

INSPECTION REPORT

**THE BEACON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 131311

Headteacher: Mrs P E Polimenovi

Lead inspector: Mrs J E Platt

Dates of inspection: 1 – 3 March 2004

Inspection number: 258103

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	158
School address:	Heyworth Street Liverpool Merseyside
Postcode:	L5 3QG
Telephone number:	0151 263 4206
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. P Spiers
Date of previous inspection:	18 May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Beacon Church of England (voluntary controlled) School is a small school having 158 pupils on roll including 15 children attending full time in the nursery. The school serves a socially and economically deprived area in Liverpool and is part of an education action zone. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the school does not identify any needing help because English is not their first spoken language. A well above average percentage of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Fifty-seven pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs. Identified needs include specific and emotional and behaviour difficulties. The overall attainment of children when they start school is below average. The school has a Basic Skills Quality Mark and Investors in People status. To improve standards the school is taking part in the local authority's Raising Attainment Project.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11565	Mrs J E Platt	Lead inspector	English English as an additional language
9926	Mr A Dobson	Lay inspector	
29504	Mrs S Herring	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Humanities including religious education
22740	Mrs M Leah	Team inspector	Science Creative, aesthetic, practical and physical subjects Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Although this is a caring school it is failing to provide an acceptable quality of education. It is an **ineffective** school and is not providing satisfactory value for money. Standards are too low and achievement is unsatisfactory. Although some good teaching was seen the overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because of a lack of challenge which fails to extend pupils' learning sufficiently. Leadership ensures the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. However, there are weaknesses in leadership and management in the important aspects of monitoring and evaluating the school's work.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is satisfactory in the early years and children settle well in school. Overall achievement is unsatisfactory and standards in Year 6 are well below average in English, mathematics and science.
- Too much teaching fails to meet the needs of the differing abilities in the school because teachers are not using assessment information effectively.
- The overall quality of leadership and management is unsatisfactory and has been ineffective in raising standards. Governors are not holding the school to account for the quality of education provided.
- Attendance is well below average. However, many pupils enjoy school and punctuality is good.
- Good attention is given to pupils' welfare and there are trusting relationships between staff and pupils.
- The school has a good number of clubs and the range and number of visits are very good.
- Links with parents are good and the school works very well with the local community.

The overall rate of improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory because standards have declined. To stop this decline the school sought support from the local authority. This has tackled the weakness in strategic planning and the raising attainment plan is giving the school a clearer focus for improvement. Although monitoring of teaching takes place it has been ineffective in eliminating weaknesses. Good management of information and communication technology has raised standards. Planning for the under fives now closely follows national guidelines. Resources for outdoor play are good. The school gives more attention to promoting understanding about life in a multi-cultural society.

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

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

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

Overall achievement is **unsatisfactory**. The test results indicate standards are very low and show these pupils made very little progress in the juniors. Current standards in Year 6 are higher but

remain well below average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are underachieving and make unsatisfactory progress. Achievement in the infants is satisfactory. Current standards in Year 2 are below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools, pupils in the infants are doing as well as expected. Children start school with below average ability and make satisfactory progress in the nursery and reception class although they do not reach the goals expected of them.

Pupils' personal development is **satisfactory**. Most pupils behave well and have satisfactory attitudes to their work although it is not always presented neatly. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is well below average. Punctuality is good and lessons start promptly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is **unsatisfactory**. Although good teaching was seen, too much teaching fails to provide the pupils with activities that are sufficiently challenging and the overall quality of teaching and learning is **unsatisfactory**. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and the infants are satisfactory. A variety of practical activities are used to teach early literacy and numeracy skills and pupils are starting to make effective use of these skills. The pace of lessons is often too slow in the juniors and the lack of variety of approaches fails to capture pupils' interest. Assessment information is not being used effectively to match work to pupils' needs and this restricts the rate of learning of all abilities including pupils with special educational needs. Pupils with behaviour difficulties make good progress in overcoming these difficulties because of the sensitive support of the learning mentor.

The curriculum is satisfactory. From Reception to Year 6, pupils go on a residential visit and this greatly enriches their experiences. Care, guidance and support for pupils are good and reflect the school's Christian status. Staff are attentive to pupils' views and ideas. The partnership with parents is good although parents could be more supportive by ensuring their children attend regularly. Links with other schools are good and those with the local community are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **unsatisfactory**. With the support of the local authority and the raising attainment plan the school has a clearer vision and sense of purpose. However, the headteacher's leadership pays insufficient attention to the effectiveness of teaching and learning and this is the major reason for the lack of improvement since the last inspection. Too many initiatives are introduced without evaluating their impact on standards. Management is unsatisfactory because key staff have insufficient time to follow up changes and check on their effectiveness. Governors are supportive and statutory requirements are met. However, they rely too heavily on the headteacher for information and are not good at challenging decisions and holding the school to account for the education provided.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views of the school and find the staff approachable. Pupils say they enjoy school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise achievement and improve standards in English, mathematics and science;
- increase the effectiveness of leadership and management of the school including the involvement of the governing body;
- improve teaching, especially the expectations of teachers and the use of assessment to match work to pupils' ability;

- improve attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall achievement is **unsatisfactory**. Children in the Foundation Stage¹ and the infants² make satisfactory progress although they do not reach the level expected for their age. Progress in the juniors³ is unsatisfactory and this is reflected in the well below average standards in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils of all abilities are underachieving in the juniors and standards in Year 6 are too low in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards have declined since the last inspection in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science in Year 2.
- Children get off to a good start in the nursery, especially in their personal and social skills.
- Improvement in information and communication technology (ICT) has been good and pupils now work at the level expected for their age.
- Examples of work in design and technology in Year 6 are good and show pupils benefit from an intensive week focusing on this subject.

Commentary

1. Children's attainment on entry to nursery is generally below average, although there is a cross section of abilities. In response to caring staff many settle quickly into nursery life and this enables them to take full advantage of the imaginative range of experiences. However, despite satisfactory progress in the reception class, pupils are not reaching the early learning goals⁴ expected for them.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores⁵ in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.8 (24.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	21.5 (24.0)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	25.7 (25.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children start in the nursery and finishes at the end of the reception class.

² The infants comprise Years 1 and 2.

³ The juniors comprise Years 3 to 6.

⁴ Early learning goals are the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

⁵ Average point scores. The average point score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades by all of their pupils with the grades attained by all pupils in another similar school as well as an average for all schools nationally. The score is obtained from the National Curriculum level attained by pupils in the national assessments. For example, in mathematics pupils are awarded 9 points for a level 1, 15 points for level 2 and 21 points for level 3. The average score is then calculated by adding up all of the points and dividing by the number of pupils who were tested.

2. These results for pupils in Year 6 were very low and were in the lowest five per cent in the country. Standards are not improving and have been well below average since 2000. The school does not keep a close enough eye on their pupils' progress. Taking into consideration their attainment in the national tests at the end of Year 2, the 2003 results indicate these pupils underachieved. The picture is one of overall underachievement with too many pupils not reaching the level expected for their age as well as a very low number exceeding this level. The school's analysis of the test results suggests that several pupils came close to reaching a higher level. However, this analysis fails to get to the real reasons for the decline in standards and masks the evidence that the pupils failed to reach the required level and hence the school did not achieve its target. The analysis also failed to identify that girls out-performed boys and this remains a weakness. Current standards in Year 6 are higher but remain well below average in English, mathematics and science. Overall achievement is unsatisfactory but varies between classes, with better progress being seen in Years 5 and 6 where teaching is better.
3. Pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 have also made insufficient progress in the juniors. School assessment information reveals a significant dip in their progress in Year 4 and this has affected their overall performance. Intensive work in withdrawal groups is not consistently followed up by work in class that matches pupils' needs and this restricts pupils' learning. Teachers do not always make good use of pupils' individual education plans to guide their teaching. Pupils with behaviour difficulties make satisfactory progress overall due to the effective intervention of the learning mentor or other extra adult attention in class which keeps the pupils on task.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.7 (14.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.0 (12.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.5 (16.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. The 2003 national assessment results above show that standards in Year 2 were well below the national average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools these results present a more favourable picture. Results in writing were below average, in reading average and in mathematics were well above average. This group of pupils was unusual for the school with a high number of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age which raised the school's overall performance and increased the trend in results to be above the national trend. This level of high attaining pupils is not evident in the current Year 2. Although standards are below average there are signs of improvement in the infants because basic literacy and numeracy skills are being taught through practical activities that capture pupils' interest. Overall achievement is satisfactory and significantly more pupils are now reaching the level expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress because relevant small group work and individual targets are reinforced by suitable work in class.
5. The school does not identify any pupils needing help because English is not their first spoken language. Inspection evidence supports this. However, the school lacks a system to assess these pupils' language needs in order to check that they receive the correct support. No pupils are assessed as being academically gifted. The school does recognise the sporting talents of their pupils and they benefit from expert coaching to extend their skills.
6. Standards in ICT have improved in response to effective management and better resources. Overall achievement in this subject is now satisfactory with pupils working at the levels expected for their age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **satisfactory**. Attendance is **well below** that normally found in primary schools. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school.
- The school is trying hard to promote good attendance although attendance levels are not improving.
- Punctuality is good.
- Pupils have confidence in the staff's ability to sort out any bullying issues.
- Good use is made of the learning mentor to boost pupils' self-esteem.
- Although satisfactory overall, pupils are not fully prepared for living in a multi-cultural society.

Commentary

7. Pupils know they go to school to learn. However, although they enjoy being at school and feel secure, there is little innate enthusiasm for learning. The pupils require motivating in every lesson and this is not always successful. When the teaching is good and pupils are interested in a subject they are keen to participate in the lesson and work hard. A significant minority of pupils do not have a pride in their work, which is often untidy and unfinished.
8. Behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils understand the school's rules and think they are applied fairly. Most teachers use the behaviour management strategies effectively. Playgrounds have a friendly atmosphere where pupils play well together. Incidents of bullying and name-calling are handled well, with pupils having a high level of confidence in the staff's ability to sort out any problems. Very good records are kept of all incidents. Racial issues are not a problem in the school. One pupil was permanently excluded from the school last 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	88	1	1
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	60	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

9. Pupils' personal qualities develop satisfactorily while at school. Spiritual issues are covered in assemblies, religious education lessons and in displays around the school. Provision for boosting pupils' self-esteem is good; particularly the encouragement to succeed that is given to pupils by the learning mentor. Good use is made of photographs to celebrate pupils' achievements. Pupils generally get on well with each other and the staff. Boys and girls play

well together and pupils collaborate productively in class. School clubs and residential visits are popular and effective in developing pupils' social skills. Pupils are given a satisfactory

grounding in understanding the difference between right and wrong through the example set by staff, class discussions and assemblies. Visits to museums and public buildings, together with talks by visitors, ensure that the pupils have a good knowledge of their local culture and traditions. Their knowledge of western culture is satisfactory and the school has extended the promotion of other cultures although pupils are not fully aware of their traditions and beliefs.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.6
National data	0.4

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

10. Attendance is well below the national average and not improving – in spite of the school having good procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. Certificates are given out every half term and all absences without reason are followed up speedily. Registers are monitored in detail every week. Unauthorised absence, although above the national average, has been reduced as a result of sharper monitoring. However, an increasing number of parents are taking their children on holiday in term time. Even though the school strongly disapproves of this, parents are not made sufficiently aware of this disapproval. The procedures for parents to request holidays are too informal. Punctuality is good and the day gets off to a crisp start.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides an **unsatisfactory** quality of education because overall teaching and learning are **unsatisfactory**. The curriculum is **satisfactory**. Links with parents and the attention given to pupils' welfare are **good**.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **unsatisfactory**. The use of assessment to inform teaching is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Too much teaching lacks challenge and the pace is too slow to maintain pupils' interest and so it fails to extend their learning.
- Overall assessment procedures are satisfactory but the information gained is not being used effectively to plan future work.
- Planning does not always make it clear what pupils are to learn.
- Early literacy and numeracy skills are taught well through practical activities in the Foundation Stage and the infants and this is leading to improvement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Support assistants in the Foundation Stage and the infants are used well to support pupils with special educational needs. Their contribution to learning is less effective in the juniors because they are not always clear about the purpose of the tasks they are supporting.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good and pupils usually try hard to please their teachers.
- Marking is not telling pupils how to improve their work.
- Homework in the juniors is inconsistent and is not used to encourage independent learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0(0%)	0 (0 %)	11(37 %)	15(50 %)	4(13 %)	0(0 %)	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.

11. The overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory and important weaknesses in teaching slow pupils' progress. Monitoring of teaching has not been effective in tackling the concerns raised in the previous inspection and many of these remain, especially in the juniors where almost a quarter of the teaching seen was unsatisfactory. Although the majority of the unsatisfactory teaching seen was in one class, the review of pupils' work indicates it is more widespread than this because teachers' sights about what pupils should achieve are set too low.
12. The implementation of new planning guidelines in the Foundation Stage has led to clearer lesson planning and this has successfully resolved a weakness identified by the last inspection. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for the under fives and no teaching seen was less than satisfactory. Lessons are now more practically based and imaginative teaching was seen, especially in the nursery. Tasks generally match children's ability although the higher attaining children could be more challenged in writing. Staff show an understanding of the needs of this age group and include lots of encouragement which successfully raises children's self-esteem and they enjoy school.
13. The close links between the Foundation Stage and the infants ensures continuity in the teaching of letters and their sounds. Teachers use practical approaches that make learning interesting so that children not only learn these sounds but also remember them. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the infants is satisfactory although a review of pupils' books suggests that some of the lack of challenge seen in the juniors is also evident in these classes. Examples of worksheets show that all abilities complete the same worksheet rather than extending learning through work which meets the differing needs of pupils. Planning in the infants and the juniors, although satisfactory overall, has weaknesses. Teachers have so many planning documents it is clouding the real focus of their teaching. Plans are not always making it clear what pupils are expected to learn in that lesson and teachers focus more on teaching than learning. As a result, pupils complete tasks without fully appreciating the focus of the activity. This leads to the conclusions of lessons being ineffective since teachers celebrate success as pupils share their work but fails to consolidate learning.
14. In the unsatisfactory lessons in the juniors teaching failed to capture the pupils' enthusiasm, pupils lost interest and behaviour in some lessons deteriorated. The school does not have a teaching and learning policy which would guide teachers in adjusting their plans to match the pupils' differing learning styles. As a result, a restricted range of teaching approaches is often used which results in learning being slower than it should be. This was not the case in a good literacy lesson in Year 5 when drama captured pupils' interest and a lively pace maintained their interest as they extended both their speaking and listening skills as well as their understanding of the text. Teaching of ICT in the computer suite was good showing the co-ordinator's confidence in this subject. However, other teachers are not building on these skills by using computers to support learning in other subjects. Opportunities for pupils to consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills are not planned in other lessons and so pupils miss chances to extend these skills.
15. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress which is providing some useful information. To some extent, as with planning, there is an overload of assessments and staff are unsure about their purpose. This apart, the school is now carefully

tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. As a result, Year 2 and Year 6 teachers have detailed predictions for their pupils and put in additional support to help in reading, writing and mathematics. However, overall, the use of assessment information is unsatisfactory. Teachers' planning includes a space for evaluation but a review of plans shows the use of this varies very much between teachers. Future plans are not always adjusted according to assessment information and this leads to a lack of challenge for all abilities and hence the underachievement in the juniors. The school has started to set targets as part of the raising attainment plan but this is not proving helpful because staff are overwhelmed with school targets, class targets and group targets for different subjects. Although they are often on display in class these are not easy to understand and are not referred to regularly so pupils do not relate to them. A few teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and inform pupils how to improve but this is not common practice. Teachers use symbols to grade the piece of work and some teachers identify if an objective is achieved but discussions with pupils suggest this system falls short of telling them how to correct their errors and make their work better.

16. These weaknesses in the use of assessment have an adverse effect on the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. This is ineffective in extending pupils' learning because tasks in class are not closely matched to the ability of these pupils. Some teachers make effective use of the clear targets in pupils' individual education plans but others do not and fail to ensure the pupils are receiving an education that matched their identified needs. Teaching is better in withdrawal groups because it is more clearly focused and provides satisfactorily for their needs. These short sessions promote and consolidate learning effectively.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall and all statutory requirements are met. The provision of extra-curricular activities is **good**, and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Accommodation, resources and staffing are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A significant strength is the range of residential visits for pupils from reception to Year 6.
- There has been good improvement in the provision for ICT.
- Work is not always well matched to suit the needs of different groups of pupils.
- There is good support for learning outside lessons.
- There is a good range of support staff, including an effective learning mentor.
- The nursery is isolated from the rest of the school.
- The library is under-resourced.
- Drugs awareness is not yet dealt with in sufficient depth.

Commentary

17. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. A clear scheme of work now guides teachers' planning, which includes a varied range of activities in all areas of learning⁶. Outdoor activities have improved with better facilities. The nursery is isolated from the rest of the school and this inhibits the creation of a cohesive Foundation Stage unit.
18. The requirements of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented to guide teachers' planning, though work is not always well matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities, particularly in Year 3 to Year 6. This is a significant factor in the underachievement in the juniors. Whilst the focus of the curriculum is rightly on developing

⁶ Areas of learning are personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

literacy and numeracy, the school has made good efforts to maintain a balance and all subjects are included. National guidelines have been adopted for each subject, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. In particular there has been a good improvement in the provision for ICT with the creation of a new computer suite. This is being used well to teach the necessary skills to whole classes, though there is a weakness in the use of these skills to support learning in other subjects. The school has adopted a new syllabus for the teaching of religious education. However, a weakness still remains in giving pupils some in depth knowledge of world faiths other than Christianity. Pupils benefit from regular French lessons from specialist teachers. The organisation of the day does not lead to effective learning because literacy lessons are often followed by another lesson for spelling and handwriting. This practice fails to stimulate pupils who find it hard to maintain concentration for such a length of time.

19. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. A good number of teaching assistants provide sound support in withdrawal groups for these pupils. Individual education plans are detailed and clear but do not always provide the appropriate small steps of learning. Older pupils with behavioural difficulties are supported effectively by the learning mentor.
20. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Most aspects are covered in Circle Time⁷ and in religious education lessons. Sex education is provided for older pupils but drugs awareness is not dealt with in a systematic way.
21. A good range of activities effectively enhances pupils' learning beyond the school day. Pupils take part in a good range of competitive sport with good links with the local football club who also provide coaching in sportsmanship. This is especially beneficial for pupils with significant talents in sport. Musical activities such as choir and keyboard are well attended and the school performed at the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral and the Police Christmas Concert. Pupils benefit greatly from breakfast club, computer club and first aid training. A significant strength of the school is the very wide range of residential visits organised for all pupils from the reception class to Year 6. This helps pupils to develop independence and social skills and also contributes well to aspects of physical education and geography. Visitors to the school enhance pupils' experiences as does the wide range of visits to places of interest.
22. Resources for ICT have been significantly improved and this has been a factor in raising standards. The condition and range of library books are unsatisfactory. The school has been allocated a sum of money to supplement the stock and is looking to relocate the library. However, more attention needs to be given to this plan so as to ensure the books are easily accessible for independent research.

Care, guidance and support

The school gives **good** attention to pupils' care and welfare. Monitoring and guidance of pupils' development is **satisfactory**. There are **good** procedures for involving pupils in the way the school develops.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a good level of care and pupils feel safe and secure.
- Pupils are not clear enough on what they have to do to improve.
- Support for pupils' personal development is good.
- Good procedures are in place for seeking pupils' views.

⁷ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease free from any interruptions from other children.

Commentary

23. The school shows a high degree of concern for the pupils' welfare. The headteacher and other staff know the pupils well and treat them with respect and consideration. Supervision is good at all times. Child protection is taken seriously; the responsible person is fully trained and staff are familiar with the school's procedures. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory.
24. The school is trying hard to give good support to the pupils. Academic progress is monitored regularly. However, in an effort to improve standards the school has gone overboard on setting pupils targets on how to improve. The effect is counter-productive. Pupils have too many targets and many are not written in a child friendly language. The result is pupils are unclear about how to improve.
25. Personal development is well supported. Pupils are happy to talk to staff when they have a problem or concern. Staff have a very good knowledge of the pupils and often a good understanding of their family backgrounds which means that pastoral advice is well matched to the pupils' circumstances. The learning mentor, who has a very good relationship with the pupils, plays an important and effective role in giving help, advice and support when pupils have personal problems. Pupils' reports have sections on personal development that are well written and give sensible advice. Pupils' achievements both inside and outside school are celebrated at weekly assemblies.
26. Pupils feel part of the school. Weekly class councils followed by fortnightly school council meetings ensure that every pupil has a regular opportunity to contribute any ideas or views on the school. Good records are kept of these meetings. Pupils value this system that has already improved their playground through their decisions on markings and play equipment.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents think highly of the school.
- Parents find the headteacher and staff very approachable.
- Not all parents see education as a partnership between school and home.
- Pupils' reports are of good quality.
- Pupils benefit from the links with the community and other schools.

Commentary

27. Parents raised no significant concerns and particularly appreciate the accessibility of the headteacher and staff. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
28. The quality of the information parents receive is good overall. Pupils' reports are of good quality but there is some inconsistency between classes. The best examples are easy to read and give parents a clear understanding of how their child is attaining against national standards. Newsletters are informative. Parents in the nursery are kept well informed about future work although this good practice is less evident in other years. Arrangements for parents to see teachers are good and parents find staff approachable. Parents consider that any concerns are listened to sensitively and appropriate action taken. They appreciate the improvement made to the school buildings. Parents of pupils with special educational needs

are fully informed as soon as the school has a concern and are consulted where possible about identifying and reviewing needs. Although the school does not consult formally with parents the good relationships between staff and parents ensure that the school is quickly aware of any concerns.

29. Although the school tries to involve parents in their children's learning not all parents value education, for instance, homework is not treated seriously, taking holidays in term time is increasing and few parents help in the school. However, parents are supportive through attending assemblies and school events. The Parent Teachers' Association is active organising social events which, as well as raising funds, successfully involves the community in the life of the school.
30. Pupils benefit from the school's very good links with the community. They participate in a wealth of activities. For instance, visitors to school include members of the emergency services, the local clergy and elderly citizens who talk about past life in Everton. Pupils visit a variety of establishments from museums to a hospital. The local church is used as a good resource, for instance, gravestones are used to study mortality and changing life spans. During the inspection, children in the nursery went to the church to join in a pretend baptism – giving most a valuable insight into a fundamental Christian ceremony. Open days are used effectively to celebrate the work of the school to the local community. Pupils play competitive sports against local primary schools and close links with two local secondary schools result in Year 6 pupils having useful introductory lessons in secondary mathematics, food technology and design technology.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Governance is **unsatisfactory** because governors do not call the school to account for the low standards. The overall quality and effectiveness of leadership and management from headteacher and key staff is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors give considerably of their time to help the school and share their particular skills but are not sufficiently challenging of the school's actions.
- Monitoring of teaching and the school's performance has been inadequate in raising standards.
- The school's raising attainment plan is providing a sharper focus on raising standards although its implementation has delayed self-evaluation in other aspects of school life.
- The headteacher gives good pastoral care to pupils and parents find her easy to approach with any concerns.
- The deputy headteacher is a good role model for effective leadership of ICT. Management of English, mathematics and science is unsatisfactory because staff are not enabled to fulfill their management roles.

Commentary

31. Since the last inspection the headteacher has worked hard to improve relationships with parents which were strained because of the merger with another school. In this she has been successful. Parents are appreciative of her efforts and many find her approachable. She clearly has the day-to-day care of pupils as a priority. However, other aspects of her leadership are unsatisfactory. The headteacher has not provided a clear focus on raising standards and many of the concerns raised in the previous inspection remain. Weaknesses are often noted but the response is not well thought through and is insufficiently rigorous to be effective. Last year the headteacher identified this lack of progress and sought help from the local education authority. This has led to intensive help and the raising attainment plan is now providing a clearer direction and sense of purpose for the school.

32. The governing body meets its statutory duties. Governors are supportive especially in promoting pastoral development and inclusion. They are up-to-date on accessibility, with a good action plan in place. Governors are, however, not effective in challenging senior managers and holding them to account for the performance of the school. Links with subject leaders are underdeveloped and governors rely too much on information provided by the headteacher. This is insufficient to enable them to ask questions that challenge the school to do better. They have no input in the school's raising attainment plan. Governors have taken part in a self-evaluation exercise and are aware this is an area they need to improve.
33. The deputy headteacher shows how effective management can bring about change. She provides good leadership of ICT and standards have improved. Other initiatives which she has effectively managed are the achievement of a nationally recognised Basic Skills Award and the successful reassessment of Investors in People Status. Leadership from other staff is less effective especially in English, mathematics and science. To some extent the role of co-ordinator has been weakened by the introduction of two co-ordinators to lead each subject who are not totally clear about their individual responsibilities. Nevertheless, they have implemented satisfactory assessment procedures and the school now has more information about its overall performance. However, co-ordinators have too little time and guidance to lead on improvements.
34. Management of special educational needs is satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides sound support for staff and pupils in identifying and providing for pupils with special educational needs. Training for teaching assistants is effective and the co-ordinator organises withdrawal groups efficiently. Provision has been enhanced and the school is now a Dyslexia Friendly School. A weakness in management is the lack of precise information to check on pupils' on-going progress and so spot when pupils are not making as much progress as they should.
35. Self-evaluation and its use in leading the school forward are unsatisfactory. The school started to follow the local authority's procedure for self-evaluation but this has been shelved with the introduction of the raising achievement plan. As a result, the school's assessments of several aspects of school life are inaccurate.
36. The headteacher and advisors from the local authority monitor the quality of teaching and learning through classroom management and performance management. However, identified weaknesses are not being tackled effectively and these slow pupils' progress, especially in the juniors. The headteacher has attempted to resolve some teacher weaknesses by setting up a system in the juniors for subject teaching. However, not enough thought is given to what the changes will achieve. It was a successful strategy to raise standards in ICT but less so in science because staff are not deployed according to a thorough understanding of their skills. Consequently, the teaching of science is unsatisfactory in every year in the juniors.
37. Monitoring of performance and the actions taken to raise standards are both unsatisfactory. The school analyses test results and provides reasons for pupils not doing as well as expected but fails to make use of this information to raise standards. Data is not used to analyse performance by ethnicity or gender. Hence, the school has not taken any action to tackle boys' underachievement in the juniors. The school lacks formal procedures to assess the language needs of pupils who have English as an additional language. Consequently, it is impossible to assess if they need help with language. Assessment information is not being checked for reliability and some significant dips in trends are not checked for accuracy. Similarly, the assessment on entry to school identifies pupils start with levels higher than the local authority average. This is an obvious error but not challenged by the school and so the ability to check on pupils' progress from entry is not based on secure evidence.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	478,614
Total expenditure	470,995
Expenditure per pupil	2,766

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	25,359
Balance carried forward to the next	32,978

38. Financial administration is satisfactory and funds are directed to identified need. The school receives advice from a financial consultant and takes steps to plan and monitor the budget closely. Principles of best value are understood and applied satisfactorily by governors. For example, governors are very aware of the need to maintain pupil numbers and much has been spent on refurbishment to make the school more attractive to parents and pupils. The school benefits from a range of additional funding that is used well.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

Children in the reception class build soundly on the good start provided in the nursery. Overall standards when children start in the nursery are below average. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage but are not in line to reach the early learning goals in each of the areas of learning. Standards are therefore still below average when children start in Year 1. No judgement is made on physical development as there is insufficient evidence. Children achieve satisfactorily because of sound teaching in all the areas of learning observed with some good teaching in the nursery, especially of knowledge and understanding of the world.

The concerns from the last inspection have been resolved. Consequently, the curriculum is now carefully planned towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning and outdoor play facilities for reception children are satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory but the role of the curriculum co-ordinator in monitoring teaching and learning is not well developed. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and teachers make sound use of the information gained effectively to plan the next steps in learning. However, in writing it could be used more effectively to extend the skills of the higher attaining children. Teachers provide encouraging verbal feedback to individuals so that they know how to improve but children do not have individual targets to increase their involvement in their own learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Routines are clearly established so that children happily settle into school life and grow in independence.
- Caring relationships are nurtured so that children learn to get on with each other.
- Children's awareness of cultural and religious differences is good in the nursery but is less well developed in the reception class.

Commentary

39. Good organisation at the start of sessions makes children feel welcome in the nursery. Consequently, almost all leave their carers happily. Self-registration is effectively organised to promote independence as each child selects and displays their own photograph to show they have arrived. Boundaries are clearly established. Nevertheless, several children are at an early stage of learning to accept what is expected of them. Reception children successfully follow the teacher's clear instructions, as well as showing independence in selecting an activity or persevering with a task. Praise, supplemented by reward stamps, is used effectively to promote acceptable behaviour and effort and to raise self-esteem. As a result, children respond positively. They take turns and share sensibly, for instance, in mathematics games or at snack time. In the nursery, practical dragon celebrations of the Chinese New Year, including tasting Chinese food with chop sticks, have greatly increased children's awareness of cultures beyond their own. In the reception class, statutory requirements concerning religious education are met. Opportunities to take responsibility, for instance, to carry out specific monitorial tasks, are not well promoted with older children.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults use questions skillfully to promote speaking and listening skills.
- Continuity in teaching letters and their sounds is good across the Foundation Stage.
- In the reception class, joined handwriting is promoted successfully but insufficient emphasis is given to the structured development of children's independent writing.
- Literacy sessions in the reception class are only partially successful in meeting children's needs.

Commentary

40. Teachers are skilled at drawing children into discussion in large and small groups. Through purposeful questions they help children extend their ideas verbally. They provide positive feedback which raises children's self-esteem effectively. As a result, nursery children are confident in composing simple questions to ask a visitor. Use of the video camera so that children can watch and listen to themselves, supports learning very well. Although variable, listening skills generally are poor. When really interested, for instance in a story, reception children show good recall in simply describing characters and plot, but on other occasions they show in their response that they have not listened closely and, so, fail to understand. Children do not always follow instructions accurately. The teaching of letters and their sounds follows a commercial scheme which provides consistency of approach. As a result, most reception children are beginning to recognise letters by shape and sound. Not enough use is made of this knowledge to extend children's own writing. For instance, they stick printed captions like *the pig is fat* into their books when they could have attempted to spell this for themselves. Whilst there are informal opportunities for children to use their own phonic knowledge to write messages, children's ideas in their own work books are largely scribed by the teacher thus missing opportunities for challenging, independent work. Most reception children can write their own first name with reasonable control in joined script due to the well-organised, clear and frequent practice sessions. The literacy hour is adapted with partial success in the reception class, but the pace of the lesson is sometimes too slow. When children spend too long listening as a class they lose interest and their learning slows. Groupwork is not always focused clearly enough, or there is insufficient adult intervention to keep children on task. Consequently, children do not sustain their concentration and planned learning outcomes are not always realised.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are well managed and motivated to learn.
- There are insufficient practical activities to consolidate concepts well.

Commentary

41. Teachers plan lively sessions which successfully interest children in the subject. Whole class and small group work is well managed and purposeful. In the nursery, good use is made of the smart board and, in the reception class, of a soft toy to add an interesting dimension to learning. This harnesses children's enthusiasm successfully and they concentrate well. With help, nursery children count objects to 5 on a screen and reception children accurately recognise numerals along a number line to twenty. However, too few opportunities are

Provided for children to consolidate concepts purposefully by practically handling objects to count and match items one-to-one. A few reception children can find the number before or after 4 but are without the practical understanding of one more or one less.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory** overall and **particularly good** in the nursery.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of first-hand experiences enhances the curriculum.
- Group activities sometimes lack challenging focus.

Commentary

42. The well-planned integrated curriculum with relevant topics supports learning well in this area. For instance, nursery children show much interest in watching a mum bath her baby. They compose their own simple questions to investigate bath time and are beginning to appreciate the different needs of others. Due to the teacher's skilled questioning, children are thoughtful in making comparisons with their own home and family. This learning is consolidated well by carefully planned informal role-play activities, and further developed successfully by a visit to a church to baptise a doll. Through first-hand observations, reception children have acquired sound knowledge of the needs of a guinea pig. This is built upon satisfactorily when the teacher purposefully extends discussion about looking after pets in general in role-play in the pet shop. Some group activities like sand play or modelling with dough sometimes lack specific focus, and children are unclear about what is to be learnt. As a result, learning is not always as purposeful as it could be, and potential higher attainers do not always make the good progress of which they are capable.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on provision. Teachers' planning indicates that children experience the expected aspects of this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-organised role-play promotes creative development successfully.
- Expectations of musical development could be higher in the reception class.
- Children in the reception class enjoy learning French.

Commentary

43. The attractive role-play areas are imaginatively resourced and provide good stimuli for imaginative play. Adults intervene purposefully, adding extra resources or asking questions which help children extend their play. Reception children enjoy taking part in role-play activities based on their own first-hand activities. They join in a small repertoire of songs and poems but would benefit from more opportunities to explore sound through percussion. In French lessons, children take part energetically in action songs, extending their French vocabulary, but also responding enthusiastically to dynamics and tempo. Work on display suggests children explore a satisfactory range of creative media and techniques including paint and pastel, collage and printing.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are too low and especially in Years 3 to 6 pupils are not making as much progress as they should.
- Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall because lessons are not sufficiently challenging.
- Subject management is ineffective in evaluating the effect of changes.
- The monitoring of teaching has failed to eradicate weaknesses identified by the last inspection.
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory and the school now has useful information to track pupils' progress. However, this information is not being used effectively in future planning.
- In the infants the practical approach to teaching letters and sounds is helping to raise standards.

Commentary

44. Monitoring of teaching has failed to tackle weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection. As a result, standards in Year 6 are well below average and have been so over the last four years. Overall achievement of pupils of all abilities is unsatisfactory. The results of national tests last year were very low and fell into the lowest five per cent in the country. These pupils had not made nearly enough progress from Year 2 to Year 6. Test results show boys do not make as much progress as girls. This remains a concern for the school and in lessons in Year 6, girls outnumbered boys in the higher attaining group. The school does not analyse assessment information with enough attention to gender and so has not tackled this aspect except to link this underachievement to boys being more disaffected as they move into Year 6. Current standards are below average in speaking and listening. Most speak confidently but pupils do not listen with sufficient care to their teachers. Reading is well below average. Many pupils read sufficiently well to enjoy a story and have favourite authors. However, pupils do not always read with understanding. This was very clear when reading the children's version of Shakespeare. The words were generally decoded correctly but the meaning eludes the pupils because the vocabulary is beyond them. During the inspection pupils had insufficient time to read to an adult on a regular basis and this restricts their progress, especially when literacy lessons do not include a guided reading session. Writing is the weakest aspect in English. Teaching in Year 6 extends pupils' creative vocabulary and many are writing with more enthusiasm. However, throughout the juniors expectations of presentation and accuracy in punctuation and spelling have not been high enough and pupils continue to make basic errors which are holding down their overall standards in writing.
45. National test results in 2003 in reading and writing in Year 2 were well below the national average but compared with similar schools were average in reading and below average in writing. Standards have been declining over the last two years but current standards suggest the decline has stopped and standards are starting to rise. This is linked to the successful introduction of a more practical approach to teaching letters and their sounds which is having a positive effect on pupils' early reading and writing skills. Overall achievement is satisfactory although standards remain below average. Listening skills are weak and pupils' responses often show a misunderstanding of the question. Teachers do not always insist pupils take turn in class discussions and so many are calling out and disrupting others. Reading is improving and compared with similar schools many pupils are achieving as well as expected for their age. However, few confidently read a new text with understanding. Pupils have limited knowledge of a range of authors and refer to their reading scheme book as their favourite story. They are unsure about the library and say *we are not allowed to use it until we*

have read the reading scheme books. Writing is often untidy and this is linked to teachers' expectations not being high enough. However, when the teacher collates examples of work in large books, this motivates pupils and examples are more neatly presented. Pupils are making good attempts at spelling new words but are less confident using early punctuation and their vocabulary relies heavily on their spoken language.

46. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the infants but unsatisfactory progress in the juniors. Many of these pupils have individual education plans to guide teachers but these are not always used effectively to support learning. In the infants, more effective use is made of support assistants, and practical group work leads to effective learning. In the juniors, the lack of joint planning between teachers and support staff means that they are not fully aware of the purpose of the tasks they are supporting and their help is not always effective. The majority of pupils who have English as an additional language are confident speakers of English and are fully involved in lessons. Occasionally, there is a misunderstanding about their needs because the school does not have procedures to assess their language skills.
47. The overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Teaching seen was satisfactory in the infants and most lessons led to satisfactory learning. A variety of approaches captures pupils' interest and encourages them to maintain concentration. Teachers encourage pupils and pupils behave well in lessons. Even in these classes the review of pupils' work shows weaknesses in the overuse of worksheets which are not matched to pupils' ability. This does not lead to effective learning. In the juniors teaching is unsatisfactory with weaknesses seen in lessons and in the review of pupils' work. The most significant weaknesses that are leading to underachievement are low expectations, lack of challenge and work set that fails to capture pupils' interest. As a result, learning is ineffective. In most lessons seen the pace of learning was too slow. When teaching seen was unsatisfactory the lack of clarity about the purpose of the lesson led to confusion about the written tasks. In Year 5 teaching was good, the pace of learning was brisk and the inclusion of drama improved pupils' speaking and listening skills as well as raising an understanding about the plot of *Theseus and the Minotaur*. Information and communication technology supports English in lessons in the suite but teachers do not follow this up in class. Most teachers manage pupils well so that learning takes place in an orderly atmosphere.
48. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The effectiveness of management is watered down by having two co-ordinators who are unclear about their different responsibilities. Co-ordinators do not have an opportunity to see how changes are influencing practice in lessons and they are unsure about current standards. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and track individual progress from the Reception class to Year 6. However, this information is not used effectively to analyse progress by gender and ethnicity or to adjust the curriculum when a weakness is spotted. Current priorities are led by the school's raising achievement plan and this includes setting targets. However, this has led to an overload of targets for the school, class, group and also for reading and writing. As a result, the system is not effective and pupils are unsure how to improve their work. The library is poorly stocked and underused. Co-ordinators are very aware of this weakness but future plans to move the library to an isolated building (previously the caretaker's home) lack an understanding of the purpose of a library.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. The promotion of language and literacy in other subjects varies between classes but is satisfactory overall. Teachers do not have any guidelines to help them and examples in other subjects show missed opportunities. For example, in Year 4 pupils have large skeletons on display but these have not been labeled. In other classes this is much better and good practice is seen in Year 6 in the pupils' aspiration maps which encourage pupils to plan their writing and show use of notes and lists as pupils record their future life plans.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is unsatisfactory in Year 3 to Year 6 and so pupils underachieve.
- The pace of many lessons is too slow.
- Assessment information is not used effectively to track and influence pupils' progress.
- Lessons have clear objectives and practical activities are improving teaching in the infants.
- Work is not always well matched to the needs of different groups.
- The quality of teaching and learning is not monitored effectively.

Commentary

50. Standards are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6. This represents a comparative decline since the last inspection when standards were judged to be average and below average respectively. The school's analysis of test results showed a weakness in pupils' ability to interpret and solve problems. This is a current target for improvement and is evident in some classes, though it has not yet had an impact on standards. The good use of a variety of methods, including recognition of patterns, in the mental starter sessions in Year 1 and Year 2 is helping pupils to develop good counting skills. However, the leisurely pace of the majority of these initial sessions in Year 3 to Year 6 is not sufficiently demanding to enable pupils to develop the necessary quick recall of facts.
51. Achievement is satisfactory in Year 1 and Year 2 because the work is suitably practical and is matched to the needs of pupils of different ability. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily as they receive regular support, including a recent involvement in the mathematics recovery scheme.
52. Achievement is unsatisfactory in Year 3 to Year 6, and scrutiny of pupils' work for the current year shows that progress is particularly erratic in Years 3 and 4. Pupils with different abilities, including those with special educational needs, are often given the same task in lessons and activities are not well matched to pupils' needs. Additional support is given through initiatives such as Springboard mathematics, though this has not yet been effective in enabling a higher percentage of pupils to reach the required standard.
53. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in Year 1 and Year 2 and some good lessons were observed. A strong feature is the good use of practical activities and patterns to help pupils to understand. For example, pupils in Year 1 clench and open their hands when counting in fives. However, scrutiny of pupils' books shows that there are large gaps in pupils' recorded work in Year 2 and that marking is not sufficiently focused on helping pupils to improve.
54. Teaching is unsatisfactory in Year 3 to Year 6. Half the lessons observed in the inspection were unsatisfactory and this does not lead to effective learning. The pace of lessons is too slow to develop pupils' arithmetic skills. Whilst the use of rhythmic chanting is helping pupils to remember the patterns of times tables, there is insufficient requirement for pupils to have quick recall of number facts. In one unsatisfactory lesson in Year 4 too much time was allocated for each activity. Much of the lesson was spent in rehearsing aspects of co-ordinates with which pupils were already familiar and so there was insufficient new learning to raise standards. A stronger aspect of the teaching is the clear explanation of the activities, linked with explicit learning objectives so that pupils know what to do. The school has rightly identified problem solving as an area of weakness and this focus was evident in some

lessons. In Year 6 pupils were asked to work out how long Victorians lived, from information researched in the churchyard. Whilst this was a good activity in itself, pupils were restricted by their difficulty in interpreting the questions and in performing the calculations. There are few opportunities for pupils to consolidate their understanding by explaining how they have worked things out, though this aspect was more evident in teaching in Year 5. Teachers are not always totally secure in their mathematical knowledge, for example in converting square centimetres to square metres and this can confuse pupils.

55. When mathematics lessons take place in the ICT suite, computers are used well to support learning in mathematics, for example Year 6 entered information onto a database and used this to compare graphical information. However, little evidence was seen of computers being used in mathematics lessons on a regular basis either in class or in the suite.
56. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has made good progress in setting up systems to track pupils' progress and set targets. However, assessment information is not being used effectively to adjust the curriculum or to intervene when insufficient progress is apparent. Several people, including external consultants, have monitored teaching. However, this has not been effective in improving its quality to raise standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use and develop their mathematics skills in other subjects. There are several examples of pupils drawing graphs in science and of using shapes, symmetry and patterns in art. However, there was little evidence of accurate measurement or calculations, for example in design and technology or geography. One good example was the comparisons of life spans in history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6.
- Achievement in the juniors is unsatisfactory.
- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 does not provide effectively for the wide range of ability in each class.
- The role of the curriculum co-ordinators has been insufficiently developed and is ineffective in raising standards.
- Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

58. Standards in Year 2 are similar to those seen in the previous inspection. The overall standards reached by Year 2 pupils in statutory teacher assessments in 2003 were below the national average but above the average of similar schools. Pupils generally leave the reception class with below average standards in knowledge and understanding of the world. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 due to satisfactory teaching. Standards in Year 6 are not as high as those seen in the previous inspection. Standards are lower than those reached by Year 6 pupils in national tests in 2003 when standards were below both the national average and the average for similar schools. The test results indicate that Year 6 pupils achieve poorly in relation to their prior attainment in Year 2. This is due in part to the unsatisfactory teaching in Years 3 to 6 and to the lack of appropriate challenge for pupils of differing ability in the curriculum. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is

satisfactory as they generally respond well to the practical nature of the subject. The in-class support of the learning mentor for pupils with behaviour difficulties contributes significantly to their ability to maintain concentration and achieve as well as they can.

59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but the school's system of one teacher teaching all classes for science in Years 3 to 6 is ineffective in promoting progress. As a result, the overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. A scrutiny of work shows an overuse of work sheets which are not matched to pupils' ability and fail to inspire pupils or extend learning. Not enough use is made of assessments of pupils' performances to plan new work which builds on what pupils already know and clearly meets the needs of different attainment groups in each class. As a result, pupils are not fully challenged to do their best and do not make the progress of which they are capable. Expectations of what pupils can achieve in learning and in recording their work are too low, for instance, pupils are allowed to present their work poorly and to leave tasks unfinished. Marking does not indicate to pupils how to improve their work. The pace of lessons is sometimes slow because sessions are timetabled for whole afternoons. This is not conducive to learning, as pupils do not sustain concentration well. It is not made clear exactly what pupils are expected to learn. Consequently, pupils do not always work purposefully, and do not carry out tasks with enough care, for example, failing to make a prediction, as instructed, before carrying out a test. Insufficient opportunities are provided for older pupils to work independently in planning investigations or in collaborating with others. This particularly inhibits the progress of potential higher attainers in reaching above average standards. Plenary sessions are generally used effectively to draw the lesson together, but pupils' poor listening skills sometimes create a barrier to learning. Mathematics is used well in tables and graphs to display results, although the use of worksheets does not enable these skills to be fully promoted. Resources are used effectively and organised efficiently to promote first-hand learning in the infants. For instance, Year 2 pupils work practically to construct a simple electrical circuit to light a bulb. The school has recently acquired data logging equipment and digital microscopes but as yet ICT is not used effectively to support learning in science.
60. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The curriculum co-ordinators have an informed overview of the school's standards through careful tracking of progress and analysis of performance. However, they have not been empowered to use this knowledge rigorously to identify and implement clearly focused strategies for raising standards. For example, the analysis of test papers identified areas needing more attention and this was shared with staff but not in a sufficiently useful way with ideas and resources to have any significant effect on standards. Their roles in monitoring teaching and learning are underdeveloped.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator leads well by example.
- There is good teaching of skills in the ICT suite.
- There is insufficient use of computers in other subjects.
- Good planning guidelines ensure all aspects of the subject are now taught.

Commentary

61. Standards are average in Year 2 and Year 6. Stronger aspects are the acquisition of skills, such as developing word processing in Years 1 and 2, and compiling databases and learning to write simple procedures to control events in Year 5 and Year 6. A weaker area is pupils' irregular use of ICT in other subjects, which restricts the further development of their skills and understanding.

62. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Work is well planned to meet the needs of individuals, for example most pupils in Year 2 can word process a simple sentence. When using the computers in the suite older pupils receive a good level of individual support enabling them to progress at their own level. For example, most pupils in Year 6 write a program to turn on the house lights when it gets dark, whilst higher attaining pupils have the chance to extend this to incorporate a more sophisticated security system.
63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in the ICT suite when the co-ordinator uses her expertise to teach classes from Year 4 to Year 6. A strong aspect of these lessons is the use of the interactive whiteboard to demonstrate and explain and this helps pupils to understand. When available, the skilled teaching assistant gives good support to individuals to keep them on task and overcome difficulties. The effectiveness of one lesson was reduced because of the challenging behaviour of a small group of boys in Year 4. Whilst the teacher engaged these boys satisfactorily, this impinged on the time available for helping other pupils. The last inspection identified teachers' lack of confidence. Whilst this has been resolved to some extent by training, the lack of use of the computers in other lessons would indicate that a lack of confidence still remains for some teachers.
64. Management of the subject is good. Much has been achieved since the appointment of the new co-ordinator. A scheme of work has been produced and a new suite has been resourced, and though its shape is not ideal, it allows all pupils access to a computer during lessons. This hands-on experience has led to a good improvement in standards. The school has rightly identified the use of computer skills as an area for improvement but planning for this aspect is variable. The co-ordinator has a clear picture of provision in the juniors because she teaches all of these classes. As yet there has not been an opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in other lessons.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory overall. Some good examples were seen, such as Year 6 compiling databases from information collected in the churchyard to produce graphs of life expectancy in Victorian times. Pupils in Year 2 used the computer to paint pictures of their friends in class. Too often, however, machines are not in use. Several times during the inspection a trawl of the school revealed that all the machines were switched off. This is a waste of valuable resources and opportunities.

HUMANITIES

Only one lesson was observed in each subject so there is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on **geography and history**. Discussions with subject co-ordinators show that good use is made of visits to places of interest and of field trips, including residential visits, to enhance learning in both subjects. There is little evidence of the use of ICT to enhance learning.

Geography

Pupils' books show that pupils in Year 2 have an understanding of an island home and have compared this to their local surroundings. Pupils in Year 6 study rivers in a practical way on their residential visits. They are aware of the meaning of Fair Trade and have researched the impact on banana producers in Belize.

In a lesson observed in Year 4, pupils made good use of maps to inform their discussion on why people in the past settled in particular places. The teacher showed good subject knowledge in getting pupils to consider the relative merits of living near a river or a well.

History

Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that pupils in Year 2 have studied aspects of Tudors and Stuarts, including The Great Fire of London. Pupils in Year 6 have studied Ancient Greece including different forms of government.

In a lesson observed in Year 6 pupils showed an understanding of aspects of the Greek Wars, comparing Athens with Sparta on the map. Pupils worked well with a partner to develop a convincing argument to persuade the people of Sparta to join with Athens. The teacher related the story in an interesting way to sustain pupils' involvement and so behaviour was good.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good understanding of their Christian faith.
- There is little in depth study of other world faiths.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to enhance learning.
- There are good opportunities to develop literacy skills.

Commentary

65. Standards are broadly in line with the agreed syllabus in Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity and can relate significant events in the Bible closely to their own lives. The previous inspection identified a strength in pupils' understanding of the Bible but an insecure knowledge of other world faiths. This situation remains. The school has developed a new scheme of work which includes the in depth study of Judaism and Islam. However, scrutiny of pupils' books indicates that these have not been covered in sufficient depth so far, other than Old Testament stories such as Moses. Discussion with the co-ordinator shows that these lessons were superseded by a major production in school in the autumn term, though Year 1 pupils have looked at aspects of Hinduism, such as Divali. Progress from the last inspection has therefore been unsatisfactory.
66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. During the inspection good teaching was observed although this is less evident in pupils' books which indicate some omissions in planning to follow the scheme of work. In a good lesson in Year 1 the teacher made good connections between pupils' understanding of lifecycles to introduce the topic of Easter. In Year 5 the teacher used his good knowledge of literature and the Bible to connect passages from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* to the events in the Garden of Gethsemane. This helped pupils to understand abstract issues such as betrayal. Matters of death were dealt with in a sensitive and natural way and this made a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
67. The school makes good use of its connections, to visit churches and cathedrals and Christian visitors lead assemblies. However, there have been no visitors to school from other world faiths nor have pupils visited other places of worship. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills, for example pupils in Year 5 write the story of The Good Samaritan in their own words. However, there is insufficient use of ICT to enhance learning.
68. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory overall and a scheme of work is now in place. However, management of the subject has been ineffective in monitoring what pupils have covered.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education. It is not, therefore, possible to make a firm judgement on provision. Evidence from teachers' planning and work on display indicates that statutory requirements are met in each subject.

Art and design and **design and technology** are taught in intensive blocks for one week each half term. These are often led by an artist in residence or a visiting workshop. Work on display reflects a broad and balanced curriculum in **art and design**. In Year 2, paint and pastel self-portraits, and black and white collages show the influence of Picasso's work. In Year 6, pupils have produced some very interesting abstract designs based on the work of David Bamberg.

In **design and technology**, work on display in Year 6 is of an impressive standard. Pupils have completed a project to make models of fairground equipment powered by electric motors. Appropriate attention has been given to each aspect of the designing, making and evaluating process. There are good links with the local secondary school which welcomes Year 6 pupils for a three week design and technology project in the autumn term.

In **music**, the curriculum is enhanced by opportunities to perform in the annual Christmas presentation and to sing in the choir. Music is used well to set the scene for assembly and singing is often good. When singing and clapping to *We are here together* a feeling of belonging to a community is developed.

In **physical education**, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have swimming lessons and there are good opportunities for competitive sport in extra curricular activities. Pupils talented in sport benefit from the very good links with the local football clubs.

In all these subjects planning is following national guidance and this ensures statutory requirements are met. Assessment is satisfactory with progress being checked at the end of each unit of work. The school's focus is clearly on raising standards in literacy and mathematics and the co-ordinators have the remit to maintain standards in other subjects. Co-ordinators are fulfilling this role satisfactorily but their role in monitoring standards, teaching and learning is underdeveloped.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Only one lesson, which was allocated to school council affairs, was seen and so it would be inappropriate to make an overall judgement about subject provision on this limited evidence.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's behaviour policy focuses on positive praise and re-enforcement.
- The learning mentor offers effective support to pupils who have social and behavioural difficulties.
- School and class councils allow pupils to learn about decision making and representing the opinions of others.
- The school does not currently have a member of staff with management responsibility for the subject.
- The school lacks clear planning guidelines and fails to give enough attention to drugs education.

Commentary

69. Parents are very happy with this aspect of the school's provision. They especially appreciate the support their children receive from the learning mentor which enables them to learn to deal with any difficulties and play a full part in school life. A strength in the learning mentor's approach is her ability to provide opportunities for pupils to succeed at a worthwhile activity

and this is most effective in raising self-esteem. Photographs on display also celebrate achievement in a wide range of activities. Many of these show pupils enjoying themselves on the residential visits which are a very positive part of school life. Parents feel these are extremely valuable in helping their children to learn to tolerate others and to accept responsibility for their actions.

70. Although classes have a lesson dedicated to personal, social and health education the school lacks clear planning for the subject to guide teachers with the focus for activities in their lessons. A further weakness is the lack of records of themes for assembly so staff cannot link their topics to these occasions. The school encourages healthy eating and is looking to achieve a healthy school award. However, it is a concern the school does not give enough attention to alerting pupils to the dangers of the misuse of drugs. Displays in class show teachers' attention to this aspect of pupils' development is variable. In Year 6 pupils' aspiration maps show the teacher encourages high aspirations in the pupils. In Year 1 the *we are special display* indicates good attention to celebrating children's differences and the star of the week is described as *friendly, helpful and cheerful*.
71. The school and class councils are organised well and meet regularly. Their opinions are respected and have been taken on board in the revamping of the playground. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 carry out several duties to help the school run smoothly. Pupils support charities and so learn about their role to help others less fortunate than themselves.

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	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	6
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	5
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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
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	5
The effectiveness of management	5

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