

INSPECTION REPORT

**Saint Peter's Church of England
Voluntary Controlled First School**

Williton, Taunton, Somerset

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123781

Headteacher: Mr James E. Peate

Lead inspector: Mrs J Watts

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th March 2004

Inspection number: 257932

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	151
School address:	Doniford Road Williton Taunton Somerset
Postcode:	TA4 4SF
Telephone number:	01984 632480
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ven. Dr. Richard Ninis
Date of previous inspection:	4 th March 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Peter's is a slightly smaller than average first school, with 151 boys and girls on roll aged from four to nine years. They are taught in six classes, some of which are single age and some of which are mixed age groups. Most pupils come from Williton and the surrounding area. On entry to the school, into the reception class, the attainment of the majority of the children is below average. There are 26.6 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, which is above the national average. There are 15 per cent of pupils with identified special educational needs, which is about average. Although there are no pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need, a significant proportion of these pupils do have quite severe learning, communication or behavioural difficulties. All pupils are of white, European ethnic background. There are no pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue. Pupil mobility is low. There has been high staff turnover during the last two years as five teachers left and five joined the school. This includes the recently appointed headteacher who took up his post in September 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1945	Mrs J. Watts	Lead inspector	English Science Personal, social and health education History Physical education English as an additional language
9115	Dr T. Clarke OBE	Lay inspector	
22434	Mrs S. Bradshaw	Team inspector	Foundation Stage ¹ Special educational needs Geography Music Religious education
7336	Mrs L. Howard	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology

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¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school. The previous inspection judged that the school had serious weaknesses in key areas of its work; this is no longer so and the **school's overall effectiveness is now satisfactory**. The headteacher and key staff give good, positive leadership and direction, inspiring a strongly committed and supportive team. Pupils have mainly positive attitudes to school and are keen to learn, even though some find learning difficult. Teaching is now satisfactory overall, with good or very good teaching in over a third of lessons. As a result, pupils achieve satisfactorily during their time at the school, with a significant proportion making good progress from a low starting point when they enter school. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils attain good standards in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Standards in science are below average.
- Standards of writing are below average across the school. Whilst reading standards are average at Year 4, a significant number of the current Year 2 pupils are attaining standards lower than those normally expected.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.
- Teachers manage the pupils' behaviour especially well and most pupils, though not all, respond sensibly. The majority of pupils have positive attitudes and feel that the school values them as individuals.
- The headteacher and key staff provide strong leadership.

Good progress has been made since the previous inspection in March 2002. Standards are improving especially in English and mathematics and the good levels of achievement in ICT have been maintained, Leadership and management are now good and teaching has improved considerably.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	E	D	D	B
Writing	C	C	E	E
Mathematics	E	E	D	C

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

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils in the reception class (the Foundation Stage) often make good progress from a below average starting point, and meet or exceed the expected levels by the time they transfer to Year 1. At Key Stage 1, pupils achieve satisfactorily in speaking and listening, handwriting and mathematics. They make good progress with their ICT skills and achieve well. Progress with reading is less consistent and in Year 2, at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading is slightly below average. A significant number of pupils in the current Year 2 do have identified difficulties with their learning. A minority of pupils in this age group (Year 2) achieve really well with their reading and are on target to attain the higher Level 3. Reading standards in Year 4 are in line with those expected, as are standards in speaking and listening, handwriting and mathematics. Standards in writing and science are below average across the school. In most subjects, boys generally achieve less well than girls. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily and are well supported.

Pupils' personal qualities are developed satisfactorily. The majority of pupils behave well but a significant minority cause disruption when they misbehave, despite every effort being made by teachers to promote good behaviour. Pupils' social and moral development is good and their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching is now judged to be satisfactory overall. In the 26 lessons observed, teaching was judged to be good or very good in over a third of them. Standards are improving, as pupils are achieving more as a result of being well taught. The curriculum is satisfactory and enriched through a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities. The level of support and guidance given to pupils is good. Links with parents, the community and other schools are good. Attendance is unsatisfactory though improving and the school is making every effort to promote pupils' attendance.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are all good. The recently appointed headteacher, together with key staff, is providing a strong sense of vision and direction with a clear focus on raising standards, which are improving. Governors are highly supportive and increasingly hold the school to account. Good priority is given to in-service training but the high staff turnover has meant that some of its impact has been lost. Subject leadership is especially effective in English, mathematics and ICT.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are supportive of the school and both parents and pupils are appreciative of the new headteacher and the recent initiatives he has introduced.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- Improve further standards in reading and writing.
- Improve standards in science.
- Continue to take steps to improve attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement overall is **satisfactory**. From a below average starting point, standards in the Foundation Stage are at a level with, and just occasionally above, those expected by the early learning goals² and these youngsters are currently achieving well. Pupils achieve satisfactorily at Key Stage 1 and in the early part of Key Stage 2, in Years 3 and 4. Standards in English at the end of Key Stage 1 are average except in writing and reading, due mainly to the high proportion of pupils with identified learning difficulties in Year 2. Standards in mathematics are average and standards in ICT are above average. In Year 4, standards in most aspects of English and mathematics are average. Standards in ICT are above average. At both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 standards in writing and science are below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT (information and communication technology) are good and above average.
- Most pupils achieve satisfactorily, often from a low starting point on entry to the school.
- Standards in writing are below average across the school and reading standards in Year 2 are below average.
- Standards in science are below average.
- Boys do not achieve as well as girls.

Commentary

1. Whilst pupils generally attain below average results in the national tests for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2, when their results are compared with similar schools the picture represents one of satisfactory achievement and progress, other than in writing. The school has identified writing as a major area for improvement. Last year (2003) a pleasingly larger proportion of pupils gained the higher Level 3 for reading although writing results were lower than the previous year. Trends in all core subjects over time though are still slightly below the national trend. Standards in speaking and listening, reading, handwriting and mathematics have all improved since the previous inspection in 2002. The good standards in ICT have been maintained.
2. Over time and currently, boys do not achieve as well as girls. A higher proportion of boys have identified difficulties with their learning, communication skills and their behaviour. Consequently, even though they are often well taught, they do not achieve as well as they might.
3. The pupils in the reception class often make good progress as they are well, and sometimes very well, taught. Assuming that the quality of provision remains the same, most are on track to meet or even exceed the expected standards by the time they reach Year 1.
4. Standards of writing are below average at both key stages. There have been significant improvements in the standard of handwriting, which is now practised daily, to good effect. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The schools own system of assessing pupils' unaided writing shows that they do make progress, often from a very low starting point. They are able to use their other literacy skills competently across the curriculum.

² These are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

5. Pupils use their numeracy skills competently and their ICT skills well. They are confident to use their ICT skills as they have been well taught.
6. Standards in science are below average across the school. Whilst most pupils have a suitable level of factual knowledge, they have too few opportunities to develop their scientific skills of experimenting and investigating. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected for pupils of this age and stage.
7. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for and achieve satisfactorily and sometimes well. The school tracks and monitors their progress carefully and thoroughly. Pupils who have special educational needs regularly meet their targets because of the good planning by teachers and the good level of support they receive during the lessons. They receive regular feedback about their learning. Throughout the school there is evidence that the school strives, mainly successfully, to be inclusive. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
8. Analysis of the achievement of those small numbers of pupils who are absent regularly shows clearly that they are making less progress than they should.
9. Art and design, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education are all taught regularly but during the short period of the inspection it was not possible to make firm judgements about standards.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003		
Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.3	15.7
writing	12.6	14.6
mathematics	15.8	16.3
There were 39 pupils in the year group.		

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are **good**. Pupils' behaviour is **satisfactory**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**. Attendance is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy learning.
- The majority of pupils behave well but the behaviour of a small minority of pupils does not match the good standards of behaviour of most pupils.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.

Commentary

10. Pupils enjoy coming to school and most try hard to do their best. In lessons pupils listen carefully to others, work well in twos and threes and share resources sensibly. Good relationships exist between pupils and with all adults involved with teaching. Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and most pupils respond well to these clear expectations. Pupils behave well in and around the school. However, there is a small minority of pupils who can disturb others and display behaviour that does not match the good standards of behaviour set by the school. This challenging behaviour is dealt with firmly

and fairly by staff and pupils are usually settled back to work quickly. The school provides sensitive support for pupils who have special educational needs so that they learn to integrate effectively with their peers. The school's aims and value systems ensure that pupils who have special educational needs are respected and supported by the whole community and as a result they are able to feel secure and learn well.

11. Young children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development in the reception class. Sensible attention is given to establishing routines so that children know what is expected of them. They develop good relationships with all the adults who work with them in this secure environment.
12. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory overall. Good opportunities are provided for pupils' spiritual development in collective worship. However, there are too few opportunities provided to develop their spirituality in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils know right from wrong and they respond positively to the high expectations staff have of them. The good standards of pupils' social development can be seen in most lessons as pupils work together well sharing ideas and supporting each other. Pupils are given tasks in class that develop well their sense of responsibility. Visits to museums and to other local places of interest supports pupils' understanding of their own culture. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn about cultures other than their own.

Attendance

Pupils' attendance is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is well below the national average.
- The school's recent strategies to improve attendance are good.

Commentary

13. Pupils' attendance in the year 2002/03, at well below the national average, is unsatisfactory. Since the beginning of the autumn term the school has introduced good strategies to improve attendance. These include letters from the headteacher to parents of those pupils whose attendance falls below the 90 per cent level, and involve close co-operation with the Education Social Worker. The attendance level during the autumn term improved by 1 per cent, which suggests that the strategy is starting to work. Evidence shows that the low attendance of some individual pupils is having an adverse effect on their attainment and progress.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)				
Authorised absence			Unauthorised absence	
School data:	8.7		School data:	0.1
National data:	5.4		National data:	0.4
The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.				

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	150	2	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and Learning

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. Teaching is **satisfactory overall**, with some good and very good teaching. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when the amount of unsatisfactory teaching was judged to be a serious weakness. The curriculum is **satisfactory**. Provision for pupils' care, support and guidance are **good** and they learn in a safe environment. Assessment is satisfactory overall, but there are good assessment procedures in some of the core subjects. Links with parents are **good**.

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of the youngest pupils, those in the reception class, is good and teaching assistants are well used.
- The teaching of ICT is good across the school.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently satisfactory and occasionally very good.
- Teachers manage the behaviour of most pupils well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	9	14	0	0	0

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

- Teaching and the quality of the curriculum in the reception class are good and so children achieve well. From a low starting point, most attain and some exceed, the expected standard when they transfer to Year 1, so achieving well. Teaching assistants are used well in the reception class. They are clear about what they are expected to do and achieve and this helps accelerate children's progress.
- At Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers usually plan activities, which are well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils. Often, good provision and support is provided by the well-briefed and experienced teaching assistants, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. Many of the support assistants have well-developed questioning skills and are a great asset to the teacher, as they often have a keen eye when it comes to observing and assessing what

pupils can do. This provides further useful information to the teacher about how well pupils are learning.

16. Teachers and other staff all have very good relationships with the pupils and as a result, pupils feel valued and have positive attitudes towards learning. They try hard, even when they may find the learning difficult. Just occasionally, in English, mathematics and science, teachers plan work, which is not quite challenging enough for the higher attainers, so they do not make as much progress as they might during the lesson. Overall, though, planning and provision results in pupils making satisfactory progress over time and achieving satisfactorily.
17. The teaching of ICT is good. Teachers have been well trained and they use this training to good effect. They help the pupils to use equipment, resources and hardware confidently and well. They give clear explanations and make good use of the interactive whiteboard to enhance pupils' learning further.
18. Teachers have well-developed strategies and techniques which they apply when managing pupils' behaviour, some of which is very challenging. Teachers are well supported by the school's consistently implemented and agreed code of conduct. This gives pupils a good sense of security as they are helped to understand what the school expects of them. However, a small minority of pupils are sometimes disruptive and teachers have to take time away from the rest of the class to deal with a pupil misbehaving. The school does, though, try to involve the support of parents at every stage.
19. Homework is given inconsistently. Some teachers do give homework and follow up the work pupils have completed at home, but the approach is not consistent and so homework does not always help and support pupils' learning.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils' learning benefits from the productive partnership between teachers and teaching assistants. Teaching assistants regularly sit beside groups of pupils to support their learning, enabling them to complete tasks set.
21. Pupils' work is marked regularly. Whilst the marking is often supportive or tells pupils what they must do to improve their work, this is not followed up rigorously on all occasions, when the pupils do their next piece of work. Consequently, pupils do not always take notice of the comments made. Not all of the pupils are able to make sensible comments on their progress towards their personal targets.
22. There are good systems in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics, but in science they are not fully established. Teachers helpfully set targets for pupils in English and mathematics but as yet they are not impacting fully on pupils' achievement, as not all pupils are conversant with their targets nor are they able to assess for themselves whether they have made the right amount of progress. In some classes assessment information is not used well enough to provide the right level of challenge for higher attainers. Procedures for assessing pupils attainment and progress in ICT have been implemented but their use is at an early stage of development.

The curriculum

The provision for a range of curriculum activities is **satisfactory**. The opportunities for the enrichment of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities are **satisfactory** although provision for extra-curricular sporting activities is **good**. Accommodation is **good** and resources are generally **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good opportunities for extra-curricular sport.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

- The indoor and outdoor accommodation is good and well used.

Commentary

23. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good, with suitable planning to ensure all six areas of learning are covered. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 meets the requirements for the National Curriculum and religious education. There are schemes of work for all subjects which support teachers' planning and provide continuity across the school. Sufficient time is given to each subject. This is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. Provision for sex education is made within the whole curriculum when questions arise and when personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught as an integral part of the whole curriculum.
24. The development of the curriculum has high priority within the school development plan. The management is to undertake a curriculum audit in the near future with the aim of introducing more cross-curricular links and a more creative approach within the statutory curriculum.
25. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are regularly reviewed, and they include specific, targeted activities designed to help pupils to achieve. These pupils are provided with a broad curriculum and teachers' planning includes activities, which ensure that pupils work at their own level in most lessons.
26. Visits to historic places such as Wells Cathedral, London and Taunton bring alive the history, geography and religious education curriculum, while a visit to Bristol supports learning in science. Walks round the village support the development of pupils' knowledge about their own traditions. Visitors to the school by people who talk about their work in the community, bring a wealth of knowledge of the wider world to these rural pupils and support their personal development. Pupils in Year 3 have a one night residential visit while those in Year 4 experience a three-night stay at Exford. These visits contribute greatly to the pupils' personal and social development.
27. A wide variety of well-attended clubs are run at lunchtimes and after school by staff, parents and other members of the village community for the older pupils. During the inspection a keen group of stamp collectors, attending their club, talked enthusiastically about their hobby. The 'sparklers club' supports and challenges the higher attainers. An ICT club runs at lunchtime and one for parents and children is to start soon. Sports skills especially, are well developed. This wide range of activities supports pupils' social development as well as their academic achievement.
28. Generally resources are good. The accommodation is spacious, well used, supports the school's positive ethos and enhances pupils' learning. The library and the computers share a central space that is used very effectively during and outside lesson time.

Care, guidance and support

The school's provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **satisfactory**. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is **good**. The way the school involves pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **satisfactory**. Pupils receive their education in a caring and nurturing environment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The recent improvements in playground supervision mean that this is now satisfactory.
- The school provides good support and guidance through monitoring pupils.
- There was one minor health and safety issue reported to the headteacher and governors.

Commentary

29. The school has proper child protection procedures in place with the headteacher as the designated adult. The liaison between the headteacher and the special education needs manager on child protection matters is good and teachers and assistants are kept well informed about procedures. The two pupils in care have their own individual education plans drawn up by the different agencies involved.
30. The overall provision for welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. The school's procedures for dealing with and recording accidents are good and in line with the data protection act. The provision for pupils who are unwell, or who have been injured and are waiting to be collected by parents, is now satisfactory. The headteacher and the governing body are responsible for health and safety and carry out regular inspections of the school. One issue was brought to the attention of the headteacher and governing body, which will be taken up with the local authority.
31. The size of the school is such that the staff know the pupils well and each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with at least one, and usually more, member of staff. Consequently they have access to well-informed support and guidance. Some parents expressed concern at supervision during lunchtimes. Procedures have been tightened and during the period of the inspection showed these were judged to be satisfactory. Induction arrangements for pupils coming to the school are good. Many of the pupils come from the on-site pre-school and some have siblings at the school so induction is straightforward. They soon become well integrated into the reception class.
32. The school has established good relationships with outside agencies that provide support for pupils who have special educational needs. The school has identified funds to provide a helpful range of support.
33. The school actively involves pupils, through the school council. Pupils discuss issues and channel them through the headteacher, in writing. At the moment they are discussing the introduction of a playground 'buddy' system. Pupils have also raised the question of school meals. An opportunity to discuss this will arise shortly when the contract for school catering comes up for renewal. Governors believe that this could present an opportunity for pupil consultation. At the moment the school's involvement of pupils is satisfactory.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents, the community and other schools are all **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good links established with the community.
- The improving involvement of parents in the ways in which they help during the school day.

Commentary

34. Parents' views of the school are mostly positive, although some expressed concern about pupils' behaviour. Most say that their children enjoy coming to school and that the staff are very approachable. The headteacher is now in the playground at the start of the school day and available to talk to parents, which parents appreciate. The school provides a good range of information about the school, including reports about pupils' progress. School reports are informative and comply with requirements, although they could give more information about what pupils should be doing next. The school has two open meetings a year and the headteacher is introducing a curriculum focus on these evenings.
35. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are fully involved in the review of individual education plans. The school has established very good relationships with parents who may have daily access to the special educational needs manager.

36. Although there is some inconsistency in the way that the school sets homework, many of the parents, though not all, make a positive contribution to pupils' learning at school. For example, some parents come into the school to help in the classroom, accompany pupils on school trips and attend the regular Friday 'celebration' assembly. A particularly good area of support comes through the Parent Teacher Association. This provides many activities, many of which involve the pupils, and raises large sums of money every year. The funding provides extra resources to support pupils' learning.
37. The school's links with the community are good and includes the church and wider community. For example, there is a monthly Communion in the school, which parents and members of the community attend and pupils help to provide refreshments. This brings the community into the school. Year 4 pupils visit elderly persons' homes and the local hospital and sing to the residents and patients. The local Co-op is sponsoring this year's Easter Fayre, which is a good business link, and members of the community come into the school and work alongside parents. The school's links with both parents and the community are developing as a strength of the school.
38. The school's links with other schools are good. Arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the middle school are good and straightforward. The middle school is closely adjacent to St Peters and there is an effective transfer timetable. There are very good links with other feeder primary schools and the school liaises with them on transfer arrangements. Other school links come through the Community Learning Partnership with a tutor coming into the school to carry out workshops and the Collaboration of Small Schools (CASS). Overall, the positive links with other schools and agencies in the area make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are all good. The recently appointed headteacher is giving good, strong direction to the work of the school with a clear focus on raising standards further. The school's values are increasingly well promoted and in particular, the headteacher has initiated constructive and helpful revisions to the school's policy for behaviour management, which is already proving effective with most, though not yet all, of the pupils in the school. This policy is having a positive effect on the school's ability to include all pupils in its provision. Good systems are in place to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school. Subject leadership is good especially in English, mathematics and ICT and is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's positive ethos, which focuses on creating an environment so that pupils can learn effectively.
- The good leadership of the headteacher who is inspiring a highly effective team.
- The support and expertise of the governors.
- The very good efforts and effectiveness of subject leaders in English, mathematics and ICT.
- Below average attainment on entry and unsatisfactory attendance are both barriers to pupils' learning and achievement.

Commentary

39. The previous inspection report highlighted that there were serious weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school. This is no longer the case. There is now rigorous monitoring of the work of the school and in the core subjects of English and mathematics, and in ICT, the subject leaders have worked very hard to ensure the quality of teaching has improved, with much success. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are now achieving consistently satisfactorily in English and mathematics and they achieve well in ICT. Achievement in science remains unsatisfactory.

40. The new headteacher leads the school most effectively with the full confidence of the governors and staff. All staff, whether teaching, support, administrative or involved in site management, give their unstinting support to the school. The school's good ethos has been created by, including and valuing the contribution made to the school by staff, pupils, governors and parents.
41. Management is good overall. Given the high staff turnover, it is to the school's credit that many of the agreed policies are implemented consistently. The school has a cohesive performance management policy and its impact is increasingly effective. Induction procedures for new staff are good. Helpful systems are in place to ensure the smooth running of the school. Administrative staff are efficient, extremely helpful and most conscientious. The school has sufficient well-trained and qualified staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. There are sufficient teaching assistants but their deployment requires some rationalisation so that they can be deployed more precisely and targeted towards those classes and pupils where the need is greatest.
42. Leadership and management of special educational needs are shared between the headteacher as special educational needs coordinator and a support assistant who is a very highly trained specialist in the field. Their partnership is successful and the quality of provision is good and well managed. Pupils with special educational needs are frequently well supported by teachers and by support assistants who provide a valuable and valued resource. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities and they achieve satisfactorily and sometimes well. The special educational needs coordinator and manager have been particularly successful in fostering very good relationships with parents who are regularly well informed of their child's progress. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs works in the school and ensures that all governors are kept up to date, most helpfully, with developments about provision.
43. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are firmly in place and increasingly effective. Pupils' progress is checked regularly using a range of data including teacher assessment, tests and results of national tests. Individual targets are also set as part of this process but as yet pupils are too little involved in self-assessing their own progress.
44. Governance is good and governors increasingly hold the school to account. Statutory requirements are met. Governors are highly supportive and many visit the school regularly to gather information, become better informed about the implementation of policies, or to work with pupils. Governors have a good yet realistic view of the effective part they play in whole school review and evaluation.
45. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial Information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	512,021	Balance from previous year	81,296
Total expenditure	470,161	Balance carried forward to the next	45,036
Expenditure per pupil	3,072		

46. Sound systems are in place to control and monitor expenditure. Best value principles are well understood by the governors. The carry forward is earmarked for planned developments to the building and for resources.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **good** in the Foundation Stage.

47. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection and children work in a stimulating environment that provides challenge and interest in all areas of the curriculum. Attainment on entry to the school is below national expectations for this age group and children achieve well in all areas of learning. There are currently 27 children in the reception class.
48. Overall teaching is good. By the end of the reception year most children will attain the early learning goals and a few will exceed them. All adults work very well together providing a good and imaginative curriculum that meets the needs of the children well. Good leadership and management results in the involvement of all the adults in development and improvement through the rigorous planning, monitoring and assessment procedures. Good assessment procedures are used directly to plan work at the correct level for children, including those who have special educational needs. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and those chosen by children. The accommodation is good and a wide range of high quality resources are well used by the children.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring atmosphere enables children to establish very good relationships.
- Well-established routines help children to learn about acceptable behaviour.
- Children are developing their ability to work independently.
- The good quality of the teaching in this area of learning.

Commentary

49. Teaching in this important element of the curriculum is good. The teachers and teaching assistant who are kind and caring, infinitely patient and work well together, promote children's personal and social development very well. Children have good attitudes towards the work they do in school and behave well. Most will attain the early learning goals for this area and many will exceed them by the end of the year. Role models and the clear boundaries set by adults ensure that the children know what is expected of them and they quickly learn the correct way to behave. Children know the routines very well, settle down to the activities and behave sensibly. The majority of children are eager to attempt all the activities provided and show great interest in what they are doing. They are learning to concentrate with an activity to finish it. Children are expected to clear up after them and many do this without much prompting. Children meet, and often exceed, the expected standards in this area of learning and they achieve well.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for children to talk to adults and to each other.
- Children are developing their understanding of letter sounds and their names very well.

- Although teaching is good overall, some activities lack sufficient structure to ensure children develop the skills they are taught.

Commentary

50. Staff take every opportunity to encourage children to speak and listen, so improving their communication skills. Children readily communicate with each other in the role-play area as they decide what treatment the animals need in the vet's surgery and describe particular animal ailments to adults. Most children have the confidence to talk to visitors and involve them in their activities. When children enter the school their language skills are below what is expected for children of this age. By the end of reception most children will meet national expectations and some will exceed them.
51. Children are given every opportunity to develop their knowledge of letter sounds and their names. They regularly practise the names and sounds of all the letters of the alphabet and by having 'letter of the week' constantly reinforce their understanding. Children's reading skills are well supported by a successful home reading arrangement for sharing books.
52. Overall teaching is good in this area and children benefit from the very good subject knowledge of the teacher. There are some occasions, however, when activities related to the main focus of the lesson lack the structure and challenge which enables children to practise the skills taught. When they are provided with specifically focussed activities and tasks this has a positive impact on learning and develops their understanding. Standards are in line with those expected and children achieve well.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Where the mathematics activities are interesting the children are motivated and learn well, however, at times the children fail to be motivated as the activities lack challenge.
- Children receive good support with their learning.

Commentary

53. Teaching in this area is satisfactory overall and children enjoy a range of interesting activities. Occasionally there are lost opportunities to provide appropriate challenge and reinforce mathematical concepts and skills in some of the activities. Children benefit from the good support they receive when working with the teacher and teaching assistant who patiently help them to understand new mathematical ideas and practise the things they know. They are familiar with number songs and rhymes and can help the teacher calculate numbers on the register by using the class number line. Children's understanding of mathematical language is developing well and they use such words as under, over, up, down, behind and through with confidence. Standards are in line with those expected and pupils achieve satisfactorily.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to explore the properties of different materials.
- Good teaching provides children with many opportunities to learn about the world around them.

Commentary

54. Teaching is good in this area and children achieve well. Teachers use a good variety of well-matched activities and questioning to stimulate children's curiosity and fire their imagination. They have been particularly interested in watching the development of frogspawn and tadpoles within their study of spring. Children are provided with a wide range of materials to work with and develop their skills of independence as they select appropriate tools and equipment for their work. They handle scissors, sellotape and glue to make kites and enjoy the movement of the wind as they fly them outside. Children have a sound understanding of what makes books precious and have produced their own special books for writing about and illustrating bible stories. They have a good understanding of Jesus as a healer and listen attentively to a variety of bible stories during collective worship. Children work co-operatively in pairs as they work on the computer in the classroom using programs to reinforce their understanding of letters and numbers. They benefit from the experience of using the computer suite where they have opportunity to develop their information technology skills further. Standards are in line with those expected and pupils achieve well.

Physical development

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's physical control is developing well.
- A wide range of activities is provided for children to develop their manipulative skills.

Commentary

55. Most children will meet the expected standards for this age and a few will exceed them. They use a variety of tools and equipment confidently and with good dexterity. Most children change for physical education and put on their coats and do them up independently. They make very good use of a secure outside play area that has good resources. The effective planning of activities in this area supports children's physical development. Children's confidence and agility is very good. In a very good gymnastics lesson children confidently used all the large climbing apparatus with imagination and flair. In a dance lesson children displayed clearly their creative skills as they responded to music with a sound understanding of pace and dynamics. Teaching in this area is good and staff have high expectations of the children who respond to the challenges set with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Effective teaching of skills is combined with good opportunities for children to learn through play.
- A wide range of stimulating activities enriches children's learning experiences.

Commentary

56. Staff plan a variety of activities and with good teaching most children will attain the early learning goals by the end of the year. Many already have good skills of cutting, gluing, drawing and applying paint. They are given many opportunities to practise these skills as they are encouraged to choose activities in play situations. Children are given a wide experience of musical instruments and find great pleasure when they play together as they sing nursery rhymes. They often make up their own stories and have free access to musical instruments to accompany their story telling. Children benefit from opportunities to dress up and loved putting

crowns and cloaks on as they created stories about kings and queens. Most children achieve well in this area.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve satisfactorily and sometimes well with speaking and listening skills.
- Year 4 pupils achieve reading standards in line with those expected for pupils of their age.
- Year 2 pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment but a significant proportion are attaining below average standards in reading.
- Standards of handwriting are now average.
- The improvements in standards in some aspects of English are as a result of much improved planning and teaching.
- Pupils' writing skills are below average across the school.
- The quality of subject leadership is good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

Commentary

57. Although there remain some pupils who underachieve in English, mainly in writing, there has been a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards were well below average. They are now average in most aspects of English other than writing. When related to their prior levels of attainment, pupils achieve satisfactorily with most aspects of English. This is as a result of much improved teaching. Boys do, though, achieve less well than girls across the school.
58. Teaching is consistently satisfactory with some good and very good teaching observed, with the work in pupils' books showing clear signs of progress and improvement as a result of this satisfactory and good teaching. Pupils have mainly positive attitudes and will persevere even though they may find the learning difficult. This is a result of the good relationship with their teacher. Marking is now often good and helps pupils to improve and the school has good assessment systems in place to check regularly the pace of pupils' progress. Targets are set, but as yet pupils are not always sufficiently aware of them and they are too little involved in self-assessment.
59. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily and often make good progress in lessons. This happens particularly when the work set is rigorously matched to their needs, or when teaching assistants question and challenge them to do their best.
60. The school has put great emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, to good effect. Pupils achieve the expected standard for their age and stage and often make good progress. Particularly good use is made of 'talk partners' and drama, and teachers and teaching assistants frequently provide good role models for speaking and listening.
61. Attainment and progress in reading is a major priority for the school and teachers are knowledgeable about the teaching of reading and guiding groups and individuals with their reading, so that pupils achieve as well as they can. Pupils are well able and confident to use a range of techniques when tackling new words and they have a good phonic knowledge. Most of the current Year 4 pupils achieve standards in line with expectations for their age and stage. Of the current Year 2 pupils, a significant minority are likely to attain the higher Level 3 by July 2004. However, a fairly large proportion, whilst achieving satisfactorily, are reading at a level below Year 2 expectations. Many of these pupils have identified difficulties with their learning. Pupils enjoy books and some of them read regularly at home. Older pupils are able to use the library and the classification system thoughtfully. As yet, there is no planned programme to

develop pupils' skills to research, or to skim and scan text, or to make reference notes to use later.

62. Standards of handwriting are now average. This marks an improvement since the previous inspection. Many pupils are able to use a joined, legible style and some are learning to use pen when their handwriting is of a sufficiently good quality. However, the left-handed pupils are not always taught how to sit, or how to position their paper or book correctly.
63. Standards of writing are below average. Pupils do sometimes write at length and the school's regular and very helpful 'unaided writing' assessments give clear indicators of an individual's progress, often from a low starting point. The school has itself identified issues to do with improving spelling, grammar, the need to teach pupils to structure, edit and re-draft their writing with a mind to audience and purpose. Inspectors agree that these are areas requiring improvement.
64. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has a good overview of standards and it is to her great credit that, given the high staff turnover, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in English has improved in so many aspects. She monitors regularly the quality of teaching, scrutinises planning and pupils' recorded work, and interviews pupils about their work. There are good assessment procedures in English, which are designed to help teachers to track the pupils' progress and the development of their skills. These good procedures now need to be used rigorously by all staff, and pupils need to be more closely involved in assessing their own work and progress toward their targets.
65. Resources are sufficient and of good quality. The school acknowledges that there are too few books available which are more likely to engage boys and motivate them to read more. There are plans in hand to improve provision.
66. There is good use of word processing and ICT skills to support the English curriculum.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

67. Literacy is satisfactorily used across the curriculum. There is some evidence of pupils using literacy in geography, history and religious education. There is a whole school plan to identify precisely when writing is to be used to support another subject, but as some staff are new this is not always used successfully. Additionally, as there are weaknesses in writing, some pupils do not have the necessary skills for what they are required to write.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are now rigorous monitoring systems for teaching, learning and planning.
- There is still some low attainment in the national tests at the end of Year 2.
- There are gaps in pupils' knowledge due to inconsistent teaching over time.
- The most able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged when they and the average pupils are given the same work.

Commentary

68. Pupils' attainment in national tests at the end of Year 2 is below average, though in 2003 it was average when compared to similar schools. However, standards seen during the inspection indicate that pupils in Years 2 and 4 now attain standards in line with the national averages. Achievement overall is satisfactory.

69. Pupils attain higher standards in computation than in shape, space and measures and data handling. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils do not know number bonds and multiplication facts as well as they should. This means that they are slow to solve problems in mental work and make mistakes in computation.
70. Teaching for the Year 1 and 2 pupils is satisfactory overall with some that is good. Planning does not always take account of the different levels of ability within the class. However, the focussed support from the teacher and the teaching assistant enables all pupils to complete their tasks. Pupils have good relationships with the teacher and other adults who support them and this helps them to develop positive attitudes towards the subject. Adults are good at questioning the pupils' thinking and asking 'how' and 'why?' This enables more able pupils to explain how they arrived at an answer using mathematical terms. In the discussion at the end of the lesson Year 1 pupils were able to use terms such as *heavier than*, *lighter than* and *balance* correctly.
71. The quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 is good. In the two lessons seen teachers were clear about what they wanted the pupils to learn. They explained new concepts and tasks carefully and so pupils were able to make good progress. The tasks planned interested the pupils and they were keen to get on with them. Sometimes the work for the average and above average pupils is often the same. This means that the most able pupils are sometimes insufficiently challenged and do not achieve as well as they could. However, in a Year 4 lesson, more able pupils were challenged to work on two-stage word problems and worked hard to approach the task logically and were pleased with their success. When pupils' recorded work is analysed, it is evident that there are some gaps in their mathematical experiences but the good teaching they are now receiving is rectifying this situation.
72. The leadership and management of the subject are good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has implemented a rigorous system of monitoring teachers' planning and observing lessons. This is helping to raise the standards pupils reach. The co-ordinator is aware of the weaknesses in the subject and has taken steps towards dealing with them. She has arranged support for teachers' planning and ways to improve teaching methods. Areas for development identified are formative assessment and target setting.

Mathematics across the curriculum

73. Provision across the curriculum is satisfactory. There are some opportunities for pupils to use mathematical facts and number patterns in science and geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.
- In the past, pupils have had too few opportunities to investigate and experiment.
- There is a lack of rigorous assessment in science.
- The recently appointed co-ordinator is gaining a clear overview of what is required to improve the subject.

Commentary

74. The quantity of pupils' recorded work seen during the inspection was satisfactory but its quality was unsatisfactory. There is little evidence in their science books of pupils investigating or experimenting, or devising for themselves ways to record their scientific findings. Too often their work in science has been heavily dependent on photocopied worksheets, which they

complete, but this adds little to their scientific understanding. As a result, they do not achieve as much as they should in developing their scientific skills and understanding. Pupils do achieve satisfactorily and make satisfactory progress in learning scientific knowledge and facts. In the previous inspection standards were well below average. Standards are now below average. Although the teaching of science observed during the inspection was satisfactory, from the unsatisfactory quality of much of the work in pupils' books and the perceptive comments of the co-ordinator, improvements in teaching are quite recent. There has been too much unsatisfactory teaching in the past, limiting pupils' achievement over time.

75. Teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, with some good teaching. In a good lesson observed in Year 3, taught by the science co-ordinator, pupils were just beginning to understand the concept of an investigation and the nature of a fair test.
76. There are few systems or procedures in place to assess pupils' work in science. Often, when their recorded work is marked references are made to the quality of the spelling or punctuation, rather than comments on the scientific content or the level of understanding they have shown. There is little rigorous assessment of pupils' work in science and consequently no proper tracking of the development of their skills.
77. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The headteacher has taken on responsibility for leading and co-ordinating science only since January 2004, so he has had little opportunity to influence standards. He has already started, though, to teach science to classes in the school so has made a good beginning with trying to raise standards. Through this process he is also gaining a helpful overview of the subject. There is a very good action plan, which clearly outlines how science is to be improved and improvements monitored.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision for ICT is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are enthusiastic about using computers.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 is good.
- The school is very well equipped to deliver the ICT curriculum.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

78. The school has 14 computers in the central learning support area that also houses the library, and one or two in each classroom. There is an inter-active whiteboard in this area and all computers are networked. There is a wide range of software to support other subjects of the curriculum as well as for developing specific ICT skills.
79. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is good. This is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. Work produced shows that pupils have used a variety of programs for writing and drawing as well as playing number and spelling games. Their mouse and keyboard skills are good and they can log in and access programs independently. They can save, retrieve and print their own work. Examples of work show that they use a variety of fonts, colours and sizes. Pupils can remember a long string of commands to program into the *Roamer* to make it move forward and draw a square. Achievement is good.
80. Attainment at the end of Year 4 is good. This is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils are very familiar with using the inter-active whiteboard. They confidently explain and demonstrate to others what they have learnt.

81. The teaching is good. Teachers' planning identifies clearly what pupils are to learn and these objectives are shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Tasks are interesting with realistic levels of challenge for all pupils
82. The leadership of ICT is very good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and visionary and has very good subject knowledge that she shares with her colleagues. All staff have taken part in training and feel confident to deliver the curriculum. Assessment procedures are developing and beginning to provide an ongoing record of pupils' work that can be used to plan future work.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

83. The use of ICT in other subjects is satisfactory. Work in English and history is word processed, and art work is produced using the program *Dazzle*. Pupils use the Internet for research. There are good adult role model examples around the school in displays.

HUMANITIES

84. This area of the curriculum was not a focus for the inspection. History and geography are taught regularly but it was not possible to make a judgement about teaching or standards. Two lessons in religious education were seen and in addition inspectors looked at displays around the school and at samples of pupils' work.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve standards in line with expectations.
- Visits to places of interest and visitors into school enrich the teaching, pupils' experiences and their achievement.

Commentary

85. Standards match the levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus and the diocesan education board and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has made sure that pupils study two major religions in line with the agreed syllabus.
86. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of other faith groups. Pupils in Year 1 enjoyed comparing birth and wedding ceremonies of Christians and Hindus. Pupils have a sound understanding of the significance of Divali to the Hindu people. Pupils in Year 4 understand the importance of the Torah to Jewish people. All pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of popular bible stories and pupils in Year 3 have explored journeys of faith and pilgrimages. Pupils in Year 4 visited Wells cathedral to join with pupils of a similar age in worship and prayer. They created their own pilgrim's prayer to share with others during the visit. Ministers from local churches regularly visit the school and talk to pupils. These experiences enrich the religious education programme, which pupils appreciate and respond to with enthusiasm.
87. Teaching is satisfactory. The subject is well resourced and has good access to books and artefacts from the diocesan library.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology, music, physical education

88. This area of the curriculum was not a focus for the inspection. No lessons were seen so it was not possible to judge standards or teaching. These subjects are, though, all taught regularly.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

89. Only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about overall provision.
90. The school sees pupils' personal development as an important part of its programme. Provision includes 'circle time'³, where pupils are invited to exchange views and opinions in a supportive atmosphere. Work on diet, health, sex, drugs and personal safety are provided. Pupils are helped to distinguish between their rights and their responsibilities towards others. The programme helps them to become more mature, gain confidence and interact with others. The school council provides a helpful forum for pupils to put forward their views and they begin to understand that their views are valued. School council representatives also participated in a West Somerset meeting of representatives of councils from across the area. They met with the local member of parliament and had the opportunity to be better informed about their contribution to, and their responsibilities within, a democracy.

³ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3
<i>Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).</i>	