

INSPECTION REPORT

STAFFORD LEYS COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leicester Forest East

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119965

Acting Headteacher: Mr G Rushton

Lead inspector: Mr M J Weaver

Dates of inspection: 28 June to 1 July 2004

Inspection number: 258002

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4-10
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 475

School address: Stafford Leys
Leicester Forest East
Leicester
Leicestershire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs G Fox

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is bigger than average. It is situated in Leicester Forest East in an area of average socio-economic circumstances. The attainment of children on entry to school is average. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage with 60 pupils from 12 other minority ethnic groups. Two children speak English as an additional language, both in the early stages of learning English. Fifty-six pupils have special educational needs, which is below average; these pupils have a range of learning needs, the majority having social, emotional and behavioural, and specific learning difficulties. Nine pupils have a statement of special educational need and this proportion is broadly average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals at 1.5 per cent is below the national average. The number of pupils joining school after the normal starting age and leaving before the end of Year 5 is below average. The school received the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2003 and Investor in People Award in 2004. The headteacher resigned at Easter 2004. The school currently has an acting headteacher. A new headteacher has been appointed to start in autumn 2004. Thirty per cent of teaching staff have left over the last year and this level of turnover is high. The school is currently subject to a building programme to add a further six classrooms to replace three demountable classrooms buildings.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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23453	Mrs C Cressey	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Geography History The Foundation Stage English as an additional language
21103	Mrs V Ives	Team inspector	English Music Physical education Religious education Special educational needs
22657	Mr M Madeley	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Citizenship Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides an adequate standard of education but nevertheless has serious weaknesses. Although standards are broadly average in nearly all subjects, the weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school do not ensure that standards improve. Although much of the teaching is generally satisfactory, there is a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching and too little good or very good teaching. Although many pupils achieve satisfactorily, higher-attaining pupils do not achieve well enough, resulting in the school's giving unsatisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- standards in mathematics are below average;
- the provision for children in the Reception classes is very good;
- standards in information and communication technology in Year 5 are above the nationally expected level;
- the proportion of good and very good teaching is lower than that seen nationally and the percentage of unsatisfactory teaching is much higher; this means that pupils could do better;
- the low level of accuracy and use of assessment do not ensure that standards rise in Years 1 to 5, but the arrangements to support pupils who have special educational needs are good and enable pupils to achieve well;
- leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory and information from the monitoring of lessons is not used sufficiently to improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- governors are very supportive but they are not effectively involved in ensuring that the school sets sufficiently challenging targets;
- pupils' moral and social development is good, enabling pupils to develop good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. They enjoy school and the level of attendance is high.

The school has made unsatisfactory progress since the time of the last inspection. The effectiveness of leadership and management has declined. Standards have begun to rise in English and some aspects of science but higher-attaining pupils are not achieving well enough. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has increased and the unsatisfactory quality of assessment does not ensure that all pupils receive sufficient challenge. Governors have only recently been made aware of standards attained by pupils when compared with similar schools. They are not sufficiently involved in setting the school's strategic direction to ensure that standards rise.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is unsatisfactory overall. Children in the Reception classes achieve very well. Many are on course to exceed the national goals for early learning by the end of Reception and many exceed them now. Current standards in Year 2 are average in reading, writing, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Standards in Year 5 are average in English and mathematics and above average in science and information and communication technology. However, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall as too few pupils attain the higher levels. Insufficient action is being taken to remedy the underachievement. Standards in all other subjects are average overall but firm judgements were not possible in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, physical education, music or religious education because they were not a focus of the inspection. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall.** Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, moral, social and cultural development are good overall, and their spiritual development is satisfactory. Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is generally adequate. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Reception children make a very good start to their learning and this is satisfactorily built upon in Year 1, but pupils' learning in Year 2 and in Years 3 to 5 is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and pupils with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. Although teaching is unsatisfactory overall, some examples of very good teaching were seen during the inspection. The effectiveness of these very good lessons is diluted by the inconsistent level of challenge provided and weaknesses in some teachers' subject knowledge. Assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory and does not ensure that work is well matched to pupils' abilities. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities in Years 1 to 5 that are enhanced by a wide range of visits to places of educational interest, and by visitors to school. The curriculum in the Reception classes is very good. Provision for pupils' care and welfare is satisfactory; links with the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory overall. The acting headteacher provides unsatisfactory leadership and management but has not received training to fulfil this temporary role. School improvement planning is not rigorous and lacks specific learning targets, particularly for higher-attaining pupils. Many members of staff are relatively new to their roles of responsibility, work hard and are keen to succeed but have not received good direction for some of their work. The role of governors is unsatisfactory as they are not sufficiently involved in the strategic planning of the school and have not received sufficient information to enable them to understand its weaknesses. The school has a satisfactory race equality policy and most other statutory requirements are met except for the requirements relating to collective worship and the publication of information, neither of which is met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally satisfied with the school but a significant proportion of them believe that they receive too little information about their children's progress and they do not believe that

their views are taken into account. Inspectors agree with these perceptions. Pupils enjoy school and many say that learning is fun.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve achievement and raise standards in English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management.
- Develop and consistently apply an effective assessment system.
- Improve the quality of teaching and ensure a consistent challenge for all higher-attaining pupils.
- Improve communication with parents, informing them of the progress their children make, of the race equality policy and of their right to withdraw children from religious education.
- Ensure that acts of collective worship meet requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is unsatisfactory overall. Standards in the Reception class are likely to be above average by the end of the Reception year and children's achievement in their first year of schooling is very good. Standards are average in Year 2 and Year 5 but pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall because the more able pupils do not achieve to their potential. Assessment of pupils' learning is not accurate and does not influence the teaching sufficiently so that all pupils, particularly those with potential for high attainment, make the progress of which they are capable.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 2 and 5 are showing signs of improvement but they have not been raised enough because the quality of teaching is not as effective as the typical school nationally.
- Children in the Reception classes achieve very well and most exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.
- Standards in science and information and communication technology in Year 5 are above average.
- Assessment information is unsatisfactory and work is not well matched to pupils' abilities.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.4 (16.7)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.0 (14.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.2 (16.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 78 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. The results for Year 2 pupils in the 2003 national tests were below average in reading but average in writing and mathematics. Year 2 pupils' rate of improvement has remained broadly in line with the national improvement trend over the last four years. When compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards have been well below the average for these similar schools in reading and below average in writing for the last three years and consistently below or well below their average in mathematics for the last five years. This trend of underachievement is not being rigorously addressed by the school and standards continue to be too low, particularly for the more able pupils.
2. There are no national tests for pupils in Year 5. Inspection findings show that, although standards in Years 2 and 5 in reading are average, they have improved across the school because of a greater emphasis being placed on reading. Pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work has also improved over the course of the current year and are average. Even so, in both reading and writing, the more able pupils do not do well enough because their work is not matched to their abilities. Despite an improved focus

on mathematics to raise standards across the school, the lack of rigour in remedying the causes of underachievement, particularly in Years 2 to 5, has resulted in standards which, although average overall, continue to be much worse than those found in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. This is because the more able pupils are not being sufficiently challenged. This key issue from the previous inspection has not been tackled effectively. The high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, particularly in Year 2, is having a detrimental impact on pupils' learning, and their progress has significantly slowed since their time in the Reception and Year 1 classes. In addition, the quality of the assessment of pupils' work and the teachers' use of assessment information has not improved since the previous inspection and neither has been developed sufficiently to help raise standards.

3. Although standards in Year 2 in science are average, pupils' attainment in scientific enquiry and investigation skills has improved. However, teacher assessment is too generous, particularly for the more able, because members of staff do not accurately assess pupils' work against the National Curriculum levels and the more able pupils do not achieve as well as they might as work is not sufficiently matched to their needs. Standards in information and communication technology have dropped at Year 2 since the previous inspection and are now average. Standards in science and information and communication technology are above average at Year 5, because a greater than average proportion of pupils are exceeding the nationally expected levels for their age and the work is well matched to higher-attaining pupils to enable them to achieve well.
4. Standards are above average in the Reception year in all areas of learning because of the very good teaching, which enables children of all abilities to achieve very well. This reflects the very good provision and demonstrates what can be achieved when teaching is effective. Very effective leadership and management in the Foundation Stage are provided by the co-ordinator, together with very effective support for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who do not speak little English. Good use is made of accurate assessment information that ensures that all children receive well-focused, exciting and challenging work.
5. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans because of the effective provision they receive from most teachers and learning support assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and attain as well as their peers as most are not at an early stage of English acquisition. The school has a register of pupils who are gifted and talented that focuses on pupils' learning in English and mathematics, but they receive the same work as other pupils and this is unsatisfactory. Members of staff inform parents of external clubs that could support their children in creative and sporting subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, values and personal development are good. The school provides effectively for pupils' moral, social and cultural development, and satisfactorily for their spiritual development though the requirements for collective worship are not fully met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning; they are well behaved and enjoy school.

- Good strategies are in place to promote pupils' positive behaviour and self-esteem.
- Pupils develop a good sense of values about social, moral and cultural matters.
- The level of attendance is high.

Commentary

6. Children in the Reception classes settle into the established day-to-day routines well. They respond positively to the very good provision given by the teaching and non-teaching staff. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school are good and their behaviour is well managed by most members of staff, who consistently apply strategies to encourage good behaviour and raise pupils' self-esteem. This provision is similar to that at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils work with interest and take pride in their work. They respond positively to praise and show good awareness of the high expectations of behaviour required in lessons and around the school; this is a particularly positive factor, taking into account the disruption on site caused by the new building work, with staff managing playtimes well. Pupils' behaviour deteriorated in several lessons, however, when the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory because of ineffective classroom management, and had a detrimental impact on the work of many of the pupils.
7. Pupils' personal and social development is good and has a positive impact on the quality of relationships between pupils and with staff. Most pupils show respect for each other and on many occasions work co-operatively in pairs and groups as required. They share resources well and mostly listen to what their classmates are saying in answering questions. They move about the school in an orderly fashion and take good care of school property. During the inspection, more confident pupils were frequently seen to help their classmates who appeared insecure. Pupils listen attentively in assemblies, and at lunchtimes eat their lunch in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere. This results in pupils from different social and ethnic groups being well integrated throughout many aspects of the school day.
8. The school provides a strong moral framework and sense of community for its pupils. Pupils are involved in establishing the rules in their classrooms, which most pupils keep. They are encouraged to take responsibility for the environment and to consider those less fortunate than themselves. Adequate opportunities are provided to develop the pupils' spiritual awareness, such as in a Year 1 group assembly where one pupil said that the music *'made us think of floating, flowers, a baby and summer'*. Other opportunities for developing pupils' spiritual awareness are not planned for in subjects but on occasions occur spontaneously, such as in history and music. Pupils' cultural development is good, with pupils developing an awareness of the cultures represented by their classmates and with most classes starting the day with registers being called in different languages. Pupils' awareness of other cultures is enhanced by a wide range of visits by each year group to places of interest linked to various subjects and by visitors to the school.
9. The school achieves levels of attendance well above the national average and this has been consistent over a number of years. Pupils enjoy school and their punctuality is good. On occasions, several families take extended holidays in term time, but receive work for their children to complete while on holiday. Attendance and punctuality are monitored closely. Because of the pupils' good behaviour, no exclusions have been necessary in the last year.

Attendance (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	4.5
National data:	5.8

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.0
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 broadly satisfactory. Teaching is unsatisfactory in several classes but is very good in the Reception classes. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a wide range of visits and by visitors to school. Pupils are well cared for but not enough is done to seek their views. Links with parents are satisfactory but good links exist with other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning in the Reception classes is of high quality but is unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 5 overall. Assessment is very good in Reception but unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 5.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching is found in several classes but, overall, the percentage of good or very good teaching is less than is typical nationally and the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching is high, particularly in Year 2. Teaching and learning in the Reception classes is very good.
- Most teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour.
- Assessment of pupils' learning is not effective for ensuring that standards are systematically improved in Years 1 to 5.
- Higher-attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged, but pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (7%)	22 (52%)	12 (29%)	5 (12%)	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.

10. Good teaching was seen in several classes in Years 1 to 5 but the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall because of the high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in some classes in Years 2, 3 and 5. This represents a decline in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection, when teaching was good; it is less effective in meeting the needs of the more able pupils and the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has increased. Standards in English, scientific enquiry in Years 2 and 5, and in information and communication technology at Year 5, have risen over the last year because of improved planning and well-focused teaching. Insufficient improvement is evident, however, in mathematics, where work is not well matched to pupils' individual abilities and the more able pupils continue to underachieve. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has a marked adverse impact on pupils' learning, particularly in Year 2, where one in six lessons were unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory provision is also evident in teaching to meet the specific needs of the more able pupils in several subjects. Although teaching in Year 1 is satisfactory, some low expectation in Year 2 leads to pupils' making slow progress; their attainment when younger has not been effectively built upon and their performance compared to similar schools is unsatisfactory. Teaching in the Reception classes is of very good quality enabling children to achieve very well, with a high proportion already having commenced work in the National Curriculum.
11. In the good lessons, teachers ensure that pupils work at a good pace and provide plenty of opportunities for them to offer ideas and suggestions. In these lessons, pupils achieve well and develop their confidence, skills and self-esteem. Most teachers' affirmative manner and high expectations for pupils' behaviour have developed positive attitudes in pupils, resulting in their being attentive and listening closely to teachers. In the unsatisfactory lessons, some teachers lack the necessary subject expertise, fail to provide sufficient challenge for more able pupils, and for less able pupils in one of the Year 5 classes, and spend too much time trying to keep the pupils' attention. As a result, a high percentage of lessons at Year 2, and pupils' achievement, are unsatisfactory. Although co-ordinators give a satisfactory lead, their management is mostly ineffective as

it does not ensure that standards are raised through the monitoring of lessons, or by gaining or using accurate assessment.

12. The recently appointed assessment co-ordinator has taken a more rigorous and effective approach to the quality of assessment during the current academic year because school records have proven to be inaccurate in several subjects and inconsistent across the year groups. This very recently improved approach in comparing pupils' work to levels of the National Curriculum has resulted in assessment now being satisfactory in English. It remains unsatisfactory in mathematics and science and has a detrimental impact on the challenge that is provided for pupils of all abilities, particularly for higher attainers. Assessment in all subjects other than English, mathematics and science is conducted to a high degree but for only nine pupils in each year group, with teachers recording the work of this small sample of pupils and charting the findings against the school's own notional averages. Teachers work hard in doing this but the system is onerous; it does not include all pupils in each year group and so it cannot be used to track the progress of all pupils. Assessment in the Reception classes is very good and tracks children's performance well; it enables teachers and learning support assistants to provide work fully appropriate to children's abilities and enables them to achieve well.
13. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Good use is made of pupils' individual learning plans to achieve the planned short-term targets, which are realistically challenging and reviewed regularly. Effective strategies are used to involve pupils in whole-class sessions and to enable them to succeed. The specialist teachers make a significant contribution to this provision and have a considerable influence in guiding the learning of pupils with statements of special educational need.

The curriculum

The curriculum provides satisfactory breadth and balance that is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits. Staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits to places of interest contribute well to the pupils' learning.
- Effective focus on pupils' personal and social education helps them understand how to behave responsibly.
- Residential visits are used well to develop pupils' social skills and environmental awareness.
- Some acts of collective worship do not meet statutory requirements and insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' spiritual awareness.
- The outdoor accommodation for Reception children does not make an effective contribution to their physical development.

Commentary

14. The curriculum meets the statutory requirement of teaching the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. This is similar to the findings at the previous inspection. Each subject leader uses national guidance satisfactorily to provide an adequate curriculum with topics that are carefully chosen and interesting. These are supported by well-planned visits to places of educational interest. The governors have decided that the school will not teach a programme of sex and relationships education,

other than those elements which occur within the science curriculum, as they believe that this is better done at secondary school. The school satisfactorily teaches pupils about substance use and abuse through science, with support from the local authority drug awareness unit. Pupils attend assembly every day. Although some acts of collective worship are led well by the local vicar, a large proportion of the others do not always meet the requirement for acts of collective worship because they place insufficient focus on developing pupils' spiritual awareness.

15. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum. All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff are well aware of pupils' individual needs, and those who need additional support are identified early. Pupils' individual education plans are thoughtfully written, the targets are specific and measurable and pupils' progress is carefully monitored.
16. The school operates a well-planned personal, social, health and citizenship programme. Each class receives a lesson each week where the programme explores issues such as friendships, personal safety, 'people who help us' and helping others. The promotion of the 'Friendship Stop'¹ at playtimes is well executed, and pupils show good support for less confident classmates. Pupils are encouraged to think of others who are less fortunate than themselves and significant sums have been collected for charity from activities where pupils also have a good time.
17. Pupils in each year group visit places of interest which are well linked with the topics they study. For example, during their study of the Tudors, pupils visit Bosworth Field where they learn about the struggle for the crown of England. The school encourages pupils to be involved in sports; their attendance at clubs is good and the range of clubs, although restricted by the current building programme, is good. The integral community facility allows pupils to take part in fee-paying dance, tennis tuition and various other clubs. The 'Walking Bus' provides a useful service in ensuring that pupils arrive home safely, and daily early morning and after-school support clubs make good provision for pupils whose parents are working. The two residential visits greatly enhance the school's provision in geography, physical education, history and science and contribute well to developing pupils' moral, social and environmental awareness.
18. The accommodation is adequate, with new building work to cater for six classes currently under construction for occupation in the autumn term. The school makes satisfactory use of additional rooms such as the library, computer room and music room, although the music room becomes too hot as the ventilation system is not operating. The open-plan accommodation has a detrimental impact on learning. For example, one class was chanting a multiplication table whilst another class was trying to listen to the teacher; on other occasions, pupils in class groups use the open corridors as learning resource areas and this detracts from teaching in adjacent classrooms. Parents and pupils have complained about the unpleasant smell and lack of cleanliness of the toilets and inspectors agree with these concerns. The school playing field is substantial and caters well for pupils during lunch and playtimes, particularly as the hard surface playgrounds are cramped because of the building work, and lack sufficient seating areas. Space in the Reception classes is used well to promote children's learning, with good opportunities given for children to undertake role-play. Members of staff use well their knowledge of how young children learn and provide many practical activities for them. Although the indoor accommodation is satisfactory to promote their physical development, the outdoor

¹ The Friendship stop is like a bus stop where a pupil can stand if they do have anyone to play with or need a friend.

provision does not give children opportunities to use large climbing equipment, a soft surface is not provided, there is no seating or covered area and the playground is uninviting.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for its pupils. Provision for pupils' welfare and health is satisfactory. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils is satisfactory. Pupils' involvement through their views being sought, valued and acted upon is broadly satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures for child protection are good.
- Pupils enjoy being in school and the parents feel that their children are well cared for.
- Pupils have a positive and trusting relationship with staff and are confident to approach them with any problems.

Commentary

19. Child protection procedures are effective and well understood by the staff. Well-established routines are maintained with the social services relating to pupils that may be at risk. This is similar to the findings at the time of the previous inspection. Road safety officers, police and paramedics visit the school and organise activities for the pupils to promote their awareness of personal safety. Arrangements for health and safety are generally satisfactory but a few concerns for pupils' safety were found and reported to the senior management and governors. The rotten chain link fencing leading to the school site was being replaced during the inspection. This was a safety concern for parents.
20. Pupils enjoy school and relate well to each other in class and at playtimes. Members of staff supervise pupils well at playtimes and this ensures pupils' safety. The introduction of the 'Buddy System' and 'Friendship Stops' support pupils in developing good behaviour and a caring attitude for others. Pupils trust staff and are happy to talk with a known adult if they have any concerns. This is particularly evident at playtime when staff and pupils relate well to each other. The school has a thorough induction process that allows new children joining the Reception classes to get to know their new teachers and surroundings. Parents feel that their children are well cared for and inspectors agree.
21. Although pupils express their views in informal ways, there is no structured process provided for them, such as a school council or other forum, to give their comments on how the school might be improved. The school cares well for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements. Pupils are quickly identified and their progress is monitored and supported thoroughly. Systems for pupils' academic progress are not sufficiently developed, and pupils' personal development is monitored informally rather than as a systematically managed procedure.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from a wide range of effective links with the local community.
- The Parents and Friends Association provides effective support by fund-raising for resources and integrating new parents.
- The school communicates with parents regularly but parents believe they are still not sufficiently informed.

Commentary

22. Good links are held with the local parish church and the vicar regularly takes a morning assembly. Pupils have visited a mosque and a synagogue to develop their awareness of other religions in the community, and various parents from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds visit school to talk about their own culture. This provision contributes well to pupils' awareness of other cultures and their traditions. Pupils have studied the activities in a local shopping precinct as part of a geography project and presented their findings to the management of the precinct. There are good links with a local home for the blind and a resident from the home visits school with her guide dog, giving pupils greater understanding of some of the needs of blind people in their community. The school is used regularly as a community centre for a wide range of activities each week, helping to develop links with families and with the local community.
23. The Parents and Friends Association is very active and provides considerable financial support to the school, such as purchasing books, equipment for playtime and a CD player. This helps develop the partnership between the school, parents and the community. Several parents and a former teacher visit school to support pupils in developing their reading skills.
24. The school provides parents with regular information and newsletters about day-to-day activities, the curriculum and their children's progress. However, a significant number of parents do not think that they are kept well informed about their children's progress or their homework. Also, a large percentage of parents are concerned at the inconsistency in the provision of homework from week to week and between different teachers. Although the homework policy has been sent to parents, many of them remain unaware of the school's expectation for homework. Inspection findings show that parents do not receive consistently good information about their children's progress and that some parents have not received the homework policy. Little homework was seen to be given during the inspection week. Several pupils report that the quantity and frequency is inconsistent. Scrutiny of the pupils' homework books confirms these comments. Parents whose children have special educational needs are regularly involved in discussions with the class teachers, kept fully informed of the support that their children are receiving, and involved in termly reviews of the targets set in pupils' individual education plans.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Leadership and management of the acting headteacher are unsatisfactory because the work of the school is insufficiently focused on raising standards. The leadership of key staff is satisfactory but several aspects of day-to-day management are unsatisfactory. Governance is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strategic planning for the development of the school is unsatisfactory.
- Co-ordinators are hard working and keen to improve the areas for which they have responsibilities but lack clear direction.
- The school has a positive ethos for pupils' care and welfare but unsatisfactory day-to-day management systems fail to ensure that pupils' progress is monitored or improved effectively.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not used effectively to improve pupils' learning.
- Leadership and management for pupils with special educational needs are good.
- Governors are very supportive of the school but have not been sufficiently involved in setting the direction for the school and are unaware of the school's weaknesses.

Commentary

25. The strategic leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory. This has declined since the previous inspection. The acting headteacher has drawn up an interim school improvement plan but it is unsatisfactory because it does not have a sharp focus on improving standards, and the underachievement of many pupils has not been identified or targeted for rigorous corrective action. This is compounded in that the plan is for one year only and does not identify subjects that are to be maintained or developed in the medium term. It lacks quantifiable measures to judge the success of the provision and has no key milestones at which progress can be checked. Subject co-ordinators have developed three-year plans for their areas of responsibility and contribute to the overall plan but this longer-term planning is not included in the whole-school plan. This is a weakness as it does not use the appropriate information that is available.
26. Co-ordinators, including those new to their roles of responsibility, are keen to see their subject and management systems develop. This is clearly evident in the recent work conducted by various co-ordinators such as for English, where standards have begun to improve, and for special educational needs. The assessment co-ordinator has identified the need for accuracy in assessing pupils' work, and is beginning to give an effective lead to ensure that members of staff fully understand all pupils' level of attainment to enable appropriate work to be provided to them. Co-ordinators for subjects other than English, mathematics and science have generally satisfactory plans to develop their subjects but the assessment systems used do not contribute effectively to raising standards. Assessment does not take sufficient account of gender, ability, or background. This inhibits the monitoring of standards and provision. Although teachers have generic job descriptions, descriptions for the role of co-ordinator are not in place and there is a lack of clarity about subject management roles.
27. Despite the high turnover of staff, the caring atmosphere of the school has been maintained since the previous inspection and pupils receive the support and guidance they need for their personal development and welfare. The behaviour code is well known to pupils, and many are able to celebrate their work in school and achievements from out-of-school activities in assemblies.
28. Senior staff and co-ordinators monitor lessons. However, the quality of monitoring is weak as it does not identify the quality of learning taking place by pupils of different abilities and is not effective in raising standards. Additionally, the records of monitoring do not give sufficient indication as to how groups of pupils might improve their learning

and do not reflect the intentions of the more recently introduced teaching and learning policy.

29. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator provides good leadership, advice and organisation. Good support is provided by two competent special educational needs teachers. Statutory requirements are fully met, and the inclusion of all pupils with special educational needs is good.

30. Until very recently, governors have not been provided with school or national test results information to enable them to be aware of the school's weaknesses, particularly the underachievement of many pupils in Year 2 when compared to similar schools, and other year groups. The chair of governors has been heavily involved in the financial and site meetings for the new building and this has absorbed a great deal of time, particularly in the absence of a substantive headteacher. However, governors have not been involved in establishing an effective direction for the school to raise standards, particularly as the school improvement plan has not focused on specific standards to be attained. Apart from some ongoing safety concerns, most statutory requirements are met, except for those relating to collective worship and those for reporting to parents on the race equality policy and their right to withdraw their children from religious education.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	950,628
Total expenditure	926,869
Expenditure per pupil	1,982

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-4,396
Balance carried forward to the next	19,363

31. The school's spending has been prudent, taking into account the governors' commitment to retain small class sizes. This commitment to small class sizes resulted, however, in overspending on the budget in 2002-2003, but the policy has been successfully accommodated during the current academic year. Despite the small class sizes, insufficient attention is given to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they might. Appropriate financial systems are in place and allocations to subjects are sensibly set, but the school does not pursue the principles of best value other than for basic purchased services.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

32. The provision in the Reception classes is very good. This quality has been sustained since the last inspection and is a main strength of the school. Children are catered for in three Reception classes. The overall attainment level of most children entering the Reception classes varies from year to year but at the time of the inspection was average, with a broad spread of attainment and pre-school experiences.
33. Teaching is very good, resulting in children being confident, well-motivated and very successful learners. Members of staff provide very effective support and have a very secure understanding of how young children learn, resulting in children in all three classes achieving very well and making significant gains in their learning. The majority of children attain the national goals for early learning in all areas before they leave the Reception year. Over 50 per cent of the children are already working appropriately within the National Curriculum for literacy and mathematics.
34. Provision for children with special educational needs is good and ensures that they receive the support they need to make good progress. Provision is also very good for children at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. External assessment of these children is effective and members of the support staff provide extra help, amending tasks as necessary to meet individual needs and helping them to make rapid progress.
35. Leadership and management are successful in creating a very strong team that is committed to providing children with a high quality education that extends their learning at every opportunity. The provision for outdoor play and physical development is a weakness, but is restricted at present by the building works.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many children are on course to exceed the expected levels by the time they leave the Reception year; their achievement is very good because of high quality teaching.
- Children are confident, independent and eager learners who behave very well.
- The children play well with each other and readily take turns.

Commentary

36. The very good teaching results in very good achievement and the majority of the children exceed the national goals for early learning, reaching them well before the end of the Reception year. Tasks and activities are very well planned and sessions provide a very good balance of planned activities and those where children can choose for themselves. This makes school an enjoyable experience that promotes a love of learning and enables children to become highly successful learners who achieve very well.

37. Relationships within the Foundation Stage are very good. Children enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They eagerly choose from the wide range of stimulating activities available and are very keen to learn new skills and explore new ideas. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour while at the same time being sensitive to those children who are immature or have special educational needs. As a result, children develop a very good understanding of appropriate behaviour and of what is right and wrong. They share resources, work and play together very well in a variety of situations. The children show friendship to newcomers and where possible involve those who speak negligible English to join in with their activities. They negotiate their use of resources in an atmosphere of sharing and co-operation, taking turns, helping one another with materials and tools, sharing ideas and solving problems. Children readily share their snacks with visitors or help each other with the intricate task of using sticky-tape to attach a head to a fearsome looking Tyrannosaurus Rex. All children work hard at challenging tasks, such as writing stories about dinosaurs or creating their own models. They follow their teacher's suggestions on how to improve their handwriting and how to mix the right shade of paint to make their models more lifelike. As a result of the very good interventions from teachers and parent helpers, children work independently for sustained periods of time and are eager to share their successes with classmates, parents and other adults.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of basic skills is very good.
- Children are confident and eager readers and achieve very well in their writing skills.
- Children are well on course to exceed the expected levels by the end of Reception and achieve very well.

Commentary

38. Although children enter the Reception year with average attainment, the consistently very good teaching results in children achieving very well, with over 50 per cent of children exceeding the national goals for early learning and already working within the early stages of the National Curriculum; the remaining children are on target to attain the early learning goals by the end of their Reception year. The teaching of basic literacy skills is given a high priority and is a feature of most of the children's activities. As a result, children are very successful communicators who read and write for a wide range of purposes and contexts, with higher-attaining children independently extending their writing skills to record information about dinosaurs.
39. Children are attentive and eager listeners to stories, comments and instructions. Many are able to provide detailed spoken comments when asked and this is developed well by teachers and support staff who take opportunities to extend children's thinking and speaking. Children respond well to the many opportunities available to engage in conversations, and confidently use interesting, well-structured vocabulary to explain their ideas, ask questions or recount family events and personal successes in out-of-school activities, such as swimming or judo.

40. The teachers provide a range of very well planned, imaginative games and activities which promote children's understanding of letters and sounds. Children use their increasing knowledge of sounds to write simple words independently. Higher-attaining children write extended sentences which tell a story in sequence, some recording information gained from non-fiction books. Sentences usually include appropriately placed capital letters and full stops, simple words are spelled correctly and more complex ones are plausible. Even the most reluctant and immature child becomes motivated to write about exciting topics such as dinosaurs or small creatures. All children are competent readers and use their knowledge of sounds to read unfamiliar words. More able children locate information in topic books and use simple dictionaries and word lists to help them spell unfamiliar words. Younger children receive support to help them learn new skills, such as learning to recognise initial sounds or improving their handwriting skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and support staff provide a wide range of opportunities to extend children's learning.
- Basic number skills and mathematical vocabulary are reinforced at every opportunity.
- Thinking skills are promoted very well.
- Many children are on course to exceed the expected level at the end of the Reception year and their achievement is very good.

Commentary

41. Children enter Reception with average mathematical skills but, as a result of well-focused teaching, they achieve very well; a substantial number of children have already exceeded the early learning goals and are working within the National Curriculum. All children are expected to reach the early learning goals by the end of their Reception year. Members of staff plan together and set different tasks and challenges to enable all children to achieve the highest standards they can, resulting in them making very good progress in learning to be successful writers, readers and mathematicians. Children are clear about what they are expected to learn, how they should behave and how to be successful. Their achievements are observed and recorded carefully, and the information is used well in planning for following activities.
42. Members of staff have a very good understanding of how to develop early mathematical skills and include a wide range of activities that promote very successful learning. The adults encourage counting, matching objects and number recognition as children play independently, in planned group times and class routines. Lines of number, displays, pictures, information technology and good quality objects for counting and sorting are all used to extend understanding of number to 100. Teachers set challenging tasks that extend learning well, where higher-attaining children confidently add two numbers together mentally and explain how they have arrived at their answers. They understand simple mathematical symbols and use them accurately to record their calculations. Children use correct mathematical vocabulary to solve problems of size, shape and position as they play with two and three-dimensional shapes and small toys. Teachers use the opportunities very well for developing mathematical skills, discussing events in the playground where children are required to count up to 20. Higher attainers decide themselves whether to count forwards or backwards and count backwards from a given number; they are able to explain calculations using subtraction.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to be inquisitive, develop a respect for living creatures and a sense of responsibility towards their environment.

- A substantial number of children are on course to exceed the expected level at the end of the Reception year and their achievement is very good as a result of the very good teaching.
- Children show considerable interest in prehistoric creatures and use computers competently to produce their work.

Commentary

43. The quality of teaching is very good and children achieve very well. Fifty per cent of children have already exceeded the early learning goals, with the remaining children on target to reach them by the end of the Reception year.
44. The natural curiosity of young children is enhanced as members of staff continually encourage them to talk about their discoveries and experiences, to ask questions and to explore a wide range of man-made and natural materials. Children are developing very good scientific skills, as they excitedly look through magnifying glasses to observe real fossils, examining shells, feathers and using books to help their enquiries. They work with considerable precision as they use clay and a range of tools to recreate the designs and shapes of creatures that lived many millions of years ago.
45. Children work independently with a wide range of construction toys, discovering how things are made and move. Three-dimensional enclosures for dinosaurs are built with wooden bricks and waste materials, and children show a very good awareness of shape, purpose and design. A wide range of materials is available to develop their skills of cutting, folding and sticking. Advice is always on hand to help children make the appropriate decision as to which is the most suitable material to use for a particular purpose, but the final decision is always left to the individual, helping them to learn by their mistakes and promoting good thinking skills and a sense of independence and responsibility for their own learning.
46. Children are competent in using computer programs to support their learning in mathematics and language and literacy. They develop sensitivity and awareness of their own and other people's religions and cultures as they learn about festivals and celebrations, such as Christmas, May Day, Diwali and The Chinese New Year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good overall**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to develop all aspects of their physical skills using facilities indoors.
- Outdoor provision is unsatisfactory as there is no effective opportunity to use outdoors to further extend their learning.
- Children's skills in using large and small items of classroom equipment are good.
- Many children are on course to exceed the expectations by the end of the Reception year.

Commentary

47. The majority of children enter the Reception year with average skills. A suitably wide range of indoor activities is provided, supplemented by the occasional use of the playing field. All members of staff emphasise the need for children to carry out activities safely and to develop their use of space. The good teaching provided, despite the inability to use outdoor areas frequently, results in good achievement. A large number of children have already exceeded the early learning goals while the remaining children are on target

to reach them by the end of their Reception year. Children's natural exuberance and energy is promoted very effectively through well-planned lessons, topics and routines which provide daily opportunities for children to explore gymnastics, dance and skills in using large and small apparatus. Teachers are always on hand to encourage children to improve and provide good instructions and demonstrations to help them achieve success. Children show considerable dexterity when handling pencils, scissors, brushes, modelling tools, construction toys and jigsaws.

48. The school's outdoor facilities are underdeveloped as insufficient opportunities are available for children to enjoy using large climbing equipment, and new building work significantly limits opportunities for outdoor activities. However, members of staff compensate for these limitations as well as they can by using the equipment in the school halls and the playing field and, as a result, children's physical development does not suffer significantly.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Creative play is a central part of the curriculum.
- Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities to promote creative development.
- The children's ability to produce a variety of pictures is very good.
- A high proportion of children are on course to exceed the expectations by the end of the Reception year.

Commentary

49. The very good teaching results in very good achievement, with a large number of children having already exceeded the early learning goals, the remaining children being on target to reach them by the end of the Reception year. Through careful planning and well-prepared activities, the teachers and support staff ensure that all children, including those with English as an additional language, have opportunities to take part in all activities. All adults encourage children to develop their independence by the very well planned arrangement of lessons that enables them to move from one activity to another when they are ready.
50. Children enjoy taking part in the many role-play situations provided. They develop their imagination and extend their language skills as they become family members in the 'home' role-play or devise a dinosaur adventure using small toys. A very good range of music, songs and rhymes helps to develop children's understanding of sound, rhythm and pattern. Children develop their senses well through investigating texture, shape and colour. They learn to mix paints to create different colours and shades and they are able to choose appropriate colours, pattern and texture to create different images, scenes and models. Children choose different materials such as clay and junk material to create their own high quality designs, pictures, models and collages.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing in Year 2 are improving.
- There is insufficient challenge for the more able pupils.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The subject is well led and there is a clear commitment to developing the provision further.
- Literacy is used well across the curriculum.
- Poor behaviour in one Year 2 class detracts from the pupils' learning.

Commentary

51. The Year 2 results in the national tests over the last three years have been below average in reading and broadly average in writing. The results have been much worse than schools with pupils from similar backgrounds in reading and not as good in writing. Standards have improved significantly over the last year due to improved teaching; indications are that standards in the national test results in 2004 in Year 2 are average in reading and writing overall, but too few of the more able pupils attain the higher level. Standards in Year 5 are average in reading and writing.
52. The pace of learning in Years 3 to 5 is, with a few exceptions, generally good, reflecting the impact of recent improvements on the effectiveness of teaching. However, long-term achievement is unsatisfactory because the more able are insufficiently challenged by the teaching they receive and they could do much better. Achievement in Year 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory overall because the pace of learning in one of the three classes is unsatisfactory and because most pupils do not build sufficiently on their earlier learning, particularly the more able. The achievement of the less able and average pupils is broadly satisfactory in Years 3 to 5, but the more able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Additionally, boys in one of the Year 3 classes make slower progress than the girls. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported and every effort is made to provide carefully planned work to raise their attainment. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers.
53. Standards in reading are average at Years 2 and 5 and have generally improved across the school because of a greater emphasis on reading through the introduction of a daily guided-reading session that builds well on standards attained by pupils entering Year 1. Year 2 pupils independently studied some questions related to the text they read, while others were well supported by either the class teacher or a teaching assistant who prompted, questioned and listened to children's reading. This good practice has a beneficial impact on their learning, resulting in Year 2 pupils enjoying reading and having a positive attitude to books. They read with expression and can talk about the events and characters in the story, but the more able pupils could achieve more. Strategies to teach reading are developed well and all pupils know and can explain how to tackle difficult words. Average ability pupils are able to explain how to locate particular reference books in the library. Handwriting is generally good across the school, together with the presentation of the pupils' work. For instance, pupils in Year 2 form letters correctly while higher-attainers successfully join their letters. By Year 5, most pupils produce well-presented work with carefully drawn diagrams and handwriting that is fluent and well oriented. Marking of the pupils' work is good and usually gives a clear picture of how well they are doing and what they must do to improve.
54. The quality of the teaching and learning in lessons is good overall. Although teaching was good in three lessons in Years 1 and 2, a fourth was unsatisfactory. Teaching in lessons in Years 3 to 5 was generally good. An effective feature of the good teaching was the way in which teachers shared the learning objective at the start of the lesson, ensuring that pupils knew what they were expected to learn. The good teaching has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. For example, in Year 4, a letter that greatly interested pupils stimulated them to respond positively and to carefully consider who wrote it and what punctuation was required. Paired work is used to good effect for pupils to remind each other about the structure needed in writing a letter, leading to a high level of involvement from pupils. Good relationships between teachers and pupils

enable pupils to become confident and want to improve and clear instructions develop pupils' ability to complete the tasks set for them. Another noteworthy feature is the good level of questioning skills shown by teachers, which challenge and probe the pupils' knowledge and understanding of various types of poetry in Year 5 and helps them to identify the different categories of books, such as non-fiction in Year 2. Individual targets are set for pupils but these are not focused sufficiently well on ensuring that all pupils are aware of how to improve. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, pupils' unsatisfactory behaviour was not managed effectively and their learning deteriorated as their interest waned, resulting in their making unsatisfactory progress.

55. The subject is well led and efficiently managed. The co-ordinator has been in post for only seven months but is having a marked impact on the school's provision. Successful initiatives and accurate identification of priority areas for improvement have led to improvements being achieved. Assessment in English is satisfactory but does not ensure that planning for all higher-attaining pupils is sufficiently challenging.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. The pupils have a growing competence in sentence construction, spelling, and punctuation through the effective opportunities provided for them to use their writing skills in other subjects. In history, geography, religious education and science they write for a range of purposes. They retell Bible stories, record the results of their scientific investigations and use descriptive writing, such as in history where a Year 5 pupil wrote a very descriptive letter from the workhouse by starting, '*Dear Aunt Lesley, I'm in HELL!*' in which paragraphs and apostrophes were used correctly. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to use computers for word-processing in the computer room, but too few opportunities are taken to use the classroom computers.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are too low in Years 2 and 5 compared to similar schools and pupils are underachieving.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory overall.
- Assessment is not effective in setting or tracking achievable targets.
- Mathematics is used well in other subjects.

Commentary

57. Standards are broadly in line with the national average at Years 2 and 5. They have remained broadly average in Year 2 over the last four years when compared with all schools but have remained below or well below average over the same period when compared to similar schools. This indicates continuing underachievement by most pupils, including those with special educational needs, where they do not achieve as well as they could when compared to their prior attainment. The school has not addressed the issue of challenging higher attainers that was highlighted at the last inspection. The early indications of the national results in 2004 are that standards are broadly average in Year

2, but fewer than expected pupils attain the higher levels. Although standards have been rising slowly the rate of improvement is too slow and most pupils underachieve.

58. Teaching overall is unsatisfactory. Two of the ten lessons seen were unsatisfactory and the amount of good teaching was less than half; this is much lower than that seen typically in other schools. There are significant weaknesses in teaching in Years 2 and 5. Where teaching was good, lessons were well planned, moved with pace and reinforced pupils' knowledge and understanding. Work for pupils' independent learning was well resourced and appropriate for pupils of all abilities; when working in pairs and groups, pupils were placed by ability, and work was well linked to pupils' prior learning, such as in one Year 5 class. Unsatisfactory lessons lacked effective strategies to promote effective learning or manage pupils' behaviour, resulting in pupils taking time to settle, and pupils sustained a noisy and distracted response to the teacher's instructions. Tasks were often not sufficiently challenging and did not gain pupils' interest.
59. Pupils are placed into ability groups in Years 2 to 5 but teachers do not evaluate the effectiveness of this initiative for meeting the needs of different groups of pupils. For example, Year 2 higher-attaining pupils are competent with a range of mathematical calculations and concepts in recognising right angles, naming simple triangles and using computer programs to reinforce their learning about shape. However, they are not sufficiently challenged and there is little evidence of teachers setting work at a higher level to extend their learning. When pupils showed eagerness to learn about more complex triangles, they were told this would happen in Year 3. This dampened the pupils' enthusiasm. They became bored and inattentive and they did not progress as well as they might. Lower-attaining Year 5 pupils are working a full year behind their peers, which means that a significant number of pupils do not progress at a satisfactory rate and have few opportunities to reach the expected levels for their age. Where teaching was good, some higher attainers in Years 1 and 5 learned at an accelerated rate and pupils achieve well, but the amount of mediocre and unsatisfactory teaching in Years 2, 3 and 5 depresses standards overall and limits pupils' progress.
60. The ineffective use of assessment to improve the quality of the teaching and learning is a significant barrier to pupils' achieving well. Assessment is not used well to identify or track pupils' individual progress to ensure that they are challenged to reach the standards of which they are capable. The school relies too much on the evaluation of a small percentage of pupils' work and does not pay sufficient attention to individual progress. Some examples of effective marking in Year 5 linked to what pupils are expected to learn is evident and helps pupils understand their mistakes, but members of staff do not consistently set clear targets for pupils to help them identify what they need to do to progress further.
61. The co-ordinator works hard and is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. However, her role is undermined because of insufficient guidance from more senior and experienced staff to help identify why standards are lower than they should be.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Pupils have some good opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. Data handling is used well in science, history, geography and information and communication technology.

SCIENCE

The quality of provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 5 pupils are keen and motivated scientists and achieve well.
- Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 are not challenged sufficiently.
- Assessment is not used well to improve teaching.

Commentary

63. Standards at Year 2 are average. In 2003 the teacher assessments were above the national average when compared to all schools but only average when compared to similar schools. Pupils' scientific knowledge was good but their ability to use the skills of scientific enquiry was much weaker, especially for higher-attaining pupils. Early indication from the 2004 national test results shows a slight improvement in this aspect but standards are still not high enough for the more able pupils. Pupils' results in scientific knowledge aspects are high at the expected level but too low at the higher level. This indicates a drop in standards in Year 2 since the last inspection and improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.
64. Standards in Year 5 are above average. This reflects the findings at the last inspection. Pupils have a good knowledge of scientific facts in living things, materials and the physical world. They develop and use an extensive scientific vocabulary well, such as recognising and describing why breath condenses on a mirror. Pupils regularly test out their predictions and have a good understanding of what constitutes a 'fair test'. Their understanding, however, is not sufficiently extended by consistent requirement to write a clearly stated prediction, as they are not encouraged to carefully consider the reason for their statement. Pupils' presentation of work is, however, very neat.
65. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and is generally good in Years 3 to 5. Most pupils enter Year 1 with a good understanding of the world around them and how it 'works', and lessons steadily build on this through a mixture of planned practical activities.
66. Teaching is satisfactory overall but ranges from good to unsatisfactory, with two of the five lessons seen being unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching has not been monitored closely by the co-ordinator or senior management. Teachers follow the programme of science topics and use the good level of resources well, such as pupils using magnets to perform fair testing in Year 3. Pupils in Year 4 were very keen to make and test their 'spinners' as part of a lesson on air resistance because the teacher managed them well and stimulated their interest in a forces topic. Unsatisfactory teaching was evident where teachers' behaviour management and lesson planning were unsatisfactory and worksheets were inadequate and limited the challenge for higher-attaining pupils. Pupils' work is marked regularly but teachers' comments rarely indicate how a pupil might improve. The key issue at the last inspection to provide sufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils has not been implemented.
67. Leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has provided scientific enquiry training to colleagues recently and this has improved pupils' understanding of science.

Management, however, is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has not evaluated national test results from 2003 and has an unclear picture about what needs to be improved in Year 2 and what additional support pupils now in Year 3 need.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment systems are ineffective.
- Year 5 pupils have a good understanding of how to use computers.
- Too little work is saved or recorded to enable the subject leader to monitor pupils' attainment.

Commentary

68. Standards in Year 2 are average. Pupils use word-processing programs well and change letter size, font and a few other features with growing confidence. They enjoy working with programmable toys and some put in a short series of instructions rather than single commands in order to draw a shape. Drawing programs are confidently used as pupils fill shapes with colour and create effective 'rainbow' fish. The more able pupils are not challenged enough; for instance, they do not know how to save their work.
69. Standards in Year 5 are above average. Virtually all pupils are working at least at the average level for their age and more than one third are working at the higher level. All pupils have used databases to find out more about planets and birds. A good topic on spreadsheets was linked to finding the cost of a holiday, which held the pupils' interest. They have used search engines on the Internet well to gather source material. Higher-attaining pupils are regularly challenged, such as in linking two requests with 'and' to narrow their search and writing formulae into a cell on a spreadsheet.
70. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. The school has improved the software available to teach control technology and members of staff have been trained in its use. As a result, pupils' understanding in this aspect at Years 2 and 5 is now good, but nothing has been done to improve teachers' understanding of the levels of the National Curriculum. The assessment systems do not provide the school with quality information with which to monitor pupils' standards and achievement, and teachers do not measure pupils' progress effectively because they do not have a thorough knowledge of the National Curriculum levels to place pupils correctly.
71. Pupils' achievement through the school is satisfactory. From Year 1 pupils have regular use of the computer room and at least satisfactory teaching in Years 3 to 5 from members of staff who are generally confident and well trained to teach the subject. The computer room is used well and pupils' skills are gradually built up in lessons, but the application of these skills in other subjects has not yet been completely thought through.
72. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 3 to 5, where pupils behave well because they are highly motivated once in the computer room. Teachers use a device to flash a sign on a selected screen if pupils get too excited or noisy and this is very effective. Teachers' planning is thorough and often shows that ability groups are given slightly

different tasks to do. Pupils work sensibly in pairs sharing the use of the mouse. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 so no overall judgements are made on teaching but from a scrutiny of pupils' work it is clear that teachers expect too little from pupils. Higher-attaining pupils are not familiar with enough word-processing, nor are they clear how to name a file, or where to save.

73. Leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been in post for a year and is a good role model for colleagues and disseminates her subject knowledge mostly informally to them. Management of the subject, however, is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has a firm understanding of what pupils understand in Year 5 but she has not had sufficient time to gain a full understanding of standards in other year groups. She has not monitored or supported colleagues during lessons and has little understanding of the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Pupils' use of computer skills in other subjects is satisfactory. Opportunities occur mostly incidentally rather than as a planned extension to a learned skill. For example, Year 2 pupils use a drawing program to create pictures from lines and shapes in the style of a Dutch artist, the finished pictures being visually very effective. Use of a programmable toy is linked well with mathematics work on angles. Pupils extend their knowledge of reading by following copies of animated texts on the computer screen. The computerised library system enables pupils to see the application of computers outside school; older pupils sometimes operate it and learn more about optical mark readers and large databases. However, too few opportunities are given for pupils to use the classroom or other computers to extend their skills or to develop their own research from CD ROMs or the Internet.

HUMANITIES

75. Pupils' work was sampled in art and design, geography, history and religious education as only one lesson was seen in each. The one lesson seen in **geography**, together with a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils, indicates that the school provides an appropriate curriculum that promotes pupils' interest in people and places. In the one Year 2 lesson seen, teaching was broadly satisfactory, with the teacher making satisfactory use of a range of pictures to highlight key features of a range of holiday destinations. The teacher's communication was clear and her questioning satisfactory but the work was not sufficiently planned to ensure that the more able pupils were challenged. Pupils worked generally satisfactorily in groups but a minority of pupils took little part in discussions and did not show interest in the work. Pupils' learning was broadly satisfactory, but they demonstrated limited enquiry skills and unsatisfactory geographical knowledge of well-known countries as they examined the pictures to identify and justify a suitable range of key factors for choosing a holiday destination. Pupils have a satisfactory range of opportunities to build up a satisfactory knowledge base and to develop their geographical skills. Teachers have developed well-planned visits and use of the local environment to bring the subject alive and pupils are encouraged to think of themselves as geographers. Assessment is unsatisfactory as too few pupils' work is scrutinised and insufficient information is gained from which to ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged.

76. The one lesson seen in **history**, together with a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils, indicates that pupils' interest in people and events through the ages is satisfactorily developed. The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of topics for pupils to build up their historical skills, and effective use of library-loan service resources complements the curriculum well. Teaching in a Year 4 lesson was good. The lesson was well planned. It used very well chosen resources such as typical artefacts from the Mary Rose, linked very well with a computer program. Pupils' learning was good as they enquired, raised hypotheses as to each artefact's use and justified their decisions well. They showed a keen interest and worked well in groups, handling the resources carefully and demonstrating good analytical skills. Assessment is unsatisfactory as too little work is examined across all year groups and work is not linked closely to National Curriculum levels.
77. Standards in **religious education** based on the one lesson seen in Year 4 are average, although insufficient opportunities were available to judge standards overall. From discussions with the co-ordinator and scrutiny of the subject action plan, and even though no lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, indication is that the locally agreed syllabus is being fully implemented. The one lesson observed in a Year 4 class was satisfactory and pupils were helped to consider the meaning of the parable of the Good Samaritan. One pupil commented, *'It doesn't matter what religion you are, you should always respect and help them like God.'* Pupils' work in books across the school shows that they are provided with good opportunities to learn about their own and others' faiths, with religious education making a good contribution to class assemblies. Visits are made to a synagogue and a local church, where pupils have the opportunity to identify and begin to understand the differences in the buildings and artefacts used; this helps to develop pupils' emerging understanding of the practices in several religions. Visitors to school, including a local vicar and representatives from charity organisations, enrich this element of pupils' learning. Pupils use a variety of written skills to illustrate their understanding of facts and traditions from the Christian and Islamic faiths. Assessment is inaccurate and erroneously measures a small number of pupils, which is then compared against a 'national average'. The monitoring of lessons is weak as insufficient attention is given to assessing and ensuring that pupils of all abilities receive the challenge of which they are capable.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

78. Pupils' work was sampled in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education due to timetabling constraints. A scrutiny of pupils' work in **art and design** and discussions with teachers and pupils indicate that the school provides an appropriate range of experiences to systematically develop pupils' skills, techniques, knowledge and understanding in the subject. Work displayed around the school and the one lesson seen in Year 5 effectively demonstrate this. In the one lesson seen, teaching was good and pupils produced work which was above average. Skills were promoted well and pupils were encouraged to be creative and imaginative in their designs of a container. Visits to places of interest, artefacts and natural materials are used well to stimulate pupils' interest and to provide a focus for their work.
79. A scrutiny of curricular planning and other documentation for **design and technology** and study of the pupils' work showed that National Curriculum requirements are met. The co-ordinator is successfully broadening teachers' understanding of the subject through training and dissemination of information from the Internet; this is improving teachers'

confidence in teaching skills and their understanding of what is required at each level of the National Curriculum. Older pupils' work is well presented, for instance the Year 5 'biscuit books' are of a high standard. Pupils in Year 4 have a good understanding of the design, make and evaluate process and use it regularly. They learn to join materials by a variety of means such as glue, tape, sewing and fasteners and choose the best method for the purpose. There was insufficient evidence to form judgements about teaching, standards and provision overall, but discussions with the co-ordinator and scrutiny of the subject action plan indicate that pupils experience a suitable range of interesting and appropriate activities.

80. In the one Year 1 **physical education** lesson seen, teaching and pupils' achievement were satisfactory. Pupils were encouraged to listen to a selected piece of music from 'The Pied Piper'; they were then asked to picture how they might perform movements as the mayor. They offered a range of ideas and later practised them individually and in groups. Teacher intervention was beneficial to developing pupils' depictions and pupils responded well, developing generally good spatial awareness. Satisfactory support enabled a pupil with special educational needs to participate fully. The school has satisfactory physical education resources overall, having two halls and a large playing field for games and sports activities.
81. Only two **music** lessons were seen in Years 3 and 4; both were taught by the music co-ordinator, were of good quality and, although standards are average, pupils of all abilities achieved well. Pupils' quality of singing in assemblies was generally tuneful and many enjoyed singing. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and encourages pupils' involvement by the range of music she teaches and the lively way in which she encourages pupils' singing. A scrutiny of pupils' past work in Year 3 shows that they are given good opportunities to listen to and reflect on mood music. Photographic evidence further indicates that the curriculum is enriched by pupils' performances in concerts and assemblies as well as by a visitor to school who taught Biblical action songs, and an Irish Dance demonstration group. Assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. It is based on only a small representative number of pupils across each year group and too little information is gained in order to impact effectively on pupils' learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

82. This area of the curriculum was sampled as no lessons were seen. The programme is well planned to meet the pupils' needs. Pupils learn to help others, good examples being the 'Friendship Stop' in the playground and raising money for charities. They benefit from the visits by police and road safety officers, learning at first hand what is and is not dangerous. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and offers good support, resulting in this aspect of pupils' learning having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and the way they treat each other around the school.

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	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	5
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	5

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