pupils' attitudes have declined. The headteacher has ensured that the school now has a good strategic plan for improvement; that the school's budgeting is linked closely to planning, and that assessment procedures are being put on a sound footing.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	D	A	A
Mathematics	E	E	B	B
Science	D	E	A	A

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

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

The pupils' achievement is **unsatisfactory**. The National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 have been below, and often well below, the national average for some years. In 2003, the results were better, and comparable with the results of similar schools. Results at the end of Year 2 have been below those of similar schools since 2000. The results fell in 2003 to below national average and well below similar schools. Present standards are too low at the end of both key stages in English, and particularly in listening and writing, in science, information and communication technology, geography and design and technology; and in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. In the other subjects, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In the reception class, the children achieve satisfactorily in communication, language and literacy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, but not in other areas of their work.

The school provides satisfactorily for the pupils' personal development and the provision is good for their moral development, although it is not effective enough for their cultural development. The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are satisfactory. While many pupils have positive attitudes, a few find it difficult to control their behaviour. Relationships between pupils and with adults are satisfactory. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **poor**. There is a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school and, apart from Year 6, little that is good. The teachers' expectations are not high enough, and therefore the pupils, particularly the more able, do not do as well as they could. Assessment is unsatisfactory; the teachers do not have a clear enough understanding of the levels at which their pupils are working.

The balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory; not enough time is given to geography and design and technology and much of the planned time for other subjects is not used well enough. Provision for the pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.

The school provides soundly for the pupils' care and health and safety. There is a satisfactory, and improving, partnership with parents, other schools and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and manages the school well. Through good use of monitoring and evaluation, there is a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The headteacher has worked closely with the local education authority to put the appropriate measures in place. Although the subject co-ordinators and senior management team are developing their roles, they do not yet take full responsibility for the standards being achieved. The governing body undertakes its work satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents who expressed a view were reasonably positive about the school, but felt that there had been many improvements since the headteacher had been in post. The pupils were also fairly positive, although few felt that lessons were enjoyable, and there were some concerns about behaviour.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the school.
- Improve the balance of the curriculum at all stages.
- Improve the teachers' assessment of their pupils' progress and the use they make of it.
- Improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Develop the role of the senior management team and the subject co-ordinators.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is **unsatisfactory** throughout almost all of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout the school, the pupils do not do well enough at either key stage in English, science, information and communication technology, design and technology and geography, and in mathematics at Key Stage 1.
- Although the children in the reception class achieve satisfactorily in communication, language and literacy, and knowledge and understanding of the world, they do not fulfil their potential in the other areas of learning.
- The pupils with special educational needs and the more able pupils do not make sufficient progress.
- The pupils make good progress in Year 6 but their progress in Year 3 is weak.

Commentary

1. At the time of the previous inspection, the pupils made satisfactory progress through the school. This is no longer the case. The children enter the school with attainment that is, overall, higher than is usual for their age. In the reception class, they achieve satisfactorily in communication, language and literacy, and knowledge and understanding of the world, so that standards are higher than expected when they enter Year 1. However, in the areas of personal and social, mathematical, creative and physical development, achievement is unsatisfactory and attainment at the end of the reception year is similar to others of their age.
2. The results of the National Curriculum tests in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 have been comparable with the national average since 2000, but below, and often well below, the results of schools with similar entitlement to free school meals. Those in mathematics were above the national average in 2001 and 2002 and comparable with the results of similar schools. However, the results fell in 2003 to below the national average in all three subjects and well below the results of similar schools. The teachers' assessments in science were above the national average and that of similar schools. The trend in results since 1999 was similar to the national trend, but they had been falling since 2001. The initial 2004 test results suggest that the pupils have attained similar levels to those in other schools in English but that results in mathematics are still falling. This is reflected in the work of the pupils presently at the end of Year 2 whose attainment is below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Although the teachers' assessments in science suggest that standards are above average, the inspection evidence demonstrates that they are lower than this. In all these subjects, the pupils are underachieving.
3. The results of the end of Key Stage 2 tests were below, and often well below, the national average in English, mathematics and science from 1999 to 2002. Compared to the results of the schools with comparable attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, the results were well below average, and sometimes in the lowest five per cent nationally. In 2003,

the results rose considerably: in English and mathematics they were well above the national average, and in mathematics they were above average. The results suggested that this able group of pupils had done well since they took the Key Stage 1 tests in 1999. The most recent test results in 2004 were above the 2003 national average in all three subjects, and the school's targets were exceeded. However, the inspection evidence demonstrates that standards in English, and particularly in listening and writing, are below average, although in mathematics they are above average. The pupils' scientific knowledge is better than is usual for their age, but their skills of scientific enquiry are below average, so that attainment is similar to the national average overall. The pupils are achieving satisfactorily in mathematics but not in English or science. In particular, the pupils' listening skills are unsatisfactory throughout the school, and this issue from the previous inspection has not been addressed. The pupils' work is often careless, untidy and poorly presented.

4. The progress the pupils make through the school is patchy and is unsatisfactory in most classes because the quality of teaching is poor. Progress overall is unsatisfactory in almost all year groups. The pupils' work and the school's tracking records demonstrate that progress is particularly weak in Year 3. Because the teaching is good in many subjects in Year 6, the oldest pupils make better progress in many subjects, although this is not sufficient to make up for the lack of progress previously.
5. Standards throughout the school are similar to those in other schools in art and design, history, music and physical education, and the pupils achieve adequately. However, standards are too low in information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and personal, social and health education and citizenship. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress when they have good quality support in class. However, this does not always happen, and they rarely have work set at the appropriate level. In many subjects, they often complete little of the work set for them. Those with statements of special educational need do well because their support is organised effectively.
6. The more able pupils do not do well enough because the work set for them is not sufficiently demanding. They sometimes become bored and do little in lessons. The school has made a start on identifying those who are gifted and talented, but there is not yet sufficient understanding of the difference between these two groups and with those who are very able. Many boys underachieve because the lessons do not engage them, and so they do very little.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.9 (16.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	13.8 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.8 (17.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3. (26.0)	26.8. (27.0)
Mathematics	27.6. (24.7)	26.8. (26.7)
Science	30.0. (27.3)	28.6. (28.3)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is **good** and punctuality is **satisfactory**. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **satisfactory**, as is their personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Although many pupils are keen to learn and behave well, some do not show sufficient interest in their work, and misbehave.
- Bullying is rare and is dealt with well
- The pupils' knowledge of Christianity is good, but their awareness of personal spirituality is inadequately developed.
- The pupils develop a good understanding of what distinguishes right from wrong, but do not always apply it.
- Pupils' knowledge of their own culture and those of others in Britain today is unsatisfactory.
- Attendance is above the national average and the school monitors attendance thoroughly.

Commentary

7. The pupils' attendance has improved since last year and is similar to that reported previously, being above average at 95.1 per cent. The school rigorously monitors those who are absent or late and these efforts have borne fruit. Most parents believe that their children enjoy school, and the pupils generally agree. When asked, they can think of few major areas that they would like to improve. Their attitudes in lessons are satisfactory overall, but these vary from lesson to lesson and are not as strong as at the time of the previous inspection. Where the teaching is good and expectations are high, the pupils are keen to answer questions and to contribute to their own learning. In many lessons, however, pupils become bored and apathetic because the teacher talks for too long or because the work is not well matched to what they already know. Some pupils say that some teachers don't help them to become independent; the skills of enquiry are not well developed where they are most relevant, for example, in science.
8. As at the time of the previous inspection, most pupils behave well, but a few behave badly. There were no exclusions during this or the previous school year. Where the teaching is good, as in Year 6, the teacher needs to spend little time correcting behaviour, and learning is much better. In many lessons, however, there is an undercurrent of minor indiscipline, such as background chatter, and the pupils call out. This sometimes prevents the teacher from finding out what they know, or from explaining a point to the class whilst in discussion with a pupil. This is reflected in the views of some parents and pupils, many of whom have reservations about behaviour.
9. The school has made procedures for discipline more consistent, in consultation with pupils, who understand them well. However, the pupils do not always respond adequately to this, and the teachers do not remind them of their responsibilities often enough. Nevertheless, there are few occurrences of bullying or other forms of harassment and, when they occur, they are dealt with well. The pupils' relationships with adults and with each other are satisfactory and their respect for others is sound. The pupils take responsibility suitably when asked, but there are few such opportunities and they rarely take the initiative to do so.
10. Older pupils are starting to reason that moral judgements can be made on the basis of 'do as you would be done by' and that their actions will have more far reaching implications in the wider world. They have a good knowledge of Christianity and have many opportunities, in assemblies and in the classroom, to worship God in song and prayer. However, not enough opportunity is taken to develop deeper personal spirituality through the curriculum. Opportunities are lost in many lessons for pupils to marvel at the

wonder of the natural world or at the beauty of music or literature. The mundane too often stifles spirituality.

11. Pupils are aware, through art lessons for example, of the work of famous artists but have little knowledge of a range of music. For example, although they might enjoy music from worldwide cultures or hymns in assemblies, they are unaware or bored by any classical music played while they enter. They have a good knowledge about the culture and history of Bedworth and can talk about cultures that they have studied in history or geography. They have very little recollection of religions other than their own and no knowledge of how these have an impact upon the lives of people in other parts of the country. They are tolerant of the idea that others may have differing beliefs or have different coloured skin, but there is little opportunity to test that tolerance or to discuss the underlying tensions that such differences might generate.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	5.7
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.3
National data:	0.4

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 **poor**. The quality of teaching is poor and the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **poor**. The teachers' own assessments are **unsatisfactory** and their use of these is **poor**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is poor in almost all year groups, particularly Year 3.
- Teaching is good in Year 6.
- The teachers' assessment of their pupils' attainment and progress is unsatisfactory and their use of the assessments is poor.
- Marking is unsatisfactory.
- Homework is not used consistently.
- The use of teaching assistants is poor.

Commentary

12. Teaching is poor and has deteriorated significantly since the last inspection, when it was satisfactory. There is a very high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and very little that is good, most of which occurs in Year 6. Teaching was satisfactory in only six out of ten lessons in reception and Years 1 and 2, and in seven out of ten lessons in Years 3-6. This proportion is reflected in other

evidence, such as the work in pupils' books, which demonstrates that the teaching in Year 3 is particularly poor. The weaknesses are the major contributors to the pupils' underachievement. The better teaching in the school is energetic and enthusiastic, and involves pupils in the lessons and keeps their concentration throughout. The teachers' subject knowledge is secure and a range of interesting teaching methods is used to ensure that the pupils work hard and increase their understanding of the topic. However, most teachers' expectations are too low, so that the pupils are not enabled to achieve their potential.

13. Lesson planning is inconsistent. Occasionally, the teachers plan their lessons in detail, ensuring that they know precisely what the pupils are to learn from the lesson. However, these intentions are not usually clear and state only what the pupils are to do, rather than what they are to learn. As a result, the activities are not always appropriate to build on the pupils' skills and understanding in a consistent way. The use of support staff is poor and many seem unsure of their role. In one lesson, the support assistant was used well to demonstrate, but in most their time and expertise are rarely used effectively during whole-class teaching sessions, when they usually sit unoccupied.
14. The teachers' assessments are unsatisfactory and those that exist are used ineffectively. There is insufficient knowledge of the levels of the National Curriculum and too little assessment of the pupils' attainment and progress. It is rare for teachers to adjust the pace of their lessons or the planning for the future in light of the progress being made. Where the pupils fail to make the expected progress, there is a tendency to blame them or the circumstances rather than evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching. Time is often wasted at the beginning and end of lessons and, on many occasions, it is not used well during the lesson. The headteacher and local education authority have provided considerable support, training and guidance to teachers over the year, and have developed a range of assessment procedures. Through this support, the teachers have begun to set targets for the pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. However, this is at a very early stage and the high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching demonstrates that there has, as yet, been very little impact for all the guidance given. The level is similar to that found in a local education authority survey in the previous term.
15. Most teachers do not cater adequately for the range of ability in their class, and the teaching is often dull, with a lack of challenge even for the pupils of average attainment. The pupils become bored and often restless in lessons when the pace is slow. In some lessons, the teacher does not have sufficient control and the flow of the lesson is disrupted by unruly behaviour. Teachers rarely give pupils opportunities to develop their independence through exploration or investigation in such subjects as mathematics, science and design and technology, and this is confirmed in the pupils' opinions. Too many of the activities are heavily directed by teachers and a very narrow range of teaching techniques is used. Time is often wasted in filling in and colouring undemanding worksheets. Few classrooms are interesting and stimulating places where the pupils' work is celebrated. Many pupils displayed little real enthusiasm when talking about their lessons, and the parents who responded expressed reservations about the teaching in some parts of the school.
16. The teaching of English and the skills of literacy is unsatisfactory. The over-use of worksheets and the lack of opportunity for pupils to write their own accounts in many subjects have limited the development of their writing. The teaching of mathematics and the skills of numeracy is also unsatisfactory. There are few opportunities in most classes

for the pupils to develop the mathematical skills they have learned through subjects such as science, design and technology and geography. Information and communication technology is sometimes used in lessons, but is not an integral part of the teaching.

17. Marking is unsatisfactory and rarely contains comments that will help pupils to improve or set targets for themselves. Some work is not marked, and the teachers' handwriting and spelling rarely set good examples for the pupils. Teachers sometimes, but not often enough, comment on the quality of the pupils' presentation or spelling, but this has little apparent impact on the quality of the work produced in many classes. Poor work is accepted and is often praised. This does not help pupils to appreciate the quality of work required. Homework is not used consistently enough to support work in the classrooms, and this is supported by the views of many parents. Many pupils in Year 2 were disgruntled because they had been expected to practise old National Curriculum test papers during the Easter holiday.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (18%)	19 (48%)	12 (30%)	2 (5%)	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.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**. There are **satisfactory** opportunities for enrichment. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for all age groups lacks breadth, depth and balance.
- Teaching time for some subjects is too fragmented.
- Timetables are disjointed and time is not always used well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.
- Provision for the pupils with statements of special educational needs is good.
- Some pupils miss their entitlement to a full curriculum when they are withdrawn from lessons for extra literacy work.
- Recent curriculum development has started to improve provision.
- Some support staff do not make a strong enough contribution to pupils' learning.

Commentary

18. The quality of curriculum provision has deteriorated. It has not kept up with the pace of change and, until recently, insufficient progress has taken place. On the positive side, the new headteacher has identified what needs to be done and set about the task of improving provision with a structured, purposeful approach. She has lengthened the school day and implemented initiatives to provide greater balance. The introduction of particular days and weeks for the teaching of specific subjects has developed better cross-curricular links and made effective use of staff expertise. Music provision has improved with the introduction of specialist teaching.

19. Although curriculum time is better organised now than in the past, the balance of time allocation needs further attention. In subjects such as geography and design and technology, there is insufficient time for teachers to cover topics in depth, and standards are low. In addition, teachers choose when they teach subjects such as history, and this leads to inconsistency and a lack of continuity. Frequently, pupils of all abilities cover the same topic at the same level of difficulty, with very little attention given to the development of their skills. Those in different year groups repeat the same topic year after year. In subjects where time allocations are high, teachers do not always use sessions effectively to raise standards or develop literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Guided reading sessions, for example, vary considerably in quality. There is also considerable time seepage as teachers move from one subject to another.
20. The programme for sex education is in draft form, awaiting further advice from the local diocese. Arrangements for drugs education are unsatisfactory and do not prepare pupils adequately for the world in which they live. Pupils have adequate opportunities to participate in arts and sports activities, such as Gaelic football, and have a satisfactory range of extracurricular activities on offer. Provision for the pupils' personal and social development has not received sufficient emphasis. The school offers pupils sufficient opportunity to discuss social and moral issues. However, in classes where control is poor, pupils are not encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour or learning.
21. The Foundation Stage curriculum is not yet firmly established. Although planning refers to the six areas of learning for children of this age, the timetable is rigid, with lengthy sessions of literacy and numeracy. Free choice activities lack structure and purpose and do not meet the needs of individual children. More able children suffer most because they receive little challenge.
22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory and has declined significantly. Although procedures for identifying pupils with learning difficulties are sound, class teachers do not always take account of pupils' individual targets in their planning or make best use of support staff. Time constraints do not permit enough liaison between teachers, support staff and the co-ordinator. Consequently, the quality of provision is variable and some class teachers do not have an appropriate range of skills to tackle behavioural problems. The co-ordinator works mainly with pupils in Key Stage 2. Consequently, not all pupils with special educational needs receive the help they need. In addition, when pupils are withdrawn from the same lesson each week for extra support, they miss their entitlement to other subjects. However, documentation is well-organised and pupils' individual education plans have realistic short-term targets well matched to needs. Provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is good and these pupils achieve well because they are taught well and receive high quality support.
23. The headteacher has successfully created an attractive learning environment for pupils and staff out of previously neglected accommodation. There is a well-structured programme for further development, including classroom refurbishment and improved facilities. School grounds are generous and playground space is ample, but the information and communication technology suite is not sufficiently ventilated. The Foundation Stage accommodation is spacious and attractive. Outdoor play provision, however, has not improved since the previous inspection. The area is too small and inadequate for children to learn through play and exploration. Plans are well in hand to remedy the situation. Resources are adequate in most subjects, but not in geography or design and technology.

24. The school has an adequate number of appropriately qualified teaching staff. The quality of support staff is an area of concern. Some are of very high calibre and make a major contribution to pupils' learning. Far too many are entrenched in outdated practices, making little contribution, particularly when class teachers do not use them effectively.

Care, guidance and support

The school has **satisfactory** procedures for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Support and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development is **unsatisfactory**. The school **satisfactorily** involves pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are cared for well on a day-to-day basis, but health and safety procedures are not sufficiently rigorous.
- The pupils are given insufficient guidance on what they need to do to improve, because of shortcomings in assessment.
- The pupils receive a good introduction to the school when they start in the reception class.

Commentary

25. Although procedures are satisfactory, they are not as secure as they were at the time of the previous inspection. The staff inspect the premises regularly and take remedial action where risks are identified. There are appropriate safety checks on equipment and risk assessment is completed for major off-site activities. However, this is inconsistent for more local visits, where written assessment is not always completed. There is little curriculum activity risk assessment, and this is evident in insufficient awareness of safety, for example, in some physical education lessons. Systems for collating all the information gathered, and for collaboration between staff and governors, need to be improved. Child protection procedures are in place but need updating. The headteacher has made all staff aware of what they should do if the need arose but all staff require better written guidance, and records kept by the school are not rigorous enough. The school has taken appropriate action where there have been concerns, but has some misgivings about the speed of response from outside agencies.
26. Although the school has some records of assessment of the standards that the pupils attain, these do not sufficiently promote action by teachers in setting work at a level that will enable pupils to make good progress. Individual pupils do not know what is required to improve their own knowledge and they are not helped by constructive marking of the work they do. Pupils with special educational needs are not always identified and the work they are given is not always suitable. The staff only monitor the pupils' personal development informally, although steps are now being taken to assess emotional and behavioural problems and their impact on academic standards. Parents and pupils are generally confident that there is little bullying, and that staff would take effective action to stop it.

27. The school takes advantage of having a private nursery in the same building to smooth the transition from there to the reception class. The children have suitable opportunities to visit the school with their parents and to experience the life before they start formally.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with **parents**. Links with the community contribute **satisfactorily** to school life. Links with other schools are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the past year, there has been good improvement in the general information for parents and the extent to which parents are welcomed into the school.
- The school has good links with the Catholic Church and supports those of the faith well.
- There are no links with local businesses.

Commentary

28. At the meeting held for parents before the inspection, most said that in the past they had felt that they were held at arms' length by the school. This has totally changed in the last year. General information for parents is regular, timely and useful. Parents find the headteacher approachable. Some parents have concerns about inconsistency amongst teachers in matters such as information about homework, and these concerns are justified. The pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements in reporting on all subjects. However, parents felt that they were too generic and needed to reflect the individual more. The school is well aware of the need to improve these and other information documents still further, such as an anti-bullying policy. A good start was made with the new home-school agreement, which was drafted in consultation with parents and reflects the vision for the school well. Although improvements have been made recently, the partnership is not as strong as at the time of the previous inspection.
29. Pupils participate fully in the life of the Catholic Church, attending services both at the school and in the local church. Parishioners attend Masses in the school and parents come to the school's assemblies with their strong Catholic ethos. Links with the local secondary school, that most pupils from here will attend, are supportive. The staff discuss the pupils who are transferring. The school co-operates with other schools, for example in sporting competitions. The well-attended youth club, which the chair of governors has run for many years in the school, also maintains contact with former pupils and allows those in Year 6 to talk to them about life in their new school. However, at present there are no links with local businesses to broaden pupils' experiences and to extend the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is **good**. The leadership of other key staff is **unsatisfactory**. The management of the school is **satisfactory**. There has been

satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, with most progress being made since the current headteacher was appointed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a clear educational direction for the school.
- Through rigorous monitoring and evaluation, the headteacher has a realistic view of the weaknesses of the school.
- The good school improvement plan, which focuses on raising standards and action being taken, is appropriate to improve the key areas identified.
- Many subject co-ordinators have not sufficiently developed their roles.
- Effectiveness and efficiency of financial decisions are monitored well by the governors' finance committee.

Commentary

30. Since her appointment, the current headteacher, in partnership with the local education authority, has worked hard to address the issue of raising standards in the school. While it is evident that there had been little progress since the previous inspection, the progress in moving the school forward has been good recently. There has been a rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluation, so that there is a clear view of the weaknesses of the school. A range of information has been gathered, including observation of lessons and scrutiny of the pupils' work. The accumulated assessment data showing progress in each year group has enabled the headteacher to pinpoint the specific strengths and weaknesses and to put in place support where it is needed.
31. Progress has been hampered in some areas, due to the fact that the school has not yet managed to appoint a permanent deputy headteacher. However, the acting deputy headteacher and the Key Stage 2 co-ordinator have begun to develop a whole-school view. The senior management team has participated in a national initiative which has enabled them to develop their understanding of their roles and responsibilities. However, senior staff are still at an early stage and some have a clearer understanding than others. The local education authority and a consultant headteacher have provided good and effective support.
32. As a result of the headteacher's work, a clear educational direction now exists for the school, which is the focus of the new school improvement plan. The plan is detailed and appropriate. It pinpoints areas that most need developing, and the action that is being taken is appropriate to bring about the required improvements. However, the culture of the school is hampering improvement. The staff do not work as a team and there has been some lack of understanding as to why improvement is needed, as well as resistance to developments. Consequently, the initiatives are slow in having an impact. Measures to improve the quality of teaching are being hampered because there are so few examples of effective teaching in the school.
33. Under the guidance of the headteacher and the strong leadership of the chair of governors, the governing body has begun to take a more active role in the school, and is beginning to hold it to account much more. There is an appropriate range of committees and working groups with a satisfactory level of expertise to ensure that the school runs smoothly. Until recently, the governing body had very few means of monitoring the effectiveness of their decisions, and were very reliant on the previous headteacher to provide future vision. Regular reports from the headteacher now provide individual governors with the information that they need in such a way that they can monitor the school's performance more effectively. Governors have recently been involved in formulating the school improvement plan and are now aware of the overall vision that the school has, and what it must do to improve further. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties adequately.

34. Apart from the mathematics co-ordinator, subject co-ordinators do not have a clear enough grasp of standards in their subjects. Pupils' work and progress is monitored from time to time by the headteacher and co-ordinators. However, findings are not always communicated effectively or acted upon by all co-ordinators, so opportunities for making improvements to the quality of teaching and learning are lost. Co-ordinators have had only limited opportunities to monitor the quality of provision within their subjects and, as a result, are not fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subjects that they manage. The headteacher has managed the implementation of performance management satisfactorily. Targets that stem from observation and discussion are linked to whole-school and personal development needs. However, this process has not yet had a significant impact on the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning.
35. The large budget surplus from the previous year has been due to staffing changes that have recently taken place. Strategic planning is linked closely to financial decisions. The finance committee is challenging the effectiveness of spending. For example, governors are questioning the value for money that would be provided by the purchase of new computers. Procedures for financial management are secure and the bursar and office administrator are efficient. However, taking into consideration the standards achieved, the quality of education provided and the leadership and management of the school, it does not provide satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	473,261
Total expenditure	483,662
Expenditure per pupil	2,406

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	18,944
Balance carried forward to the next	8,543

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 **unsatisfactory**.

36. The attainment on entry of the current reception children was above that of others their age. Early language, literacy and numeracy skills are well developed and children have secure knowledge of the world around them. Some have good personal and social skills; others have difficulty working with others. Despite starting from such a secure base, the quality of teaching is not good enough to ensure that the children, in particular the more able, make sufficient progress and, therefore, their achievement is unsatisfactory. The overall quality of teaching is poor and provision has declined since the previous inspection. There is little sense of teamwork between adults and no one appears to be in control. The children's behaviour is unacceptable when adults' expectations are not high enough. Activities often lack purpose and, all too often, tasks are poorly matched to children's ability. The more able children suffer most when they receive little to challenge or inspire them. Lessons frequently run late and there is not enough sense of purpose. Provision for children with special educational needs is also unsatisfactory overall. When supported in group activities, these children achieve satisfactorily, but the lack of structure and support at other times slows their progress significantly.
37. Despite current provision being unsatisfactory, there are encouraging signs of improvement. Planning is detailed and relates more to the six areas of learning than in the past. Group activities that are supported by adults target the children's individual needs effectively and they achieve well in these short sessions. Comprehensive assessment procedures are now in place but, as yet, there is little evidence of information being used in day-to-day teaching. Induction arrangements are good and the recent introduction of an on-site private nursery has already shown positive results by ensuring children have a smooth transition into school. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory. There is considerable lack of understanding about Foundation Stage teaching and learning and the standards children of this age and ability can, and should, achieve.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults do not always have high enough expectations of children's behaviour.
- Children quickly become bored when activities lack structure and purpose.

Commentary

38. Children enter the reception class at various levels of development. Some are mature, confident and articulate; others are very self-centred and find difficulty relating to others. When working in groups with an adult, they chat together amicably, and treat each other

with care and respect. These are positive times, when children achieve well. In contrast, when children are engaged in independent activities that lack structure, adults do not have clear enough expectations of behaviour and courtesy. Consequently, many children are over boisterous, noisy and badly behaved.

39. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, mainly because adults do not have high enough expectations. Achievement is unsatisfactory. An example of this occurred when children were observed going to the hall for a physical education lesson. They had not had time to change because the previous lesson had overrun and they were ill-prepared. They were restless, fussy and inattentive. Several took no notice of instructions and did not listen well because they were inactive for a large part of the lesson. Some children lack independence and do not show enough awareness or respect for others. Although most children achieve the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1, many are capable of achieving more.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Group sessions are used effectively to develop speaking skills.
- Children do not listen well enough.
- Children are given appropriate opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills.
- Some independent activities lack structure and purpose.

Commentary

40. Most children enter school as confident speakers and listeners. Early literacy skills are also well advanced. Through sound teaching, their achievement is satisfactory and most exceed the early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1. In lessons where there is a high level of adult support, children benefit greatly from working in small groups. On these occasions, adults question and encourage children effectively to extend their speaking skills. At other times, however, children do not listen well to adults or each other and ignore instructions.
41. Routines for reading at home and at school are well established, and children love books. They know a good range of books. Writing development has been a whole-school priority and this focus has had a positive impact on reception class standards. Through sound teaching, the more able children make progress in line with their ability during group writing sessions. They write unaided in sentences, demonstrate an understanding of spelling and have good letter formation. However, whilst activities of working with an adult are purposeful and productive, other work lacks structure. Children quickly lose interest, particularly when tasks do not match their needs or ability. By the time children reach Year 1, most exceed the expected level in this area of learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children do not receive a sufficiently balanced range of appropriate activities.
- More able children frequently complete undemanding work that is too easy.

Commentary

42. Children enter the school with good mathematical ability. Staff do not build on these secure foundations sufficiently and the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Activities, particularly for the more able, are undemanding and expectations are too low. Consequently, achievement is unsatisfactory. Despite making slow progress, most will exceed the expectations for their age by the time they reach Year 1. However, a large proportion of children are not achieving in line with their ability.
43. The children demonstrate a firm understanding of bigger and smaller when, for example, discussing the size of model caterpillars they have made. Evidence from previous work, however, indicates that children of all abilities do the same undemanding work at the same level. More able children suffer most because the work is too easy. In addition, when support staff are not fully involved during the introductory part of lessons, children with special educational needs do not get the help they need. These children quickly lose interest during lengthy sessions. Although they have opportunities to learn through play, there is not always a rich enough variety of activities. Children play in the sand and the water, but the activities make little contribution towards their mathematical development because they lack purpose and structure.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school uses outside visits well to support learning
- Children do not receive enough structured, purposeful learning opportunities

Commentary

44. Children enter the school with a secure knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. Through sound teaching and learning, their achievement is satisfactory. Most are on course to reach the early learning goals by the time they move into Year 1.
45. During one lesson, children had good opportunity to extend their knowledge as they observed mini-beasts. At other times, however, although children have opportunities to experiment with construction toys, activities are completely unstructured and the children do not make enough progress because tasks do not match individual needs or abilities. They have access to computers, but information and communication technology does not make a strong contribution to their learning. Visits to places such as Coombe Abbey are used effectively to broaden children's knowledge. Children of all abilities benefit greatly from visiting places outside their immediate locality.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Poor class control is a major weakness in unsatisfactory lessons.
- Current outdoor play facilities are inadequate.
- Plans are in hand for developing a separate outdoor learning area.

Commentary

46. Physical development is similar to other children this age on entry to school. The children do not make as much progress as they should or achieve satisfactorily because the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. Despite making slow progress, most children are on course to achieve the expected level for their age by the time they reach Year 1.
47. The lack of outdoor space restricts opportunities for development, and physical education lessons move at too slow a pace to ensure sufficient progress. During one lesson observed, both teacher and support staff had great difficulty in establishing calm and getting children to listen and obey instructions. There was very little activity during the half-hour session and children made hardly any progress. Children demonstrate good pencil control in their writing activities and use scissors with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children do not have the richness and variety of experiences they need.
- The spacious accommodation is not always put to best use for creative work.
- The children know a good range of songs.

Commentary

48. On entry to the reception class, children's creative development is similar to others their age. The quality of teaching and learning is not high enough to enable children to achieve satisfactorily. Despite making slow progress, most will achieve the early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1. Children have access to an appropriate range of tools and equipment, and ample space for exploration and creativity. However, many areas are positioned around the edge of the room, where they are not clearly visible to staff. On occasions, children wander aimlessly or shout to a friend on the other side of the room. When tasks lack purpose, the classroom becomes noisy, boisterous and unproductive. The children quickly become bored and learn very little.
49. The children enjoy singing and using musical instruments. They revel in the sense of occasion, as they participate in action songs during assemblies. They know a good range of songs, and music makes a good, positive contribution towards children's social and cultural development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils do not achieve well enough through the school.
- Pupils' listening skills are unsatisfactory throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching is poor.
- There are limited opportunities to develop and extend writing.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.
- Monitoring systems are not developed well enough.

Commentary

50. The results of the National Curriculum tests in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 have been close to those of schools nationally since 2000, but below those of schools with a similar entitlement to free school meals. The tests in 2004 suggest that the pupils have attained similar levels in English to those of other schools. However, the inspection evidence demonstrates that the pupils make unsatisfactory progress in the subject at Key Stage 1, and their attainment at the end of Year 2 is below the national average in reading and writing.
51. From 1999 to 2002, the results of the end of Key Stage 2 tests were below, and often well below, the national average, and well below the results of the schools with comparable attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. In 2003, the results rose considerably in English, to well above the national average. Preliminary results from the 2004 tests in English are above the national average. However, the inspection evidence demonstrates that standards in English at Key Stage 2 are below the national average, and that pupils are underachieving.
52. Pupils' listening skills at both key stages are unsatisfactory, and this issue from the previous inspection has not been addressed satisfactorily. Pupils have opportunities to talk about the activities in which they are involved. Their talking skills are satisfactory. They talk with confidence, but lack the skills to listen and comment upon the views of others or instructions that they are given.
53. The majority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 have developed a satisfactory knowledge of basic sounds and blends. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in reading are similar to the national average, but some pupils are not doing as well as they could. Most pupils read books containing text that is appropriate to their individual needs. The majority of pupils read with fluency and expression, and discuss the contents maturely. The school has introduced a guided reading scheme, to try to further develop standards in reading. However, the work in these sessions is very much guided by worksheets, and some pupils do not subsequently receive adequate teaching to help them to develop and reflect upon their reading skills. Reading records are not used consistently across the school, with the result that some pupils' progress is not monitored effectively by the class teachers.
54. Standards of writing across the school are below the national average. The standard of presentation is unsatisfactory, with handwriting that is often hard to read. The pupils

encounter a range of writing activities, but there is an overuse of worksheets, which often limits their creativity. There are also too few opportunities to develop writing skills in a consistent way and, as a result, progress in writing is unsatisfactory across the school. Writing activities are often lacking in challenge and are not sufficiently thought-provoking. Consequently, the pupils' interest is not stimulated and expectations are not high enough. Furthermore, marking is too often unhelpful, as it does not clearly identify what the pupils need to do to improve.

55. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning in English has deteriorated and is now poor, particularly in Year 3. The unchallenging nature of much of the work, along with an over-reliance on worksheets, means that the pupils, particularly the more able, do not make enough progress throughout the school. Unchallenging teaching results in some pupils misbehaving, and wasting time. The less able pupils and those with special educational needs make adequate progress when they work with those learning support assistants with some expertise. However, this support is not always suitably organised across the school, and some assistants do not provide the support needed, with the result that some pupils underachieve. The school has not fully taken advantage of the National Numeracy and Literacy materials to help develop teaching and learning. This has resulted in a lack of progression and continuity throughout the curriculum, with groups of less able pupils not having access to targeted provision.
56. The curriculum and the leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The curriculum is not balanced because much time is allocated to the subject, but it is not used well. For example, the time allocation for guided reading has been significant, and it has not had an impact on standards. Opportunities for using English across the curriculum are not consistent across the school. Some work has been done using computers to word-process writing, and the Internet is sometimes employed to find out information, but this is inconsistent. The co-ordinator plans to use assessment and tracking information more effectively, but this is yet to have an impact. There are well considered plans to develop the library. However, the pupils who are underachieving have not been identified or given support with any of the specific booster programmes that are available. The monitoring of teaching and learning, although highlighted for development, is ineffective. The weaknesses in teaching and learning across the school are now being identified, but this is at a very early stage.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. The use and development of language and literacy across the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to develop their listening skills through reasoned discussion and debate. The pupils' ability to extend their reading through research is limited and the development of writing is particularly restricted. It is rare for the pupils to write their own accounts in subjects such as science, history, geography, and the over-use of worksheets further inhibits their skills in writing for a range of audiences in a variety of styles.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are not high enough in Years 1 to 5, and teaching is poor.
- Pupils achieve well in Year 6 through good quality teaching.
- Assessment is not used effectively to raise standards.
- Numeracy skills are not developed sufficiently through other subjects.
- The use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory.
- The subject is led and managed well.

Commentary

58. Results of the 2003 national tests indicated that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were below average when compared with schools nationally, and well below average when compared with similar schools. There has been a pattern of decline since 2002, with too few pupils achieving higher levels. The standards of pupils currently in Year 2 are similar to last year. Standards are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory. In 2003, there was significant improvement in Key Stage 2 results, and standards were above the national average. A similar picture of above average standards emerges this year, with pupils making good overall progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, although the picture is more positive in this key stage, there are pockets of serious underachievement, particularly in Year 3. Although achievement is satisfactory overall, it ranges from poor at the beginning of the key stage to good at the end.
59. Pupils with statements of special educational needs achieve well because they receive good quality teaching and support. Others with special educational needs, particularly those with behavioural problems, make very little progress in classes where the teacher does not have enough strategies to handle their bad behaviour. Since the previous inspection, there has been deterioration in the quality of provision. Despite good support from the local education authority and good subject leadership, standards of teaching and learning have declined and the provision for pupils with special educational needs, previously good, is now unsatisfactory. Pupils enter the school with well-developed mathematical skills but do not achieve standards in line with their ability for most of Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has not kept pace with new initiatives and, until recently, has been slow to change outdated practice.
60. Evidence taken from examples of previous work reveals why the pace of learning is too slow and why pupils do not make enough progress from entering to leaving the school. Many younger pupils do not acquire a secure enough understanding of number or the confidence to apply their knowledge to practical situations. All Key Stage 1 activities are worksheet-based and pupils have very little opportunity to think for themselves. The more able pupils make least progress because the work is undemanding. Pupils with special educational needs only increase understanding when they receive an appropriate level of effective support. At other times, they struggle and their achievement is unsatisfactory. Topics are not covered in sufficient depth and pupils of all abilities do not get further practice if they do not understand what they are doing. By the time pupils enter Key Stage 2, the seeds of underachievement have been sewn.
61. Until recently, the school has not analysed information from test results, tracked pupils' progress or assessed levels of understanding with any regularity or precision. Target-setting is not yet securely established and assessment, although improving, is not recognised by all as an important tool in raising standards. There are, however, some signs of improvement. The subject leader analyses data in impressive detail and feeds

information back to individual staff. Teachers, however, do not always follow up on what needs to be done, because they do not have the skills necessary to know what work best suits pupils' needs.

62. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is poor. None of the teaching observed was of a satisfactory standard and evidence taken from previous work confirms the lack of challenge, breadth and depth. Expectations are too low, the pace of lessons is slow, work is undemanding and pupils are allowed to waste time. Despite a slightly improved picture in Key Stage 2, the overall quality of teaching and learning remains unsatisfactory. Teaching in Year 3 is poor. Presentation is poor, the quality of marking is unsatisfactory and behaviour management is weak. The only good teaching occurs in Year 6. In this class, relationships are strong, class control is calm and positive and pupils are challenged to think mathematically. Pupils respond by wanting to succeed and not giving up when work is difficult. Occasionally, previous gaps in knowledge come to the fore, when pupils with good mathematical thinking make simple mistakes or lack maturity. There is very little evidence of information and communication technology being used effectively. It is not a strong feature of mathematics throughout the school and it does not make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning.
63. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader is the best practitioner in the school. She leads by example, and has a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses. There is a clear sense of direction for the subject. There has been good support from the local education authority and numerous positive initiatives have been introduced during the past year. However, the quality of teaching and learning has not improved because teachers have been slow to accept change. The school will only succeed in raising standards, particularly of the more able, when it expects more of its pupils.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**. The school has yet to focus its attention on developing mathematical skills further through other subjects. There are few examples of mathematics being used well across the curriculum. Those isolated opportunities that do occur tend to happen incidentally, rather than as part of systematic planning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are making unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- There are limited opportunities for prediction, evidence or for pupils to design their own tests from scientific question.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

65. The teachers' assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2003 and 2004 suggest that standards are above average. However, the inspection evidence demonstrates that they are lower than this. The pupils are underachieving in science at Key Stage 1. The results of the end of Key Stage 2 tests have been below the national average and the average of similar schools from 1999 until 2003. The most recent test results in 2004 were above the 2003 national average, and the school's targets were exceeded. The pupils' scientific knowledge is better than is usual for their age, but their skills of scientific enquiry are below average, so their attainment is similar to the national average overall. The pupils' achievement in science is unsatisfactory at both key stages and has worsened since the previous inspection.
66. Pupils are underachieving because teaching and the curriculum are unsatisfactory overall. Whilst many pupils develop a scientific knowledge that is better than usual for pupils of their age, shortcomings of the curriculum limit progress. Teachers too often focus on ensuring that the pupils acquire knowledge at the expense of developing their scientific skills. As a result, the pupils have limited experience of planning and carrying out their own investigations or of choosing their own ways of setting out their methods and findings. Where teaching is more effective, scientific skills are developed and the pupils make sound progress. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teaching involved practical investigation, which helped pupils to learn from first-hand experience. The pupils were encouraged to set up a fair test and predict the outcome. They were given good opportunities to compare results and draw conclusions about their findings, and to use their mathematical skills to present their ideas.
67. However, much of the evidence suggests that, more often than not, pupils' work demands little effort and involves completing photocopied worksheets rather than writing about real objects and opportunities. The presentation of work by pupils is unsatisfactory. There is limited use of computers in science lessons for pupils to use as tools to aid learning. Pupils have little opportunity to consider their own approach to a question, devise their own test or select the appropriate materials. Marking is also unsatisfactory and, where comments are written by the teacher, they rarely inform individual pupils of how they are doing or how they can move forward in their learning.
68. The leadership and management of science are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has a secure knowledge of the subject, and has identified some of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. Through this work, she has made a sound start in developing an action plan. However, there is only limited monitoring of standards, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress within each year group. There is not enough detailed tracking of the attainment of pupils or use of assessment to plan further lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are too low at both key stages.
- Teaching is not sufficiently effective.
- The curriculum is unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management are not good enough.
- The computer suite is not ventilated adequately.

Commentary

69. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in information and communication technology were similar to those in other schools. The current picture is less positive, and, although the pupils have the expected skills in many aspects of information and communication technology, insufficient progress has been made since then. The pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory because they are capable of higher standards, even in those aspects where their attainment is at the expected level. The pupils in Year 2 have adequate knowledge of the use of the technology and word-processing programs. They have used computers for making pictures and patterns, and their ability to move items by 'clicking and dragging' is sound. However, they have not built on their skills and knowledge rapidly enough.
70. The pupils in Year 6 use the Internet with satisfactory understanding, but have not communicated by email. They have some experience of using computer programs for data handling and importing graphics. However, they do not have sufficient opportunity to use spreadsheets, and have rarely used programs to control or measure. Consequently, although standards are as expected in some aspects, they are below in others. Some pupils are working at a higher level because they have greater access to computer programs at home or they attend the school's weekly computer club. There has been a recent initiative in the partnership with the local secondary school for the more able Year 6 pupils to attend classes there. However, these have little impact on the attainment of the majority.
71. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall, and was not effective enough in two of the four lessons observed. Although the curriculum is based on national guidance, it is not taught sufficiently well for the pupils to build on their skills and understanding rapidly enough or consistently. All pupils in a class are given the same work, regardless of ability. There was little work available from some year groups. It is clear from lessons and discussions with them that the pupils do not have adequate experience and that some are given work that is too difficult while the more able are not stretched. Time and resources are sometimes wasted in printing out pages that do not illustrate the pupils' own achievement.
72. The teachers do not always consider their colleagues or the pupils well enough. One lesson was disrupted when another class walked noisily through the room, and the noise from the computer suite sometimes disrupts classes and groups nearby. Although in one instance the learning support assistant was used well to demonstrate and to ensure that the lesson moved on well, they are often not prepared well enough for what they have to do. Often, the teacher and learning support assistant use their time inefficiently by supporting individual pupils on demand rather than planning the teaching time carefully.
73. When the teaching was satisfactory, it was because it had been planned carefully to teach specific skills, and the instructions were clear and specific. When it was less effective it was because the activity was set at a similar level for all pupils and some were frustrated by the task. In one lesson, there were not enough resources and, consequently, many pupils spent much time unoccupied. In another, there was not sufficient control of the pupils' behaviour, and some was unacceptable. When the work for all the pupils in the class is at the same level of difficulty, some finish rapidly while others complete little. Although there is a well-equipped computer suite, it is not an easy space in which to teach, and the lack of ventilation makes it uncomfortable, particularly in the summer. There are not enough resources for the technology to be used for measurement in such subjects as science. There are few assessment procedures and little of the pupils' work is marked.

74. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has adequate subject knowledge, and is developing her role through putting together an action plan for the development of the subject. However, there has not yet been an evaluation of standards or planning to tackle the deficiencies.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**. The pupils use word-processing programs to record their writing, and some programs in mathematics and art and design. The pupils in Year 2 have undertaken some research in history. Those in Year 6 record some of their history work in different ways using word-processing programs. There is some limited use of the Internet for research in history and geography but this is patchy, and pupils sometimes print out pages from the Internet indiscriminately without understanding the content. There is insufficient use of the technology in other subjects, such as science, design and technology or music.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **poor**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at both key stages are too low.
- There is too little coverage of the subject.
- Resources are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

76. When the school was last inspected, standards in geography were similar to those in other schools and the pupils made sound progress. Standards have since declined and the pupils do not do well enough, particularly at Key Stage 2 where the pupils' attainment is well below that which is usual for their age. The school has adopted the national model scheme of work but the subject does not receive a suitable length of teaching time. The scheme is not implemented or used well enough to provide pupils with a worthwhile coverage of the geography curriculum, and there is no systematic development of skills. The pupils in Year 6 have had little geography teaching before May this year, while those in Year 2 have very little recorded work in their books.
77. The pupils at the end of Year 2 display a good general knowledge of places in the locality and abroad through their own experience, but this is not built on adequately. They have insufficient experience of using maps or of comparing places. The pupils at the end of Year 6 have only a rudimentary knowledge of many aspects of the geography curriculum. Discussion with a group of articulate and interested pupils in Year 6 revealed that they could use atlases to locate places around the world, but that they had little knowledge of key geographical information such as the location of major rivers, mountains and cities of the world. They have a sound understanding of some aspects, such as the water cycle, but little recall of the features of any contrasting localities they may have studied.

78. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall and the pupils do not have an adequate experience of the subject. In some lessons, the teachers have a sound understanding of what they want their pupils to do, but rarely set out a clear idea of what they would achieve by the end of the lesson. The range of teaching strategies is limited, and the pupils often fill in unchallenging worksheets, spend time colouring in or copying information they have been given. This restricts their geographical experience and does little to support and extend their literacy skills. Much of the pupils' work is unfinished and poorly presented. Where teachers have commented on this in their marking, it has made little impact, and marking is rarely used to aid pupils in seeing how well they have done or how they could improve. Some work has not been marked.
79. The curriculum is not organised well enough because much of the work is superficial or at too high a level for the year group. The water cycle has been covered in each year at Key Stage 2, and the pupils in Year 6 have studied it every year. There are few field visits. Information and communication technology is occasionally used for research, but its potential is not exploited sufficiently. Numeracy skills are used and extended adequately when the pupils are using maps and grids, but this is rare and the skills are not built on consistently. Few pupils reported that they enjoyed their work in geography and, while most behave satisfactorily during the lessons, many do their work with little enthusiasm. The atlases in use at Key Stage 2 are out of date, as are some of the worksheets being used.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for writing are not developed sufficiently.
- There is an overuse of worksheets.
- There is not enough extension work for the more able.
 - Coverage of the subject is not always consistent.

Commentary

80. Standards are similar to those in other schools and have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection. The range of the curriculum and breadth of topics covered are adequate. For example, Year 2 pupils were able to explain in detail about life in Tamworth Castle in the past. The pupils in Year 6 have a sound knowledge of how historical evidence is collected. They have recently produced newspaper reports based on life in Ancient Greece, which has contributed to the development of literacy skills. Pupils have enjoyed the school trips that have increased their overall knowledge and understanding of history.
81. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although there are some shortcomings. In one lesson, pupils used old photographs of the local area to think about changes that had taken place. This raised some interesting discussions about life in the past, but insufficient opportunity was given for the pupils to reflect on the changes that had taken place. As a result, some valuable learning opportunities were lost, particularly for the more able pupils who could have been challenged further. Good questioning enabled pupils to progress in some lessons. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher's questions effectively

probed pupils' understanding of the relationship between the Aztecs and the Spanish. However, much of the work is also based on recounts. In many of the classes, much of the work covered is based on worksheets, many of which have been coloured in. This limits opportunities for developing historical skills, as well as the achievement of pupils. Pupils' work is often untidy and hard to read.

82. There is little evidence in the pupils' books of opportunities for carrying out meaningful research. In one lesson observed, pupils in Year 2 used computers to find out information about the Great Fire of London. The purpose of the lesson was clear, but the unsettled behaviour of some pupils inhibited learning. In some classes, there is too much emphasis on factual knowledge at the expense of the study of primary sources or tracing the impact of particular events.
83. There are no procedures for assessing the standards that pupils have reached. Therefore, when the pupils move to a new class, it is difficult for the new teacher to plan work that is suitable for the individual needs of the pupils. Marking is unsatisfactory because it does not allow the pupils to gain any idea of how they are doing, or what they need to do to improve.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is insufficient attention given to non-European art.
- Teachers pay good attention to skill development and teach the subject well.
- Display of pupils' work varies considerably in quality.

Commentary

84. Standards at the end of both key stages are similar to those found in other schools. Evidence taken from a small sample of lesson observations, examples of previous work and discussions with pupils indicate that pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily. Standards are not as high at the end of Key Stage 2 as they were at the time of the previous inspection because art has not been given as much emphasis. Despite a reduction in time dedicated to the teaching of the subject, pupils still experience an adequate range of media, and study topics in sufficient breadth and depth.
85. Topics are linked well to other subjects, such as history and design and technology. Year 5 pupils display sound artistic skill in, for example, making feather shields as part of their Aztec topic. Artwork based on stories such as 'How the Koala Bear came to be' demonstrates good links with literacy. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support learning, but opportunities to do so are not built into planning.
86. Pupils in Year 2 develop a secure range of skills. In discussion, they are keen to emphasise how much they enjoy the subject. They recall previous work on famous artists, observational drawings and collage work. Year 6 pupils have a good recall of the work of artists such as Constable and David Hockney. Although they remember some African and Native Australian art, there is not a strong enough representation of non-European artists.
87. In the small number of lessons observed, teaching was always good. However, the broader evidence from work on display, the use of sketchbooks and discussion with the pupils indicates that the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Year 2 pupils are confident with paints and pastels in their work and display good knowledge of Monet and Van Gogh. The teacher has secure subject knowledge and transmits an enthusiasm for the subject. The pupils are highly motivated because activities interest them. Year 6 pupils also enjoy their artwork and, consequently, achieved well in one lesson observed. The class teacher made effective use of a recent visit to the Almshouses in Bedworth to teach the skill of using perspective in observational drawing, and results were of good quality.
88. Displays celebrate work across the whole curriculum. They vary considerably in quality. Some are attractive and displayed with care; others lack attention to detail and are poorly presented. Although there are some good examples of outside visits being used well to support learning, they are not a strong feature of provision.

Design and technology

89. Only one lesson during the inspection was observed in design and technology. However, from a scrutiny of the available pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers, it is evident that there is limited coverage of the subject, that standards are well below those expected and that achievement is poor. Little work has been done and standards have declined since the time of the previous inspection. There are examples of pupils' planning and designing, but these are well below the standard expected, especially at Key Stage 2. Examples of products made by pupils indicate that finishing skills are much lower than those in other schools.
90. At both key stages, the pupils have made artefacts and models, such as wheeled vehicles in Year 2, picture frames in Year 3 or money containers in Year 4. Pupils rarely make detailed plans for their models and, where they have drawn plans, these are skimpy and few show measurements or the resources to be used. There is evidence in only one year group of the pupils evaluating the effectiveness of their designs, and these evaluations are at a very superficial level. The pop-up books made by Year 4 pupils are of the standard expected for Year 2. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have very little experience of designing and making moving models.
91. Throughout the school, the pupils do not develop an adequate knowledge of mechanisms or the ability to use them in their own designs. They have little opportunity to experience the full breadth of study through using a range of materials and tools. They do not use information and communication technology to develop their knowledge or own ideas, and the subject makes little contribution to the development of the pupils' numeracy skills. The school uses the national model scheme of work, but inadequately. There are no procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' developing skills and there are insufficient resources to teach the subject.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A new music scheme has introduced progression and continuity.
- The timetable makes it difficult to teach the subject consistently.
- The use of the peripatetic music service enables some pupils to achieve well.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology.

Commentary

92. When the school was last inspected, the planning and co-ordination of music were found to be weak. The music co-ordinator has addressed this weakness by implementing a satisfactory new scheme throughout the school. The scheme has enabled teachers to ensure that skills are built on in music. The pupils sing tunefully, and clearly enjoy singing together. However, the fragmented timetable means that pupils have long periods where they have no musical experiences, which can inhibit their progress because they tend to forget what they have learnt.

93. Nevertheless, the pupils achieve satisfactorily at both key stages, and standards are similar to those in other schools. The quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory, and in one lesson the teaching was good. The school uses the expertise of the music co-ordinator to teach music to all of the classes. Her subject knowledge is used well to give pupils the opportunity to develop a clear understanding of the composing and performing element of the subject. The pupils read simple musical notation, and are confident when performing. A number of pupils have enjoyed playing musical instruments and achieve well through the teaching of the peripatetic teachers who visit the school.
94. There are too few opportunities at present for the pupils to use and develop their music through information and communication technology, for example using computer programs to compose music. The pupils have had only limited experience of researching the lives of composers. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The music co-ordinator has a clear idea of what she wants the pupils to learn, and assesses their individual progress during each lesson, using this information to plan and adapt future teaching.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school teams do well.
- Pupils and teachers do not always wear suitable clothing for their lessons.
- Teaching is good in Year 6.

Commentary

95. Standards are similar to those in other schools, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 1 practised throwing, catching and defence skills and showed sound control and movement. The Year 5 pupils have the expected level of physical co-ordination and the ability of those in Year 6 to throw, catch and bat is comparable with others of their age. Most play together well, show that they have developed their skills satisfactorily and are able to play according to simple rules. They appreciate the need to warm-up at the beginning of lessons and to cool-down after activity. The school provides soundly for swimming and the pupils achieve satisfactorily. All learn to swim by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, almost all being able to swim at least 25 metres. The school's Gaelic football and cricket teams have done well in competition locally, reaching the area finals.
96. Teaching and learning were satisfactory in two lessons and good for the pupils in Year 6. The lessons were planned soundly, with clear explanations and satisfactory organisation. When the teaching was better, the pupils were managed well, explanations were brisk and there was a good variety of activity. This led to good co-operation between pupils and ample opportunities for vigorous movement and practice of skills. However, in two lessons some pupils were not dressed suitably for physical activities, and in one the teacher had not changed. In some lessons, the pupils were given opportunities to evaluate their own performance but there are not enough carefully planned assessments of pupils' achievements.

Personal, social and health education and citizenship

97. Although it was only possible to observe one lesson, in **personal, social and health education and citizenship**, it is evident that there is not a coherent programme of study for the subject. The school has not implemented a programme for sex education, although one exists in draft form. There is no whole-school scheme for drugs education. However, there has been progress recently with the introduction in Years 5 and 6 of a programme of personal and social education.
98. Teaching and learning were unsatisfactory in the lesson observed. The teacher did not prepare the pupils adequately for the subject to be discussed and was unable to create a suitable atmosphere for exploration of personal values and feelings. The boys were allowed to dominate the lesson and the discussion failed to develop the pupils' understanding of the topic. The teachers' timetables demonstrate a variety of treatment. The subject is timetabled in all classes but, while some devote a reasonable amount of time, others plan to teach in two very short sessions, a practice that restricts the opportunity to explore issues in detail, and which was the case in the lesson observed.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	5
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	3
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	6
The quality of teaching	6
How well pupils learn	6
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	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	5
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	3
The leadership of other key staff	5
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).