

INSPECTION REPORT

TOWN END PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sunderland

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108779

Headteacher: Mr R Hepburn

Lead inspector: Mr N Tonge

Dates of inspection: 14 – 16 June 2004

Inspection number: 258223

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:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	213
School address:	Borodin Avenue Town End Farm Sunderland Tyne and Wear
Postcode:	SR5 4NX
Telephone number:	0191 553 6996
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Hudson

Date of previous inspection: 29 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Town End Primary School serves the community of Town End Farm Estate in the city of Sunderland. There are 213 pupils on roll, including 50 children in the nursery, 26 who attend in the morning and 24 in the afternoon. They are almost exclusively of white British origin with a very small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. There are no pupils at an early stage of language acquisition. Numbers of pupils have declined from their highest point of 296 in 1999 due to a general decline in population, particularly marked in north Sunderland. There is an equal balance of boys and girls overall, although in Year 5 boys outnumber girls by three to one and vice versa in Year 6. Two-thirds of the families live in municipally owned council housing, while most of the remainder live in owner-occupied ex-council houses. Attainment on entry is well below the average, particularly in language development.

The area is one of high social disadvantage. The estate has the highest unemployment rate in the city. Nearly half the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average of 18 per cent. The school has received a Leading Aspect Award, for its provision of a breakfast club and after school activities, and also the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools, Physical Education Active Mark and Investors in People recognition. Mobility of pupils is relatively high with approximately one-fifth of Year 6 pupils who did not begin their school career at Town End. Teacher mobility too, is high, with eleven teachers leaving in the last two years, being replaced with 7 new teachers (falling rolls has meant a reduction in teaching staff). There are 80 pupils with special educational needs but none with a statement of special educational needs. This figure is well above the national average. Special needs comprise predominantly moderate learning difficulties, but four pupils have severe learning difficulties and a substantial minority have social, emotional and behavioural needs. Four have speech and communication needs. The school is undergoing

refurbishment to provide a purpose-built Foundation Stage unit and changing rooms for physical education.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1157	Mr N Tonge	Lead inspector	Geography History Religious education
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22274	Mrs V Rogers	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Music
22113	Mrs A King	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs English as an additional language
32180	Mr D Sleightholme	Team inspector	English Science Design and technology Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Town End primary school provides a **satisfactory** education for its pupils. Children enter the Nursery with standards that are very low for their age. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, standards have improved although they are below the national averages in English, mathematics and science. The pupils' modest progress is achieved because of the good climate for learning that is provided and the procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and taking satisfactory action based on this information. The cost of educating pupils is in line with the average and bearing in mind the satisfactory performance of the school, it provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils begin with very low levels of literacy and numeracy but the school ensures that they achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 6.
- Relationships are very good because the school works at them effectively and, as a result, pupils have good attitudes to their work and they behave well.
- Pupils are well cared for and given many responsibilities and as a consequence the personal development of pupils is good.
- Leadership by the headteacher is satisfactory.
- Teaching is satisfactory.
- Parents and pupils are very appreciative of the work done by the school.
- Governors carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily but they rely too heavily on headteacher reports.

Since the school was inspected in 1998 the rate of improvement has been satisfactory. Specifically, in response to the key issues; pupils now receive an improved curriculum in mathematics in Years 1, the provision and standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have been raised but standards in English, mathematics and science remain below the national average. The school, however, has had many difficulties to overcome including falling numbers on roll and high pupil and staff mobility. Pace and challenge in teaching has improved, but the needs of pupils with different abilities in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are not planned for effectively. Coordinators are now monitoring planning and reviewing pupils' work but staff mobility has meant that there is some lack of systematic development in some subjects.

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

The achievement of pupils throughout the school is satisfactory. When pupils begin school their attainment is very low. The Foundation Stage unit enables the children to make satisfactory progress and although few reach the Early Learning Goals by the beginning of Year 1, they achieve well in their social and personal development.

The 2003 results show that by the end of Year 2, pupils are in line with the average in reading, below in mathematics and well below in writing compared to similar schools nationally. These pupils started school with very low attainment and approximately half of the pupils had special educational needs, and consequently have made satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 6, standards attained by pupils were below in English and well below in mathematics and science compared to similar schools nationally and their achievement was unsatisfactory. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs as well as staff changes affected results.

Inspection evidence shows that standards have improved since last year and the unvalidated results for national tests for 2004 confirm this judgement. This has been achieved through the continuity of effective teaching in literacy and numeracy, the close monitoring of pupil progress as well as the additional support given to those pupils who have needed help.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils work happily together and show tolerance and respect because they are expected to do so and understand why. The pupils have positive attitudes to school. They want to learn because most lessons are made interesting and they have trust and confidence in their teachers who motivate them to want to succeed. Standards of behaviour are good throughout the school at all times. They are given a considerable amount of responsibility both within the school council and in general work around the school and as a consequence feel greatly valued. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory but the monitoring of attendance is insufficiently rigorous.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory. Children start school with confidence because of good induction procedures and they make good progress in their social and personal development. The standard of satisfactory teaching is generally maintained throughout the school as a result of the very good relationships that exist and the generally interesting and challenging activities that are planned for the pupils. Teachers do not, however, insist enough on pupils presenting their work more neatly and the marking policy is inconsistently applied so pupils do not have a sufficiently clear picture of what they need to do to improve. The school provides good pastoral care and child protection procedures are effective. The school offers a satisfactory curriculum, which is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements and is greatly enriched with a very good range of out of school activities. There are good links with parents and the community at large.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership by the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory. The headteacher, supported by a very able deputy, has developed an ethos in the school in which pupils feel valued. Parents are very appreciative of this aspect of leadership. Furthermore, the headteacher has managed falling rolls well and at the same time improved the facilities the school offers, such as the construction of a new Foundation Stage unit and changing rooms but there has been insufficient emphasis on ensuring the raising of standards in English, mathematics and science. **Management is satisfactory.** Systems to ensure the school reviews its performance are in place but they need to use assessment information more effectively in planning lessons other than those in English, mathematics and science. The governance of the school is satisfactory. It is satisfactorily informed and asks pertinent questions about the school performance, although members are too reliant on headteacher reports.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils enjoy coming to school because they know they are cared for and valued by their teachers. Parents hold the school in high regard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science and to more fully develop writing skills across the curriculum.
- Curriculum planning to ensure there is a greater match of work to pupils' needs.
- A consistent approach to marking, ensuring that pupils know what they need to do to improve and present their work more neatly.
- Using assessment information fully to plan work in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.
- Broaden the ways in which governors receive information about school performance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards on entry in the Foundation Stage are very low but the children's achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are below average but achievement is satisfactory for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 but their achievement is satisfactory because of the high expectations of teachers and the predominantly good teaching of literacy and numeracy.
- Overall, achievement and standards have improved from unsatisfactory because of a stable staffing situation and the effective action given to those pupils in need of extra help.
- Pupils with special educational needs, including the gifted and talented, achieve satisfactorily.
- Children make satisfactory progress toward meeting the early learning goals by the end of reception, particularly in personal and social development, although their literacy and numeracy skills are below.

Commentary

1. The below average standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science have been broadly maintained since the last inspection despite the many challenges the school has faced with regard to falling rolls and a declining ability level, high pupil and staff mobility, and a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards attained in national tests last year, however, and achievement overall, were unsatisfactory. Inspection evidence based on observation of lessons and an examination of pupils' work shows that this situation has improved. This is principally due to a more stable staffing situation, effective teaching of literacy and numeracy and the support given to pupils who have needed additional help. The school did not meet its targets last year for they were set at too ambitious a level. Targets this year are more realistic and the unvalidated results for the 2004 national tests indicate that they have broadly succeeded in meeting them. The trend of performance has been below the national trend but is commensurate with the general decline in ability levels in the school. Parents have confidence in the standards and achievement of the school. Pupils similarly have trust in their teachers and do their best for them because teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work ethic. However, pupils need to have a clearer view on what they need to do to improve.
2. In general terms, attainment on entry has declined with successive years, but it is normally very low in literacy, numeracy and social development. The school has a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, approximately half of the school population, and this places it in the top five per cent of schools nationally with special educational needs pupils.
3. Pupils make a satisfactory start in the Foundation Stage. At the time of the inspection, children and teachers were working in cramped conditions as a new Foundation Stage

unit was being built and this had some impact on the judgements about teaching and learning. Assessment information at the end of reception shows that these pupils make satisfactory progress toward reaching the goals that are expected for children of this age, particularly in personal and social development, although few actually achieve them.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.0 (14.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	11.4 (14.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.3 (17.1)	16.3 (16.5)

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

4. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve satisfactorily, bearing in mind the very low starting point in literacy and numeracy at which they enter this phase of the school. Writing remains the weaker component, which the school has identified as a major priority in its development plan. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' achievement is satisfactory because teachers teach literacy and numeracy well and there is good additional support from teaching assistants as well as an additional part time teacher in Year 1. This arrangement means that pupils receive a good level of help to improve their basic skills. Inspection evidence shows that this is having a positive effect on raising standards, albeit gradually.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.3 (23.4)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	23.5 (24.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	25.1 (26.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 52 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Standards are below average by the end of Year 6 but pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This represents an improved situation compared to 2003, when standards were too low and achievement unsatisfactory. This unsatisfactory situation had arisen because of numerous staff changes in Year 6 specifically, as well as across Years 3 – 6 overall, over the last two years. Standards have improved and achievement is now satisfactory because the staffing situation is stable and teachers teach literacy and numeracy skills well, and the teaching of investigation skills in science is improving. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and this information is used satisfactorily to plan work for pupils although they need to be more flexible in meeting the needs of different abilities of pupils rather than always teaching to the national expectations. High expectations of behaviour during lessons helps motivate pupils to do well although these good attitudes need to be reinforced by an insistence on good presentation of work and a greater awareness by pupils of what they need to do to improve.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Pupils have good attitudes towards their school and behave well. Their personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are interested in their work and accept responsibility very willingly.
- Teachers praise good behaviour, are quick to correct minor infractions and pupils respond well.
- Pupils' social development is very good and spiritual moral and cultural development, good. Pupils learn satisfactorily about other faiths and cultures.
- Procedures for obtaining the reasons for absence are insufficiently rigorous.

Commentary

6. Both the parents and the pupils, in their respective questionnaires, said that children enjoy coming to school. This is very evident from their demeanour around the school, and the enthusiasm with which they take part in lessons and other activities. At their meeting, parents said that their children often preferred school to holidays. Although children in the nursery start at a very low level of social development they quickly gain social skills and learn to work together. By the time they finish school, many pupils are confident in speaking to an audience, such as assemblies. When asked, pupils could think of little they would improve about their school. They appreciate the help that teachers give them to improve and the companionship of friends who are cheerful and rarely unkind to each other. There is little bullying and no racism, but if any issues arise, they are quickly and effectively dealt with, often through discussion in class.
7. Pupils have good attitudes to learning in lessons and even the lower ability pupils can concentrate for long periods of time because teachers have high expectations of them. When the teaching is interesting, as it was in most lessons during the inspection, pupils respond well to questioning and are keen to learn. Pupils' overall behaviour is good and teachers work hard to praise them when they see improvements or those acting as good role models. Most pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations of behaviour. Pupils move around the school in a quiet, orderly way and are courteous, opening doors for others and standing aside. They behave well in the playground and in the dinner hall and respond positively to the responsibility placed on them to act maturely. Pupils willingly accept the many responsibilities offered, for example, running the school shop, and helping younger pupils. Some organise lunchtime clubs for them, like the Dancing Cats and the Jungle Club. They collect money for a variety of charities and take their work on the school environment very seriously.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.7	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

8. Although attendance and punctuality are satisfactory, the school's procedures for monitoring reasons for absence are not. Some confusion has developed about whose responsibility it is to collect and record these reasons and, as a result, there are many unexplained absences in registers. The school has not implemented guidelines on contacting all parents whose children are not in school without explanation on the first day of absence, or maintaining a record of those who arrive or leave in mid-session.
9. The school raises pupils' spiritual and social awareness through assemblies and class sessions in which they can discuss personal issues, and this is improving their speaking and listening skills, as well as their moral development. The pupils enjoy the 'Philosophy for Children' initiative, which encourages them to consider alternative views to their own and to defend their own beliefs. Pupils understand right from wrong and can talk about their feelings and the impact of their actions on others.

10. Pupils participate enthusiastically in art and music clubs and write poems that are thoughtful and show good perception of, for example, the nature of God, the beauty of the natural world or the plight of those less fortunate. Classrooms and corridors are made alive with displays of artefacts of religions other than Christianity, and a wide range of other cultures. Whilst they are taught about the traditions of other main cultures found in Britain today, they have little understanding of the significance of these, although some pupils did know, for example, of the current discussion on Muslim headscarves.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Pupils achieve satisfactorily because of satisfactory teaching; an enriched curriculum with out of school hours activities; the very good relationships, which foster positive attitudes to learning; the good care it provides for its pupils and the good relationships the school has with its parents and the community at large.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have secure subject knowledge in literacy and numeracy.
- The quality of teaching in ICT has improved since the last inspection.
- Throughout the school relationships are good and pupils are keen to learn.
- The school makes good use of teaching assistants to help pupils to learn.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent.
- Individual targets are not shared sufficiently with pupils to help them to have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- There is a lack of insistence on the quality of presentation of pupils' work.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0 %)	4 (11 %)	18 (50%)	14 (39%)	0 (0%)	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 quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. As evident from the table above, the lessons observed during the inspection show a stronger profile than satisfactory. However, the good level of learning seen in lessons is better than that seen in pupils' previous work, and consequently teaching is satisfactory overall and pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning.
12. Since the last inspection there has been a significant change in staff because of the higher than average level of mobility of teachers. This has had some impact on the consistency in pupils' achievement and slowed down continuity in learning, particularly for some of the older pupils.
13. Teachers in the school manage their pupils well. They establish very good relationships, which are supportive and as a result pupils feel secure. This encourages a good climate for learning in which pupils behave well and carry out their work with interest. The school has a generous number of support staff and teaching assistants, with one in each class. They work well with the teachers. They are given liaison time together to plan pupils' work and this contributes well to the good support, particularly for the high number of pupils with

special educational needs. As a result these pupils are able to make progress in their learning at a satisfactory rate. Teachers have secure subject knowledge for teaching literacy and numeracy and these subjects are taught well. In these subjects, teachers' planning is appropriately structured with clear learning objectives and some variation in the level of tasks set. However, there is a lack of flexibility in planning and the use of assessment information to

ensure that the needs of all pupils are met, as teachers adhere too rigidly to the recommended year group requirements of the national strategies rather than on building on what pupils already know and can do. This leads to some pupils working at levels that are far too difficult and, therefore, their learning is slower than it could be. In subjects other than English and numeracy, teachers do not always plan work that meets the needs of pupils of different abilities, so that pupils who do not have the necessary skills in writing for example, often find the work too difficult, whilst the higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and, therefore, do not achieve as well as they should.

14. In the more effective lessons, teachers used a range of strategies and resources well to make learning interesting. They used their subject knowledge well to challenge the pupils through a good level of discussion and questioning which ensured that all pupils were interested and involved. These lessons were conducted at a good pace. In the satisfactory lessons, the pace was generally slower and discussion, questioning and tasks were not adequately planned to meet the ability levels of all pupils. As a result pupils' learning was slower.
15. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT). The school has invested heavily in ensuring that teachers have the necessary skills and resources to teach the subject and this has been beneficial. Teachers are also beginning to use ICT well to support learning, especially the interactive white boards which have recently been installed and are used with good effect, particularly in teaching English and mathematics.
16. There is a good and comprehensive system of tracking pupils' progress, which enables teachers and assistants to provide the required support for the pupils. However, this information is not always used effectively to set work at levels appropriate for the range of abilities in the classes.
17. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent in providing the pupils with information on how they might improve their work. Across the school the quality of presentation of pupils' work is untidy and lacks clear organisation. The school has developed thorough procedures to assess the achievements of the pupils in English and mathematics, based on regular evaluations by class teachers and standardised tests. This information is used well to plot the achievements of pupils and to set overall targets. However, it is not used specifically enough to set targets with individual pupils to give them a clear picture of how they are progressing or of the next stage of their learning.

The curriculum

The curriculum is broad, balanced and **satisfactory** for all age groups. It is **greatly enriched** through a very good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good enrichment opportunities in art, music and sport.
- Overall there is good accommodation and the school is well-resourced with a good level of support staff.
- There is a good programme for personal, social and health education.
- There is not enough structure to some schemes of work or child-initiated activities within

the Foundation Stage of learning.

- Teachers need to use their knowledge of the attainment of pupils to focus work for them on their particular needs rather than following too rigorously the schemes of work.

Commentary

18. At the previous inspection the Foundation Stage curriculum was broad and balanced, with very good planning. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 however, had imbalances in coverage of mathematics for Years 1 and 2 and ICT across the school. Mathematics has been improved and ICT has been developed considerably and as a consequence standards have improved. All pupils have full and equal access to the curriculum.
19. The curriculum is broad, balanced and satisfactory for all age groups and enriched through a very good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. The curriculum covers the requirements of the National Curriculum and includes a scheme of work for religious education, based on the local authority agreed syllabus. The school uses the Primary National Strategy well. In other subjects national guidelines are used as a source of reference, but not enough flexibility is used for them to meet the specific needs of pupils. However the provision for information and communication technology is good as there is an effective structure in place for pupils to acquire computer skills. The computer club held every morning in conjunction with the breakfast club has also added to the curriculum experience of the pupils and as a result has had a good impact on standards. Numeracy and literacy skills are used across the curriculum, but are not sufficiently developed to enhance other subjects and reinforce basic skills in writing and mathematics. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory overall. The Nursery uses the guidelines well producing clear learning objectives, which reflect the stepping-stones and Early Learning Goals. However, the Reception curriculum is not fully integrated into the Foundation Stage of learning as yet and there is a tendency to use National Curriculum criteria, which means there are not always enough opportunities for the children to initiate their own activities within a structured programme.
20. The provision for the pupils' personal, social and emotional development is good, with an effective programme on awareness of drugs misuse, a clear policy for sex education and relationships, and good input from outside agencies and the local community. The pupils are offered satisfactory access to the curriculum and opportunity within lessons to develop their skills, but sometimes, assessment is insufficiently used to match tasks and activities to the range of abilities. However, the very good variety of extra-curricular opportunities, residential trips for Year 5 and Year 6, and artistic and sporting activities, means the pupils also have valuable experiences to enhance their learning. A very good number of after school clubs are held each week organised by staff, parents and teaching assistants. Non-teaching staff organise a swimming club at the Castle View Centre. The pupils' success in swimming means all Year 6 pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave school.
21. The provision for pupils identified as having special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The policy for special educational needs is inclusive and the school provides effectively for the pupils to ensure that they have equal access to the curriculum and are well-integrated into lessons. The policy also reflects the current Code of Practice and states clearly the procedures for identifying and supporting pupils. The school has a register of pupils identified as having special educational needs, and prompt assessment means that pupils receive support, in lessons, suitable to their needs. The school provides a teaching assistant for each class and through this effective support pupils make progress comparable to their peers. Two coordinators for special educational needs ensure that support for children is available as soon as they come into school and that this is maintained as they progress

through each year group. The tracking and setting of pupils' targets is thorough, especially as a high proportion of pupils are identified in each year group, in some instances nearly 50 per cent. With a teaching assistant in every class, the support offered is effective. The school uses an ICT program to devise individual education plans, which means there is a common format. The school also encourages the parents and carers to be involved as fully as possible in their children's progress. They are all invited to attend the reviews of their children's progress in meeting their targets and identifying new ones if required, although not all parents take up this

offer. The school has good links with outside agencies, but staffing changes in the local educational psychology service have resulted in a lack of continuity in the support the school receives for special educational needs. However, the staff are well-aware of these issues and are proactive in seeking support and ensuring pupils are supported in their learning.

22. There has been a high turnover of staff, particularly from Years 3 to 6, which has affected the sustained development of the curriculum. The match of support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum is good. Accommodation is good overall. Renovation of two classrooms is taking place to provide a well resourced Foundation Stage Unit and there are plans for further developments in future to provide changing areas in the existing Foundation Stage area. Resources are good overall, to support learning in all subjects, especially in ICT, and at present they are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage.

Care, guidance and support

The school effectively ensures pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Staff provide satisfactory support and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development. The school is very good in seeking the involvement of pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety and child protection procedures are thorough.
- Individual pupils are well cared for and supported in their personal development.
- The very caring, family ethos of the school ensures that all pupils can turn to an adult for advice.
- The school council is a good means of consulting pupils and acting on their ideas.

Commentary

23. Procedures for ensuring pupils' care, welfare and safety are good. The school gives satisfactory support and guidance for pupils based on the monitoring of their achievements and personal development and consults pupils very effectively on what they would like to see improved.
24. The school is a very happy, secure place where pupils feel confident and are hence able to learn. Most pupils in the survey agreed that there was an adult they could turn to if they had concerns. Conversations with pupils and parents confirmed that they could rely on staff to resolve minor conflicts and personal worries. Staff know the pupils very well and support them individually. Pupils have the opportunity to discuss their class code of conduct at the start of each year, and thus feel that they are obligated to obey it. The pupils appreciate the fairness and security that this promotes. The school keeps detailed records for each pupil so that they can link personal development with their progress in lessons. The school is starting to give pupils targets in English and mathematics so that they know what they have to do to achieve better standards. However, these are inconsistently used and are not always linked to the ability level of the individual pupil or group.
25. Staff and governors formally inspect the premises for safety hazards and any necessary remedial action is taken promptly. The school follows an agreed procedure for

assessing risks and taking steps to avoid them when pupils are taken on educational and residential visits. All equipment is correctly maintained. Child protection procedures are in place and all staff have been trained. Staff are given basic guidance in a form that they can refer to quickly. The headteacher-designate has been trained to take over the designated teacher role.

26. Before their children start school in the Nursery, parents have the opportunity to visit the school and staff visit the parents and child at home. They are given good information about routines and procedures. Thus a good relationship is established between all parties, which helps the child make a good start. When they do so, parents are encouraged to make a clean break as soon as the child is confident. However, if the need arises, parents can stay and support their child for as long as necessary. Children quickly and happily settle into the routines of school life. When a pupil starts in the middle of a year, their progress is closely monitored at first and they are given all the help they need to acclimatise. For example, they are introduced to the school and given a special award for settling in well. Pupils are allowed into school early each day for the breakfast club. About 40 per cent attend and, as well as getting a good breakfast, they can read with an adult or use the computer suite.
27. Pupils are elected to a school council, which discusses a wide range of issues. The election process itself is good citizenship preparation with candidates having to persuade the 'voters' of their worth. Initiatives like the healthy school shop and the adventure playground originated from ideas raised there. Pupils can make suggestions either through their representative or suggestion boxes. The council has organised general surveys of opinion and collated results and been consulted about behaviour, rewards and sanctions. Pupils feel valued by the staff and can see the fruits of their efforts when suggestions for changes are adopted. They are encouraged to back up some ideas by raising money to implement them.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents and links with the community contribute well to school life. Pupils benefit from good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides good general information to parents pupil reports contain a wealth of information about their child's progress.
- The school works well with several local businesses and through the Education Action Zone to broaden pupils' experiences.
- The liaison between the staff of this school and other educational establishments enriches the curriculum.

Commentary

28. When their child begins school, parents receive comprehensive information about how they will be taught. They are kept up to date on what is happening in the school with newsletters. Several well-attended workshops have been held for parents to see how the main subjects are taught. Both the school and the Action Zone organise courses for parents on basic skills aimed at helping them to become more supportive of their child through greater awareness of what is being taught. Participation in some of these activities is raised by the provision of a crèche.
29. The annual pupil reports meet statutory requirements, but do much more than that. At the start of the year each pupil is given a national curriculum level target in English, mathematics and science, which is discussed with the parents. The reports also show specific areas where the pupil should improve in order to meet them. Then, at the end of the year, a fuller report is issued which, as well as describing what the pupil has learnt in the year in all

subjects, gives the levels achieved against the targets. They give perceptive comments on their personal development. Parents have regular formal opportunities to meet the teacher to discuss their child's work.

30. The school calls on local people to broaden pupils' experiences and bring lessons to life, for example in design and technology, when the Year 4 class took part in a project to design and make a magnificent glass-based display on the theme of diversity. Good links exist with local churches and clergymen talk to pupils about their work and beliefs; pupils visit churches for festivals. Local businesses give support in the form of volunteers from their staff to work with pupils on several areas of the curriculum, again design and technology but also helping readers. The links with local engineering firms are particularly valuable in stimulating boys' learning, and the local bakery supplying the bread for the breakfast club also supports a very valuable resource. Pupils in the school brass band play regularly at community events and pupils entertain local senior citizens. The buildings are well used by local groups such as guide and brownies, for children's parties, and a local junior football club uses the fields.
31. When pupils transfer to secondary school, they are helped by effective information and induction arrangements. The staffs of the two schools liaise well and share information so that pupils can get off to a flying start. Pupils are undertaking bridging projects at the end of Year 6 that they can complete in Year 7. The schools in the local pyramid co-operate well to share ideas and try out innovative curriculum initiatives. The Education Action Zone focus is on those pupils whose attainment falls just below the expected level and they, and their parents, are supported both in and out of the classroom. This is expected to be successful this year in raising standards in basic skills. A two-week summer school is run at the secondary school for these pupils each year. ICT is also supported by provision of a technician, and the improved reliability of equipment is having a positive impact on standards.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the school is satisfactory. There are satisfactory management systems in place to evaluate the performance of the school. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governance of the school is satisfactory but they rely too heavily on headteacher reports for their information about school performance.
- The headteacher and deputy have the confidence of staff and parents.
- There are satisfactory systems in place to monitor the performance of the school but this information needs to be more rigorously used to raise standards in English, mathematics and science.

Commentary

32. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are satisfactorily informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school, although they need to develop the methods by which they can challenge its performance more effectively. Spending accords with their priorities and with the principles of best value. The budget is monitored carefully but governors need to determine criteria by which they will measure the success of their spending in raising standards.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	532,771
Total expenditure	512,428
Expenditure per pupil	1,919

Balance from previous year	526,555
Balance carried forward to the next	20,343

33. The headteacher has cultivated good relationships with parents and the community at large. This has been achieved by consulting parents about their views of the school, involving them in family learning and curriculum workshops and responding effectively to issues that have arisen. Pupils' positive attitudes toward school have been developed by giving them a say in the running of the school through the School Council as well as giving them more specific responsibilities. This has produced a climate in which pupils and staff feel valued. The headteacher has managed falling rolls well while at the same time adding to the facilities of the school through the building of a Foundation Stage Unit and changing rooms.
34. The deputy, who has been appointed headteacher on the retirement of the present head, ably supports him. She has developed a good system for monitoring the progress of pupils and developing the curriculum. However, work across all subjects needs to be planned more closely on the assessment information.
35. The school management plan is a complex document but has now been refined to show more clearly the priorities for improvement and how they are to be achieved. Coordinators are given time to monitor the quality of work in their subject areas but no clear view about standards or consistent development in some subject areas exists because of staff changes. However, the school provides satisfactory curriculum coverage, although there is a need to tailor this more closely to the needs of the pupils.
36. The coordination for special educational needs is carried out effectively by two coordinators, one who is responsible for the younger pupils and the other for the older. The school has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and this is a sensible deployment of staff. They have an in-depth knowledge about the pupils in each year group, with a good awareness and understanding of the range of needs within the school. They keep well-documented evidence and record reviews and contacts made for each of the pupils and children on the special educational needs register. With a teaching assistant in each classroom, pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily helped to make expected progress.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision in the Foundation Stage of learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development.
- The new Foundation Stage unit is an effective way of addressing the present restrictions of accommodation.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but there is not enough use of assessment to inform what children of different abilities are to learn based on what they can do, and already understand.

Commentary

37. The provision for the youngest children in the school is satisfactory. Their attainment when they first come into the Nursery is very low for their age and they have very weak skills in speech, language and communication, and underdeveloped knowledge of the world around them. Some children's attitudes towards how to look after toys, equipment and their environment are negative, their understanding of mathematical ideas is limited, although this is stronger than the children's literacy skills and added to this, hand control skills are very poor. However, by the end of the Foundation Stage, achievement is satisfactory overall and good in personal, social and emotional development and the children are learning to behave properly by taking turns and sharing fairly. Only a few children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they go into Year 1.
38. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff have a satisfactory understanding of the curriculum for young children. The staff have very high expectations of behaviour and they engage and encourage the children well. Plans for children's activities are carefully organised, but sometimes not enough emphasis is put on activities initiated by the children, especially in the Reception class. In small group work, especially when the children are supported by an adult, their learning and progress are good, because of the good quality support and reinforcement of language they receive. However, during introductory sessions, there are missed opportunities, especially for support staff to observe and note children's responses, to inform future assessments and planning.

Personal, social and emotional development

The provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good relationships.
- Staff provide good role models for the children.
- Teaching and learning are good, which results in good achievement.
- Children behave well, including those identified as having special educational needs and

they are well-supported in their learning.

- There are some, but not many activities to consolidate the children's awareness of a variety of backgrounds and cultures other than their own.

Commentary

39. The children's personal, emotional and social development is developing well, despite children come into the Nursery with very low skills in socialising and personal independence and they achieve well. Teaching and learning are good as the staff are well aware of what the children need to do and learn to develop their skills. The children behave well in both classes, their personal independence is promoted effectively in daily routines, for example, when they have to get ready for their physical development sessions. The staff are adept at building the children's confidence and self-esteem by giving them a lot of praise and valuing their contributions. As a result the children are secure in approaching adults in the school, because they know they will be supported in their learning and their requests will be acknowledged. The children have some opportunities to consider a variety of cultures other than their own, but this aspect of the work in the Foundation Stage tends to be underdeveloped within daily activities.

Communication, language and literacy

The provision for developing skills in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff work well with the children to promote language development and vocabulary.
- Not enough time is spent in group work to fully use the good level of staff participation in children's play.
- Children are encouraged to try to write independently.
- These emerging skills in writing are not always reinforced correctly to promote accurate literacy.

Commentary

40. The children's skills when they first start in the Nursery are very low in speaking, listening and language development. They make satisfactory progress overall, in the Foundation Stage of learning and achieve at a satisfactory level in communication, language and literacy. The staff provide good opportunities, especially in the Nursery, for the children to engage in activities in small groups with adults. However, this type of work is not sufficiently extended, especially in the Reception class to use fully the good quality level of interaction which adults can offer. Also introductions to lessons tend to be rather long in the Reception class, which means the full value of children working independently is lost. Learning is more effective when the children are grouped in similar abilities when working with adults in order to reinforce their learning and extend their language and vocabulary. The children are encouraged to try to write independently, for a variety of purposes, such as compiling lists, making notes and writing postcards. These emerging skills in writing are being developed well in the Nursery, but they are not continued sufficiently in the Reception class and the correct spelling of words is not reinforced sufficiently to develop accurate literacy skills.

Mathematical Development

The provision for the children's mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good practice in making and recreating repeating patterns.
- The match of tasks to the different abilities within each class is not always adequate.

Commentary

41. In the children's mathematical development their achievement is satisfactory and they make sound progress. Teaching and learning are also satisfactory. There is a reasonable emphasis on mathematical work with some activities carefully chosen to reinforce learning through practical activities. However, especially in Reception, although children work in small groups there is not always a secure match of different tasks to account for the different levels of abilities, especially for those children who learn more quickly. However, there are good opportunities for the children to observe and re-create repeating patterns and several children manage this quite successfully, although in the Nursery resources for this type of work need to be reviewed.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

The provision for the children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's skills are developing in using ICT and they attain at the expected level for their age.
- Children's experiences in the Reception class are not used to support their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

42. The children have a very limited understanding of the world around them. They do not have a range of experiences before they start in school on which to base their knowledge. They are encouraged by the staff to explore natural and manufactured objects, or to observe living things either at first hand or from pictures, but this type of work needs a lot of support from staff to ensure the children understand what they observe. The computer skills of children in Reception are at the expected level for their age mainly because of the opportunities offered during the breakfast club and in the computer suite. The children explore different materials using their senses and changes that can take place, for example observing ice melting. However, in the Reception class, these activities are not always presented imaginatively or used effectively to support the children's learning to inspire them and develop their creative ideas at the same time.

Physical development

The provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the hall to help the children develop their ideas about space and how to move around safely.
- There is no climbing frame for children to use to develop their large muscles.

Commentary

43. The children's physical development is progressing at a satisfactory pace, although many

are still unsure of their skills. Their achievement is satisfactory. At the time of the inspection, the Reception and Nursery classes shared the use of available outdoor space because of the building work that was going on. This area was adequately resourced for climbing, scrambling and balancing activities, but the climbing apparatus available did not lend itself to helping the children develop their muscles, especially in supporting their body weight by

hanging using their arms. Also opportunities were missed to use the space available, for activities such as sand and water play to support this area of learning. When the new building work is completed the school plans to provide an age-appropriate range of apparatus, with a suitable safety surface. The staff provide regular opportunities for the children to use the hall to develop their ideas about space and how to negotiate obstacles. Hand control skills are promoted through a satisfactory range of activities and using implements to write, paint, draw and use glue and other media to make models.

Creative development

Provision for the children's creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are learning to sing tunefully and enjoy music.
- Music is not used sufficiently in developing children's imaginative movements.
- Good imaginative play is supported well by staff, especially in the Nursery, but it is underdeveloped in Reception.

Commentary

44. The children in the Nursery are learning to sing songs in tune because the staff encourage them to participate and although many children are reluctant, a few try to remember the words and keep time. The children from both classes also sing well in assemblies and are aware of themselves and other as performers. Good role-play activities are provided for the children in the Nursery, but these tend to be underdeveloped in the Reception class. Work in other areas of the curriculum is not always used to reinforce creativity, for example, opportunities were missed during a session on knowledge and understanding of the world in Reception to explore materials and use these experiences in creative work. Also physical development involving moving imaginatively would benefit from more use of music to inspire the children and to keep them on task. Nevertheless, the children's creative work is well supported by a good range of materials and media in both classes and their efforts are valued and displayed proudly.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are below national averages by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The standard of writing is improving because the school sees this as a priority, and ensures there is a focus on practising, and developing, pupils' writing skills in lessons.
- School curriculum planning is beginning to explore ways pupils can use, and develop, language and literacy skills in all curriculum areas.
- Pupils' work is often untidy, and insufficient attention is given to developing a fluent and legible style of handwriting.

- The quality of marking is variable, and pupils are not always clear what they need to do to improve.
- Good leadership and management of the subject are leading to improvements in the quality of teaching, and, as a result, in pupils' achievement.

Commentary

45. Standards of attainment are below average in reading, writing and speaking and listening at the end of Year 2 and 6. Standards in writing remain low, but are gradually improving because the school views the development of pupils' writing skills as a priority. Unvalidated results from the national tests confirm that these improvements have been made and the school has met its literacy targets. Writing is a weakness because pupils enter the school with very low language and literacy skills, and, although their progress and achievement are satisfactory over time, their writing skills are weak, compared to national expectations. A significant number of pupils have special educational needs and, whilst their achievement is broadly in line with other pupils, their lower starting point means few attain at nationally expected levels in tests, particularly in writing. In the 2003 national tests, for pupils at the end of Year 6, standards were well below national averages, and below those of similar schools. In the four years prior to taking the national tests pupils' progress had not been as good as expected. This is because there were a significant number of staff and pupil changes in that period, and this had an impact on the continuity and progression of learning. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are gradually improving, and are marginally higher than they were in 2003. There are no significant differences in the attainment of girls and boys, or pupils of different ethnicity.
46. In lessons observed the quality of teaching was good, overall. This is an improving picture, because an analysis of pupils' books, covering work since the start of the school year, indicates satisfactory teaching and achievement, overall. These improvements are the result of a whole school focus on developing pupils' language and literacy skills. The subject co-ordinator has effectively involved the local education authority's literacy consultant to provide guidance and advice, ensured training is closely linked to the school's action plans, as well as analysing pupils' work in optional and national tests to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses, so that teaching programmes may be targeted more effectively. Consequently, when planning lessons, teachers now ensure a greater emphasis is placed on developing pupils' **writing** skills. For example, in a good lesson in Year 5, pupils were writing a short text where they used causal connectives to link one event to another. The teacher gave the work greater relevance by linking it to the class history topic on Victorian Britain. In order to ensure pupils did not have to spend valuable writing time searching for words, the teacher listed ones they were likely to need on the whiteboard. The planned link between history and literacy in this lesson reflected the school's increasing focus on developing literacy skills across the curriculum, and was also evident in a good literacy lesson with pupils in Year 6. Pupils drew upon the work they had covered about Greek Gods as they compiled 'skeleton' frameworks for reports. The teacher used the interactive whiteboard well as she displayed the framework pupils would use and invited suggestions about which heading to place facts under. This focus on teaching the skills of report writing led to positive outcomes with pupils achieving well in this lesson.
47. The school has embraced the guidance in the national strategy for literacy well, and plans the curriculum carefully to ensure there is a balance of activities, including opportunities to improve pupils' **speaking and listening** skills across the curriculum, because these are poorly developed when pupils enter the school. In a good history lesson in Year 5 pupils were researching what it was like for a child living in Victorian Britain. They used the source information about factories, mines and workhouses well in drawing inferences about the lot of young children, and spoke clearly and confidently as they fed back this information to the rest of the class. Similarly, in a good ICT lesson, the teacher called

upon a group who had created a Power Point presentation of a fish tank to explain the steps they had taken. They spoke clearly and fluently, and answered the teacher's questions confidently as they did so. The focus on improving speaking and listening skills is a feature of many lessons, and is used effectively by most teachers to develop pupils' understanding of specific areas through short,

focused partner discussions. This was particularly effective in a very good Year 3 science lesson when pupils found out that shadows are formed when light travelling from a source is blocked. As they shone a torch at various objects pupils discussed their findings with a partner and this helped them to understand, and explain their findings.

48. Teachers are giving greater attention to developing pupils' **reading** skills, than previously, through guided reading sessions. They were given additional training, to support work in this area, when the coordinator's lesson observations revealed these sessions were not as effective as they should be. Teachers now focus on developing pupil's reading skills by ensuring that they have strategies to tackle unfamiliar words, they understand the organisation of a book, and can talk about characters, and deduce additional details from the text. They are aware of the need to encourage boys, in particular, to read regularly so that the quality of writing is improved through reading material that motivates and inspires them to write. Home/school reading is encouraged and parents are asked to write comments in their child's reading record. Pupils receive a certificate for each book they read at home. However, discussions with older pupils suggest they have mixed views about reading, and sometimes read because they are expected to, rather than for pleasure. Nevertheless, they are beginning to develop firm preferences for the work of different authors. Roald Dahl, Jacqueline Wilson and JK Rowling are favourites. Pupils' progress is monitored closely through regular reading assessments. The school is keen to promote reading skills by providing opportunities to read at the breakfast club and by providing support to a family literacy group that meets in school. Although reading standards are higher than in writing, nevertheless, they are still below the national average by the end of Year 6.
49. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The school is well placed to continue to raise standards in language and literacy following work by the coordinator to support staff development. There is a need, however, to ensure consistency in the marking of pupils' work in order to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve. For example, in some Year 6 exercise books there are detailed comments that identify what a pupil has done well, and the most important things they need to do to improve. In other books, comments celebrate the pupils' work, but they do not offer any targets for improvement. Some teachers provide classroom prompts to help pupils improve their work. In Year 1 for example, there are laminated cards on each table reminding pupils to include capital letters, full stops and other punctuation. Pupils understand these targets because they are discussed with them. All classrooms have 'handy hints' displayed on the classroom walls. These sheets suggest many ways pupils can improve their writing. In some classrooms the language used on these is fairly complex for the age of the pupils and their stage of learning. In other classrooms these 'handy hints' are so high up on the wall that reading them from a distance is difficult. The co-ordinator has checked standards of **handwriting** throughout the school and sees improving its quality as a priority. Inspection evidence confirms that a significant number of pupils present work that is untidy, and have a poorly developed handwriting style, because insufficient attention is given to forming letters correctly or joining them. In Year 6, for example, the standard of presentation and handwriting of a number of pupils is well below the expected standard, and books contain few comments to help pupils develop a legible and mature style of writing. Sufficient resources are available to teach the subject effectively and improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. Teachers' planning is focusing increasingly on developing pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum. For example, in Year 2, pupils have used a 'writing frame' to help them write up the results of science investigations, using a word processor. In mathematics, opportunities are provided in a Year 3 class for partner discussions, and for pupils to explain how they reached an answer. In doing so, pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed because they are encouraged to talk in full sentences.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment but, standards are below those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Assessment is used well to track pupils' achievements.
- Marking is not used well enough to help pupils improve.
- Assessment targets are not always shared with the pupils so that they are aware of what they need to do to improve.
- The management of the subject is good.

Commentary

51. Evidence from the inspection indicates that standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are likely to be below the expected standard. This reflects a modest improvement over the results in the 2003 national tests, when the standards achieved were well below those expected. Although a higher number of pupils in the present Year 2 are in line to achieve at the expected level, fewer pupils are likely to achieve at the higher levels in comparison with 2003. In Year 6 it is likely that a higher proportion of pupils will achieve at both the expected and above average levels in comparison with 2003. Unvalidated results for 2004 show that the school has broadly met its targets and improvement is secure.
52. Since standards at the time of the last inspection were reported to be below those expected in Year 2 and in line with those expected by the end of Year 6, they would appear to have improved in Year 2 and declined in Year 6. Several factors contribute to the apparent dip in achievement by the end of Year 6. Currently, a higher than average number of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs. Although overall these pupils make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them, as a result of their difficulties many are unable to make the rapid rate of progress that they require in order to achieve the national averages. Further contributory factors that have an impact on the learning of the pupils is the high level of pupil mobility, with many of those entering the school other than at the start of their schooling, having problems with their learning.
53. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to improve provision in mathematics, particularly in relation to providing a balanced curriculum. This is largely due to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and support from the LEA numeracy consultant. Further improvements have been made in developing teachers' skills through further training and in developing thorough procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' achievements and in closer evaluation of pupils' achievements to identify common weaknesses. These improvements are beginning to have an impact on raising standards.
54. Pupils' earlier work indicates that in Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress overall from below average levels of attainment on entry. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have an appropriate grasp of number facts to twenty and beyond. However, there are a significant number of pupils who are still at the early stages of adding and subtracting numbers to 10, where they need much help and support. Most pupils lack

confidence and have difficulty when applying the knowledge they have learned. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the pupils found difficulty in recording the next multiple of ten following a given number when required to do so within a set task, even though they had received some good teaching focusing on this at the start of the lesson. The majority of pupils recognise and know the properties of two-dimensional shapes and are beginning to measure using standardised measures. However, these elements of the mathematics curriculum are not yet as well developed. In Years 3 to 6

pupils continue to make satisfactory and sometimes good gains in their learning particularly in number. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have a good understanding and work with four-digit numbers, although a significant number work with smaller quantities. The higher attaining pupils use their knowledge well, for example when solving a problem, which requires a secure knowledge of multiples of 3 and 5. Earlier work indicates that pupils' progress in developing their understanding and knowledge of other areas of mathematics, such as data handling, is not as strong, with fewer opportunities given to these strands of the mathematics curriculum.

55. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is satisfactory overall, although in the lessons seen teaching was mainly good. The quality of understanding seen in lessons however, is much better than that evident in pupils' written work and recording. Planning is based on the National Numeracy Strategy with lessons that are carefully planned and structured. However, there is a lack of flexibility in adapting the curriculum to ensure that all pupils have developed the necessary skills before attempting to teach work at a much higher level. This sometimes impedes the rate of learning of some pupils who have gaps in their knowledge and development of skills.
56. In the most effective lessons the teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding which are reflected in the good pace and in the level of challenging questioning and discussion that takes the pupils' learning forward. Most teachers use a wide range of well-planned activities that engage the interest of the pupils. Resources are good and used well, particularly the recently introduced ICT interactive facilities. Where possible teachers provide practical activities to help the pupils in their learning. Although pupils' work is marked regularly and they are given appropriate praise, the marking of their work does not give them sufficient direction on how to improve. The school has developed good procedures to assess the achievements of its pupils, based on regular evaluations by class teachers and standardised tests. This information is used well to plot the achievements of pupils and to set targets. However, it is not used specifically enough to set targets with individual pupils to give them a clear picture of how they are progressing or of the next stage in their learning. The presentation of pupils' work is generally untidy and lacks organisation. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well within lessons by the teaching assistants.
57. The management of the subject by the coordinator is good and has been a significant factor in the improvement in provision. The co-ordinator evaluates the results in standardised and national tests to identify any common weaknesses and has regular opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in lessons.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. The pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in subjects such as science where they use graphs and when using co-ordinates in geography, but these opportunities tend to be coincidental rather than planned. There are some opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning in mathematics with the use of appropriate programs and, for example when handling data and using the floor robot.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are below national averages by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The school has appropriately identified the development of pupils' skills of investigation as a priority for improvement.
- The quality of marking is variable and pupils are not sufficiently clear what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils' work is often untidy, and insufficient attention is given to improving its quality.
- Teachers are making increasing use of mathematics and ICT to represent the results of investigations.

Commentary

59. Pupils enter the school with poorly developed skills in literacy and numeracy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Whilst their progress and achievement are broadly satisfactory, many of them do not make sufficient gains in learning at the nationally expected levels. There are also a significant number of pupils who have special educational needs and, although they achieve and progress satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment, few of them attain in line with the expected levels for their age. Consequently, pupils do not catch up sufficiently by the time teachers assess them at the end of Year 2 and standards of attainment in science are below national averages. However, the picture is improving because standards are higher than in 2003 when attainment was well below national averages and pupils' abilities to use and apply scientific skills of investigation was well below the expectation. Over the past year the school has focussed on improving this aspect of pupils' scientific skill and this has led to an improvement in overall performance in science. Unvalidated results for 2004 indicate that these improvements are secure both with the average and above average attaining pupils.
60. In the 2003 national tests, standards attained, in science, were well below and achievement unsatisfactory because there were a number of staffing changes and some pupil mobility, resulting in a discontinuity in the pupils' learning. Inspection evidence for the current year shows that, while standards are still below the national average, a greater proportion of pupils are achieving higher standards than the previous year and their achievement is now satisfactory.
61. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall. In two lessons teaching was good and very good respectively. However, an analysis of pupils' work, covering the school year, indicates teaching is satisfactory, overall. In the good, and very good lessons, pupils worked at pace, and teachers devised good opportunities for pupils to learn through an investigative approach. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 3, pupils discovered that shadows are formed when light travelling from a source is blocked by an obstruction. This investigation had been preceded by a good introduction to the activity when the teacher projected objects onto the whiteboard. She encouraged pupils to talk to a partner about their observations in short, focused discussions, and to make predictions about what they expected to happen, before each object was projected. Through careful questioning she ensured pupils of all abilities were able to take part. One higher attaining pupil predicted correctly that a remote control would cast a shadow that reflected not only its shape, but the raised buttons also, if it was turned and viewed from the side. The teacher's very high expectations of pupils led to very good gains in learning as pupils worked with interest and enthusiasm, investigating the effect of shining

a torch at various objects. They discussed their results fully, and formed conclusions about what these were telling them.

62. The school is aware that the pupils need greater opportunities to develop scientific skills through investigative approaches, and teachers' planning reflects this increased emphasis. Teachers are also making good use of skills pupils have acquired in other curriculum areas

when they ask them to represent data from their investigations. For example, pupils in Year 6 have created bar charts, using ICT, to demonstrate the conditions woodlice prefer to live in, and pupils in Year 2 have used mathematical skills to devise a 'Carroll' diagram, where they classify mini-beasts according to whether they fly, slither or walk, and whether they have legs or no legs. Teachers are developing these links between subjects well, and this is contributing to pupils' understanding of how they can use skills from other subjects to support their work in science.

63. An analysis of pupils' books, and of work seen in lessons, indicates that the quality of marking is variable. In some classes teachers identify how closely pupils have met the learning objectives, and then suggest ways they can improve their work. In others, teachers celebrate pupils' work with a short comment, but they do not give them targets for improvement to help them develop their understanding further. Similarly, teachers' marking of work pays little attention to standards of presentation. Many books are untidy because pupils do not take enough care, and consequently a number miss out important information when writing up investigations. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they can, and this has an impact on standards of attainment, overall.
64. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The coordinator has looked carefully at pupils' performance in the national tests and identified their strengths and weaknesses. She has reported these findings to staff, and, as a result, they are now giving greater emphasis to learning through investigative approaches. Through an analysis of pupils' work the coordinator has identified a need for a consistent approach to recording the results of investigations. Inspection evidence indicates there is a mixed picture in terms of how much emphasis teachers give to this. The coordinator has not checked on the quality of teaching, therefore, she does not have a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses, and, consequently areas where staff need additional training and support. There are satisfactory assessment procedures in place to monitor pupils' progress, and to inform future curriculum planning. The school is giving increasing emphasis to sharing the 'success criteria' of lessons with pupils. This enables pupils to carry out a self-assessment of their progress in learning, against these statements, at the end of a lesson. Inspection evidence indicates the use of success criteria is helping pupils to do this well, but teachers need to think carefully about success criteria statements. For example, in a satisfactory Year 6 lesson the teacher shared the success criteria with pupils before they had made a prediction. This told pupils what they would be expected to find out in the lesson before they had carried out an investigation. Therefore pupils did not have to think too deeply about what their results told them. Resources are sufficient to teach the science curriculum. Improvement has been satisfactory since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the last inspection.
- The provision has improved since the last inspection and the school is now well resourced.

Commentary

65. Standards are in line with the levels expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Considerable improvements in provision for the subject have been made both in resources and teachers' expertise since the last inspection. The school's commitment to training all staff has led to increased confidence and a willingness to use ICT to support learning in other subjects; for example, when using the recently purchased interactive whiteboards to teach subjects such as mathematics and English. The school now has two computer suites, which are used regularly to ensure that basic skills are taught. This is working well.

66. The quality of teaching seen was good overall. Overall the teachers' demonstration of techniques and skills are clear and this ensures that pupils can proceed well with their tasks. Pupils have good opportunities to learn new skills and make satisfactory progress. For example, most pupils in Year 1 know how to access a program, use the 'enter' and 'shift' keys and space bar correctly and copy a picture onto a page that they then start to use as a starting point for sentences. In Year 3 pupils' access, create and respond to e-mails whilst pupils in Year 4 develop their skills further when learning how to present their work using images and text to create a multi-media presentation. In Year 5 pupils enter data into cells on a spreadsheet. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs so that they are able to develop their skills at their own level of ability.
67. The coordinator provides effective leadership. The resources for supporting teaching and learning have improved significantly since the last inspection, mainly as a result of national and local initiatives. The quality and range of resources are now very good and are having a positive impact on pupils' progress. The coordinator is aware of the strengths and areas for development such as the need to ensure that ICT is used in subjects across the curriculum and to develop effective systems to assess and record pupils' achievements. At present the school follows the national guidelines for teaching the subject, and has recognised the need to adapt this so that it more closely meets the needs of the pupils. The investment in a technical support scheme ensures that computers are kept in good working order and any problems are dealt with as soon as they arise. Pupils have opportunities to further practise and develop their computer skills during the before and after school clubs and at the computer club. Some pupils are producing a school newsletter.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

68. Teachers are beginning to use interactive whiteboards to enhance teaching and learning in their classrooms, but this is at the early stages of development. Although satisfactory use is made of computers in the suite to help pupils to learn, this is not yet sufficiently extended to learning in other subjects. The pupils use the Internet to carry out some research and digital cameras to record events and for work in art, for example. However, the head teacher understands the need to ensure that ICT increasingly becomes a more integral part in the work across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

It was only possible to see one lesson in history and one in geography and no lessons in religious education. It is, therefore, not possible to make a judgement on standards or teaching and learning.

69. In **geography**, there is a good balance between pupils acquiring knowledge of the world and the development of enquiry skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop the skills of mapping the immediate area through guided walks. They can identify the characteristics of contrasting localities, for example, in their own environment compared to places in the Western Isles of Scotland. By the end of Year 6 pupils have extended their geographical knowledge and skills. They understand the nature of the water cycle; can make informed comments about the local shopping facilities and identify in more detail the human and physical differences between the town where they live and a country district. There is insufficient written work overall however, presentation is in need of improvement and pupils of different abilities are not set work sufficiently matched to their different abilities.

70. In the one lesson observed, a Year 3 class achieved well in the topic 'Connecting ourselves to the World', in which they used their computer skills well to seek information about a partner school through email.

71. In **history** pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of now and then through seaside holidays in the past and major events such as the Great Fire of London. Pupils broaden and deepen their knowledge and skills in studying history as they progress through the school, for example when they study the causes of Henry's break with the Church of Rome and the interpretation of sources of evidence in their study of Anglo-Saxon burials. However, there is insufficient written work and the same work is set for pupils of all abilities.
72. The history lesson that was observed was a good lesson. Pupils in Year 5 investigated a range of sources about child labour in Victorian England in groups. They were adept at drawing inferences from the material and confidently presented their findings to the rest of the class in turns.
73. In **religious education** there is a good balance between pupils acquiring knowledge of faiths such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism and the exploration of life experiences such as special books and rules to live by. The coordinator carefully monitors the planning and provides good advice and support for her colleagues. There is a good range of displays and pupil's work, although it is thin, which illustrates the diverse faiths they study. Assemblies too, play a useful role in developing pupils' understanding of the spiritual dimension to their lives. In a good assembly, performed by Year 1 pupils on Creation, the audience was engrossed by the pupils' performance about the mystery and wonder of the world. Pupils' participation is high on these occasions. Discussion time too, provides good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their lives and the responsibilities of living in a community.
74. The subject is well led and there are satisfactory methods of monitoring through a scrutiny of teacher's planning and sampling pupil's work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Too little teaching was seen in **art and design, design and technology, music and physical education** to support firm judgements on provision. However, these subjects, particularly art and music enjoy a high profile in the school.

75. There was much **art and design** work on display around the school all of which was at the expected standard and a significant proportion was of good quality. For example, linked to pupils' work in geography, older pupils had produced some impressive pastel drawings of mountains. Equally, work produced in designing ceramics with a visiting artist and observational drawings of poppies by pupils in the art club demonstrated a high level of skills and techniques.
76. Since the last inspection the school has developed teachers' skills and subject knowledge through extra training. They have also introduced a new commercial scheme for art and design to assist teachers with their planning. The use of sketchbooks, however, has not been sufficiently developed and pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their skills or to try their ideas. The pupils have sufficient opportunities to study the work of famous artists, such as Mondrian and they have used the Internet to extend their knowledge of this artist. The curriculum is enriched by a number of visiting artists, such as sculptors and a designer of stained glass windows.

77. The head teacher, who has recently taken over responsibility for managing the subject, brings his enthusiasm for the subject to the school and has carried out some training for the teachers. The school uses the national guidance as the basis for its work alongside the recently purchased commercial scheme. The school plans to develop a scheme of work to clarify progression in the future but at present the subject is not a priority in the development plan. As at the time of the last inspection no procedures are in place for assessing or recording pupils' achievements.

78. Only one lesson was observed in **design technology**, therefore, no judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and learning, but from work seen, standards are broadly in line with national expectations. By looking at work on display, and discussions with the co-ordinator, it is evident the school is following its long-term plan, giving pupils an opportunity to work with a variety of materials, and to develop skills progressively. This has included pupils in Year 2 making moving vehicles and designing 'Joseph's coat'; pupils in Year 3 making 'groovy' sandwiches, and pupils in Year 6 designing and making sandals for a Greek God, in work that links well to their topic in history.
79. In Year 4, pupils have made books with parts that move and carried out a very good evaluation of this work by asking pupils in Year 1 to comment on how effective they are. In work on display, and in books, pupils do not always carry out an evaluation to establish what has worked well, and what could be improved next time, and, consequently, these are missed opportunities for pupils to reflect on the successful skills and processes they have used.
80. Pupils in Year 5 have used skills in ICT well to search the Internet for breads from around the world, and used ICT skills to create Power Point presentations about this topic. In a very good lesson in Year 3 the teacher drew upon pupils' skills in literacy very well when they engaged in discussions about how things are packaged according to their purpose. In a good linked topic, drawing upon pupils' skills in art and design, design and technology, and literacy, pupils worked with an artist in residence who showed them how to use mirrored glass to make pictures about friendship. The results are impressive. Work on this project also contributed to pupils' personal development well as they explored how everyone is different.
81. Only two lessons of **music** were observed, although pupils' singing and performance were observed during hymn practices and assemblies. On these occasions the pupils sang tunefully with accurate pitch, a good dynamic range and knowledge of a wide range of music. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument, such as the ocarina and brass instruments. The school choir regularly sings in the community, on special occasions and in school productions. During the inspection the brass band played well as pupils entered and left assembly. The head teacher supports their singing with high quality piano accompaniment or the guitar. Pupils' learning in music is greatly enriched by visiting musicians such as a string quartet, pianist, wind quintet, a Paraguayan harpist and Indian musicians.
82. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. The school uses a commercial scheme as the basis for its work alongside national guidance. Assessment procedures follow the guidance in these documents.
83. Only one lesson was observed in **physical education**, therefore, no judgements can be made on standards or the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils follow the full range of activities required by the National Curriculum, including opportunities for some pupils to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities when they enjoy residential experience in Years 5 and 6. The school is actively involved in a school sports co-ordinators' partnership. This fosters good links between schools and increases the opportunities for teachers to share skills and expertise. For example, one of the partnership teachers visits the school each week to teach a lesson. This not only benefits the pupils, but staff also, who see it as a training opportunity.

84. Extra-curricular activities are very strong, including opportunities for pupils to take part in football and netball teams, and a 'Fit for Fun Club'. Extra-curricular activities are well supported by members of the non-teaching staff, who lead many of the clubs. Swimming is a strength of the school. All Year 6 pupils have achieved the National Curriculum certificate for swimming twenty-five metres. This is an outstanding achievement. In addition to regular extra-curricular activities, a number of coaches visit the school to improve pupils' skills in football rugby and dance.

85. The co-ordinator looks at teachers' planning to check all elements of a lesson are included, attends the primary partnership meetings and advises staff on appropriate activities. She has identified dance as an area for development, and has organised recent staff training in this area. She is keen to promote the links between physical education and other subjects. For example, with work on healthy eating in science, and in personal, social, health and citizenship education, through healthy lifestyles. The school has been successful in obtaining an award from the 'New Opportunities Fund' to build changing rooms.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

86. The school's planning of personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHE&C) is good. There is a strong ethos within the school, which promotes this aspect of the pupils' learning successfully. There is a clear programme for health education in Year 6 that covers sex and relationships education and puberty, and also raises awareness of the dangers of drugs. This work is also linked to science throughout the school. The school council and friendship systems are used effectively to promote the pupils' sense of being part of a community, being responsible and making friends.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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