

INSPECTION REPORT

WESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Radstock

LEA area: Bath and NE Somerset

Unique reference number: 109072

Headteacher: Mr Simon White

Lead inspector: Mr Anthony Shield

Dates of inspection: 7th - 9th June 2004

Inspection number: 258373

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	393
School address:	Longfellow Road Radstock
Postcode:	BA3 3XX
Telephone number:	(01761) 413 662
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Benita Moore

Date of previous inspection: March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Westfield Primary School is a community school for boys and girls aged four to 11. There are 393 pupils on roll. Pupils come from the immediate locality of Radstock, which is an area of relative social and economic disadvantage, with a low income economy and few children from professional families. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at 10.5 per cent, is broadly average. The percentage of pupils on the register of special educational needs is below average at 12 per cent. Seven of these have Statements of Special Educational Need. Most pupils with identified special educational needs have either learning or emotional and behaviour difficulties. The majority of pupils are overwhelmingly of white British heritage, with relatively few pupils from other ethnic groups. No pupils have English as an additional language. Although there is a full spread of ability in all years, attainment on entry is below average, particularly pupils' language and literacy skills. The school has been awarded Activemark (2001), Investors in People (2002), The Healthy Schools Award (2003) and the Children's Society Charter of Children's Rights (2004).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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31758	Edward Tipper	Lay inspector	
22729	Robert Arnold	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs
32391	Lindsay Gabriel	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography Religious education Citizenship
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 10
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10 - 16
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16 - 17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	18 - 30
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory and it provides satisfactory value for money. Standards are average and pupils' achievements satisfactory overall. However, achievement through Years 3-6 is patchy because of the variable quality of teaching during these years. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good; it is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but, notwithstanding some good and very good teaching, it is unsatisfactory overall in Years 3-6. The good leadership provided by the new headteacher is strongly promoting improvement. Although the school is providing an acceptable education for its pupils, the school has serious weaknesses because of the unsatisfactory teaching in Years 3-6.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The effective leadership of the headteacher is ensuring a strong focus and commitment to school improvement.
- The quality of teaching varies and too much is unsatisfactory in Years 3-6.
- Monitoring and management systems are in place but their impact on improving performance has not yet been felt.
- Standards in speaking and listening are below average in Year 2 and Year 6, and standards of reading are below average in Year 2.
- Children make a good start and achieve well in the Reception classes.
- Good relationships encourage positive attitudes to learning amongst most pupils and a strong sense of community.
- The school's systems for pastoral care and support are very effective and pupils are valued and their views taken seriously.
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but data are not being used effectively to set targets, identify underachievement and plan for the next learning step.
- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum.

Improvement since the last inspection has been **unsatisfactory**, although improvements have been made in a number of areas. Progress has been hindered by several changes of leadership, although since the recent arrival of the current headteacher, the school has begun to move forward more confidently. Performance in national tests and tasks in Year 2 has improved, although it dipped in 2003. Results in national tests in Year 6 have been more mixed and there has been a recent decline in performance in tests in both English and mathematics. The quality of teaching remains patchy. Progress on key issues identified at the time of the last inspection has been mostly satisfactory, but important areas, such as standards of reading in Year 2 remain below average.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

science	C	A	E	E*
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Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - very low, and in the bottom 5 per cent of schools. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

The table indicates that standards in 2003 were well below average and underachievement was widespread. Standards seen in the current Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are higher than last years' test results, and are broadly in line with the national average. The school has reversed the recent decline in standards, as a result of improvements made in teaching and the management of provision, although weaknesses in aspects of the pupils' learning remain. **Achievement is satisfactory overall** given the pupils' attainment on entry, but this judgement masks considerable variation in the rates of progress, and there is some underachievement in some classes, because of some unsatisfactory teaching. However, pupils make good progress in other classes, where the teaching is good. Consequently, achievement overall is satisfactory. In Year 2, standards are below average in reading and speaking and listening, but average in writing, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good as a result of well-planned and well-managed teaching. Standards in ICT and religious education are average and pupils' achievements are satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development is **good**, and pupils' show increasing maturity in their approach to school and each other. Their social and moral development in particular, are strengths. Most pupils have **good attitudes** to learning and **good behaviour** is characteristic of most lessons and around the school at break and lunchtimes. **Attendance is satisfactory**, although it has declined since the time of the last inspection.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Overall, teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3-6, teaching ranges widely from very good to unsatisfactory. Because of this inconsistency, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in these years. The use of assessment is also unsatisfactory. The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall, but is unsatisfactory in Years 3-6, where a narrow focus on English and mathematics in some classes is limiting pupils' experiences. The curriculum elsewhere is well planned and balanced. The school cares very well for its pupils and has an effective and increasingly good relationship with parents and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The headteacher is providing a strong lead and has made a significant impact in a short time. Management is **satisfactory**. Monitoring procedures are beginning to make a difference but have yet to impact fully on standards at all levels. The work of governors is **satisfactory**, and governors are supportive and well-informed.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think well of the school, and appreciate the fact that the teachers are readily available to talk to them. This has helped build their confidence in the school. Pupils take a strong

interest in school life and although most feel very positive about what it has to offer, a small number only like school sometimes.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 3-6 to ensure it matches the best quality teaching evident in some classes.
- Ensure management and monitoring systems are implemented rigorously.
- Improve speaking and listening skills across the whole school, and standards of reading in Year 2.
- Improve the use of ICT to support learning in all subjects.
- Make more effective use of assessment to identify underachievement, set targets and plan the next learning steps.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

PUPILS ACHIEVE WELL IN THE RECEPTION CLASSES AND FROM A BELOW AVERAGE ATTAINMENT BASE WHEN CHILDREN ENTER THE SCHOOL, PUPILS BEGIN YEAR 1 AT BROADLY AVERAGE LEVELS. ACHIEVEMENT THEREAFTER IS SATISFACTORY OVERALL, BUT IS PATCHY, PARTICULARLY DURING YEARS 3-6. STANDARDS ARE BROADLY AVERAGE IN ALL SUBJECTS AT THE END OF YEARS 2 AND 6, ALTHOUGH PUPILS' READING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS IN YEAR 2 ARE BELOW AVERAGE. GIRLS TEND TO DO BETTER THAN BOYS.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good and children make a good start.
- Achievement during Years 3-6 is uneven and whilst pupils make good progress in some classes, in others, achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Standards of reading, speaking and listening in Year 2 are below average.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average in Year 6.

Commentary

1. Standards in national tests and tasks taken at the end of Year 2 in 2003, show standards to be well below average in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics. Comparison with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals indicates standards to be well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in each subject dipped in 2003 following a steady improvement in earlier years. In both 2001 and 2002, performance in all three subjects had been around or slightly better than average. Results in 2003 were largely expected, given the school's knowledge of this particular group of pupils, although there was underachievement. Over the last three years, boys have done less well in reading and girls less well in

mathematics. Otherwise, performance is close to the national averages for boys and girls.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.1 (16.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.3 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.4 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- At the end of Year 6, standards in national tests in English, mathematics and science in 2003 were well below the national average, and well below average in comparison with other schools which had performed similarly in tests in Year 2. Results dipped in 2003 and underachievement was widespread amongst pupils in this year. However, more able pupils did a little better, and 20 per cent of pupils achieved Level 5 in all three subjects. Prior to 2003, results in mathematics and science have been at least in line with the national average, particularly amongst the girls. Results overall have been falling since 2000, and the trend has been below the improving national trend. Boys tend to underachieve in English, particularly those of middle and lower ability.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.8 (25.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.9 (26.9)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.3 (29.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 66 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- Year 6 targets set by the school for 2003 were not met in either English or mathematics. Statutory targets set for 2004 are ambitious and although standards are rising in the current Year 6, the school's own assessment of current progress suggests that these targets are unrealistic.
- Tests indicate that on entry to the reception class, pupils' attainment is below average. Although children of all abilities are represented in school, there are fewer children of above average attainment on entry, particularly in their language and literacy skills. Provision in the Reception classes is good and children make good progress from their often low starting point. Progress is such that most children are now reaching the early learning goals in all areas of their development except in communication, language and literacy where only around one half of the children reach the expected level by the time they leave the Reception class. Above all, children learn to enjoy school and to approach work in Year 1 with good attitudes and commitment.

5. In Year 2, the standards of work seen were average overall. This is higher than the 2003 test and task results indicate but more in line with results in recent years and in line with the school's own predictions. Attainment in reading, speaking and listening remains below average however, reflecting the lower language and literacy skills of most pupils on entry to Year 1. The school has paid good attention to the development of writing skills and this has resulted in higher standards. Similar attention to the development of reading has not yet impacted on standards. Most pupils are achieving satisfactorily in writing, mathematics and science.
6. Standards in Year 6 in work seen were average overall in English, mathematics and below average in science. This is higher than the 2002 results, but more in line with results in 2000 and 2001, and the school's own predictions. Pupils' achievement in these subjects, given their attainment at the start of Year 3, is satisfactory. However, this judgement masks considerable variation in rates of progress in different classes through Years 3-6. The sample of pupils' work in particular, shows that whilst pupils in some classes are making good and often very good progress, as a result of some very effective teaching, in other classes, some pupils are underachieving. This lack of consistency in the quality of teaching through Years 3, 4 and 5 in particular is a key priority for school improvement.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their targets. Teachers know their pupils well and alongside the effective work of teaching assistants, plan for their needs satisfactorily. The sample of individual education plans and teachers' records support this judgement. The care with which teaching assistants support pupils is a key factor in building their self-confidence and in helping them to achieve.
8. In English in Year 6, standards in writing are improving, as a result of an increased focus on the development of writing strategies. However, whilst many pupils throughout the school write confidently and with imagination, others show weaknesses in handwriting, spelling and grammar. Like reading, standards in writing are average. However, speaking and listening skills remain below average throughout Years 3-6. Many pupils lack confidence in speaking out loud, and do not answer questions at length.
9. In mathematics, standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school, and most pupils are able to use and apply numerical skills satisfactorily.
10. Standards in science are average at the end of Year 2 and just below average in Year 6. Pupils achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. Pupils' knowledge across the range of science is reasonable and they understand the principles of a fair test. Most are able to make predictions and record observations accurately. They are less confident in using their scientific knowledge to draw conclusions from the evidence.
11. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards are average in Years 2 and 6, although ICT is not being used sufficiently to support learning in other subjects. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
12. In religious education, standards in Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected within the Agreed Syllabus, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

13. In other subjects, provision was sampled and insufficient evidence collected to make secure judgements on standards and achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are **good**. Pupils' personal development is **good**, supported effectively by the provision made for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is **satisfactory** and punctuality is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and school in general.
- Personal development is good and pupils are keen to be given responsibility.
- The school instils in its pupils a strong moral code and helps them to become good citizens.
- Behaviour is good and teachers deal well with a small number of challenging pupils.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop an awareness of other peoples' cultures.

Commentary

14. Pupils are enthusiastic in their approach to most lessons and the many activities offered to them outside the school day. They sustain good levels of interest and concentration in lessons, taking pride in their work. Many are keen to share their work with adults.
15. Attendance is average. Levels have been declining, but recent initiatives, including certificates to pupils who have good attendance have begun to reverse this decline. In conjunction with the educational welfare officer, families of very poor attendees are targeted and school attendance targets are improving. Most pupils arrive promptly at the beginning of the school day showing their enthusiasm to get down to work.

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.

16. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils form constructive relationships with each other and with adults. They work and play co-operatively together, demonstrating that they will listen to each other and will try to understand the other person's point of view. This was particularly well illustrated in a Year 4 science lesson when groups of two and three pupils were working together constructively to record different habitats. The teacher's own modelling of how to treat each other was an important factor in the way pupils themselves treated each other. Nearly all pupils act in a mature and responsible way. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and accepted into school

life. Other pupils respect their views and both their attitudes to learning and behaviour are good.

17. The behaviour of most pupils is good, although a small minority is sometimes less considerate of others. As a result of increasing concern about standards of behaviour, the school introduced a range of initiatives. Pupils themselves helped devise their class rules and contributed to the new anti-bullying charter. As a result, pupils are confident that bullying is promptly and effectively dealt with. The school is particularly concerned about behavioural problems during the lunchtime break and is training its school meal supervisors to help resolve conflict. A 'play ranger' is also employed to help them organise activities to keep pupils usefully occupied. These initiatives are clearly working as very few examples of thoughtless behaviour were seen during the inspection. The number of exclusions is relatively low.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	348	4	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

18. PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IS GOOD. IN THE RECEPTION CLASSES, MOST PUPILS ACHIEVE THE PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL EDUCATION GOALS. PUPILS OF ALL AGES ARE KEEN TO TAKE ON RESPONSIBILITIES AND SHOW INITIATIVE. PUPILS ARE REPRESENTED ON THE SCHOOL COUNCIL WHICH CONSISTS OF TWO PUPILS FROM EACH CLASS ELECTED BY THEIR CLASSMATES. SOME OLDER PUPILS ARE APPOINTED MENTORS TO HELP YEAR 3 PUPILS WITH THEIR READING, A VALUABLE EXPERIENCE FOR ALL CONCERNED. OTHERS RECEIVE TRAINING AS PEER MEDIATORS TO ENABLE THEM TO HELP OTHERS OVERCOME MINOR PROBLEMS AND DISPUTES. OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE ANSWERING THE TELEPHONE AND TAKING MESSAGES DURING LUNCHTIME; THESE OPPORTUNITIES ALL MAKE A STRONG CONTRIBUTION TO BUILDING UP PUPILS' CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM.
19. Pupils gain a clear understanding of right and wrong through the personal, social and health education programme and the constant reinforcement by adults within the school. The emphasis on paired and group work in lessons helps them to develop appropriate social skills. They are polite and courteous to each other and to members of staff and visitors, to whom they respond in a friendly and respectful manner.
20. Pupils' opportunities to understand the differences in lifestyles of peoples around the world are limited. Major religions are studied in religious education and both art and

music curricula include the study of cultures other than Western. However, there is little opportunity to prepare pupils for living in the multicultural society that is Britain today. However, some work has been carried out and more is planned. The school is making an application for the International Schools Award with a detailed programme for next year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, but varies considerably in Years 3-6. It is good overall in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils. Teachers provide good pastoral care and support and there are effective links with parents, partner schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**, but the quality, particularly in Years 3-6, varies too much. Much good and some very good teaching exists. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but teachers do not use assessment sufficiently to set targets and identify underachievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching varies too much and is unsatisfactory in Years 3-6.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, leading to good gains in children's skills and confidence in learning.
- Assessment is not consistently being used to set targets, identify underachievement and help plan the next learning steps.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	8 (19.1%)	16 (38.1%)	13 (30.9%)	5 (11.9%)	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.

21. The school has rightly identified improving the consistency of good teaching and the sharing of good practice as a key priority. Much teaching during the inspection was good or very good, and there was some good teaching in all years. However, too much was unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 3-6. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work strongly supports this judgement. In some classes in Years 3, 4 and 5, the progress pupils are making, particularly in English and mathematics is not as rapid as in other parallel classes. In these classes, there is underachievement. However, the quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection, when there was less very good teaching.
22. In both English and mathematics, teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but unsatisfactory in Years 3-6 as the quality varies too much. In science, teaching is satisfactory throughout, although there is still some variability in the learning of the older

pupils. It is also largely satisfactory in all other subjects, although the report does not include judgements on the overall quality of teaching in design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education. There is a very close link between the quality of teaching and the quality of learning, and pupils' progress in lessons is directly related to the quality of teaching.

23. It is the expectations that teachers have of what pupils can achieve that distinguishes the best teaching from the less effective. Where expectations are high, pupils are challenged, the pace of lessons is brisk and the pupils' learning is at least good. This takes place within a well-planned and well-ordered lesson that meets the needs of all pupils, taking account of their different starting points. For example, in a very good Year 1 art lesson, pupils were engaged in a range of creative activities around the theme of the jungle. Lesson planning was detailed and enabled the pupils to work on activities with very clear and specific aims. Pupils were entirely engrossed as the teacher demonstrated what was required. Effective questioning by the teacher prompted the pupils to think more deeply and engage actively with the learning. Good, clearly articulated links were made with both science and personal and social education. Work was set which challenged all pupils at their own level. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs was sensitive and very effective.
24. The school has recently focused on developing approaches to encourage independent learning strategies to enable pupils to become more autonomous learners. The results of this approach are beginning to show in the way in which pupils are increasingly able to concentrate and persevere when they find the work difficult. In a number of subjects, teachers are planning for pupils to take an investigative approach to their learning. This is particularly evident in science, where investigative work is becoming one of the strengths of the science provision.
25. Good relationships and positive attitudes also contribute strongly to the progress pupils make. In a very good Year 6 literacy lesson, the pupils worked enthusiastically when asked to write rhyming couplets. High levels of motivation and sense of enjoyment in the learning were evident. At the heart of the learning was the teacher's challenging approach and very good relationships with the class.
26. The strategies used by teachers to manage sometimes quite challenging behaviour are effective. Many teachers use praise well to encourage the pupils and ensure that their learning is reinforced at regular points in the lesson.
27. Less effective teaching lacks some of these qualities, often involving pupils in routine work that fails to stimulate their interest and their thinking. A recent survey of pupils by the school indicated that although most pupils find the teaching challenging, nearly one in three pupils do not find lessons interesting or fun. This reflects the lack of consistently good teaching in some classes. Sometimes the teacher fails to plan and teach explicitly for improvements in performance. In a Year 5 music lesson, the pupils responded positively initially, but became increasingly disenchanted and not focused on the task as the lesson progressed. This was because the teacher failed to plan for different learning needs and consequently many were not challenged. Whilst pupils worked co-operatively, the teacher failed to intervene and inform the pupils how their musical skills might be improved. As a result, pupils made little headway.

28. In some lessons, pupils are not engaged actively enough in the learning. This is usually because the teacher dominates and fails to involve the pupils themselves. In a Year 6 numeracy lesson with a less able group, the learning was unsatisfactory because pupils did not make the intended gains in understanding how to convert metric to imperial measures. This was because the teacher talked too much and did the work for the pupils, expecting them merely to follow and answer only occasionally.
29. Too much teaching in some classes in Years 3-6 is characterised by low expectations, activities which fail to capture the pupils' interest, and planning which fails to build on the different starting points of individual pupils. Compelling evidence from the work scrutiny indicates that some teaching in Years 3, 4 and 5 is unsatisfactory. Work is scrappily presented, unfinished and not regularly marked. Too frequently work is not completed and mistakes are left uncorrected.
30. Much of the teaching is inclusive and well adapted to suit the needs of the sometimes wide range of attainment of pupils in the class. This is usually because the teachers know individual pupils well and are able to respond well to their individual learning needs. Classroom support provided by classroom assistants and other adults is often very effective with lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. However, this is not consistently so, and not all teaching stretches all pupils.
31. Teachers are not using ICT enough as a resource to support learning. Whilst there have been some improvements in resources and training for staff, more needs to be done to ensure the use of computers is regarded as a natural part of the lesson. To some extent, this is because access to computers in classrooms remains limited and pupils only use ICT when they can get into the ICT suite. This remains an important priority for school improvement.
32. Marking of pupils' work often comments on whether the learning objective has been met. Much good practice exists, but it is not consistent. In English, mathematics and science, much marking is regular and supportive but generally misses opportunities to set targets or tell the pupils how to improve. As a result, pupils themselves are sometimes unsure of their progress and how they might reach higher levels of attainment. Some good practice however, is developing. In Year 2, progress in learning keywords is tracked carefully, and in Year 3, pupils are being guided to assess their own, and each others' work. 'Success Books' are a useful guide to individual progress in literacy and numeracy.
33. Until very recently, assessment systems have been ineffective, except in the Foundation Stage, where detailed and careful assessments are made of children on entry and through the Reception class. The ambitious but unrealistic statutory whole school targets for attainment in English and mathematics are an indication of how poor the former assessment systems were. On his recent appointment, the headteacher recognised the weaknesses in assessment procedures and took responsibility for ensuring the strengthening of systems for half-termly assessment weeks, for monitoring each pupil's progress and a target-setting process which is linked directly to what is known about pupils' progress. In addition, the underachievement of some pupils during 2002-3 was not recognised soon enough. Satisfactory systems are now in place for the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress, particularly in English and mathematics.

34. However, the use of assessment to inform planning and set targets is still unsatisfactory. Staff are not yet confident in using the new computerised system for recording assessment data and interpreting and analysing the outcomes. As a result, the identification of underachieving pupils relies on teachers' own assessment combined with the results of optional tests taken at the end of each year. Whilst assessment in English and mathematics is now being formalised, regular assessment of progress in other subjects is not yet in place. The introduction of more rigorous assessment practice has rightly been a priority for school improvement, but there is much to be done before its impact on raising achievement is to be seen.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage. However, a lack of time for subjects other than English and mathematics in Years 3-6 means that there is a lack of balance at this stage. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities. Whilst staffing and resources are satisfactory, accommodation is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned.
- Some subjects in Years 3-6 do not get enough time.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils have very good opportunities for enrichment, and the provision for sports in particular is very good.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory and adversely affects pupils' learning, particularly their speaking and listening skills.

Commentary

35. The curriculum is planned to cover all areas of learning for pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1-6, all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education. A clear framework sets out the topics and themes for the year, building successfully on learning from previous years. Statutory requirements for religious education are met and the provision for personal, social and health education, including citizenship, is satisfactory.
36. The Foundation Stage curriculum is broad and balanced and meets all children's learning needs, ensuring a good start to their education. In Years 1 and 2 the curriculum is satisfactory. However, the implementation of the curriculum in Years 3 to 6 varies from class to class, leading to a poorly-balanced curriculum in some cases. In some classes, particularly in Years 3, 4 and 5, only minimal time is spent on subjects such as design and technology, music and history.
37. The school is fully committed to inclusion for all, and an expectation that all pupils should have full access to the curriculum and other enrichment activities. For example, the curriculum is successfully adapted to take account of pupils with special educational needs, who are fully included in all aspects of school life. Well-written individual educational plans direct and support their progress and set challenging and realistic targets. Most pupils know their targets and feel involved in setting them. However, they do

not have a copy of the targets they are working towards and consequently are unable to evaluate themselves if they are making sufficient progress towards achieving them.

38. In addition, the school has worked hard to provide successfully for its gifted and talented pupils, both within the taught curriculum and through additional activities such as the "Button Club" which provides for a group of identified pupils in Year 2 and which aims to improve their thinking skills. Able pupils in Year 5 and 6 are trained to become peer mentors, supporting Year 3 pupils with their reading. The register of gifted and talented pupils also identifies pupils with particular abilities, such as their visual and spatial awareness, or their musical skills.
39. Curriculum innovation is also apparent in the school's commitment to networking with other schools and in particular, encouraging pupils to become more independent and resourceful in their learning. Children in the Foundation Stage have benefited from the school's involvement in a local project 5x5x5 which aims to develop independence and creativity in learning.
40. The school provides a very good range of lunch-time and after-school enrichment activities that are well attended by both boys and girls. These include opportunities to take part in sport, including tag rugby, football, netball and tennis. School teams have enjoyed considerable success, and the school achieved Activemark Gold Standard in 2001. Educational visits are planned carefully to support learning, often linked to history-based topics. There are also residential visits for pupils in Years 4 and 6. The curriculum is considerably enriched through these activities, which contribute strongly to pupils' personal development.
41. The school has a satisfactory number of qualified teachers. The provision of teaching assistants and support staff is good and they are well trained and deployed. Resources are satisfactory for most areas of the curriculum.
42. The school's accommodation overall is unsatisfactory. The main building is in a reasonable state of repair and most classrooms for Years 1 to 3 are satisfactory. However, the open plan layout has an adverse effect on pupils' ability to listen carefully and speak clearly. This affects the development of their speaking and listening skills. The fabric of the temporary, mobile classrooms for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 is poor. Pupils suffer from extreme heat in the summer and cold in the winter and have no covered walkway to the main building. The hall is too small to accommodate the whole school in comfort and the siting of the library in a corridor is unsatisfactory. However, the ICT suite is a valuable resource as are the extensive outdoor play areas including the adventure playground and amphitheatre. The accommodation in the Reception classes is however, good. Classrooms are bright and of a good size, and a secure outside play area gives good opportunities for climbing and balancing.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **very good** provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils and provides them with a **satisfactory** level of support, advice and guidance. It **very actively** seeks the views of pupils and values and acts on them.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a high level of personal support, advice and guidance for its pupils.
- Good arrangements are made to ensure pupils develop trusting relationships with at least one adult in the school.
- Pupils are very well cared for in a safe and healthy environment.
- Pupils' views are sought and valued.
- There is insufficient use of assessment data to guide pupils' academic progress.

Commentary

43. The school treats the health and safety of its pupils as a major priority. Audits of the premises are carried out each term and the resulting action plan is presented to governors. Prompt action is taken by the site manager, who ensures that any problems that arise between audits are identified and addressed. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out for proposed educational visits. Child protection arrangements are effectively in place, although there is a need for additional staff training to ensure that all are aware of procedures. The receipt of the Healthy School and Sports Activemark Awards shows how seriously the schools takes its responsibility for helping pupils develop healthy lifestyles.
44. The school council is very effective in identifying and listening to pupils' views. Its members feel their views are listened to and action is often taken as a result. A survey of pupils' views was recently carried out and the results analysed in detail. The findings were then discussed with the school council, and pupils suggested improvements, for example in the way in which behaviour might be improved. Some teachers even asked their pupils why they found some lessons uninteresting, an indication that pupils are being involved in shaping their own education. Pupils have also been involved in planning a new garden area, and the 5x5x5 Project involves Reception class children in planning what they want to do and how they are going to do it. Pupils' views are also sought on the selection of staff, including the headteacher. The school has recently been given an award from the Children's Society of Children's Rights in recognition of the comprehensive systems the school has in place for listening to the views of pupils.
45. It is clear from the comments on pupils' development in their annual progress reports that teachers know their pupils well, and the quality of pastoral support and guidance is good. Teachers are supported in this by teaching assistants who regularly meet as a team and share information on pupils. In a survey of pupils' views carried out before the inspection, the overwhelming majority of pupils felt they there was an adult they could go to if they had any worries. During the inspection, pupils confirmed this. They also thought the 'worry boxes' worked well for those who were nervous of approaching an adult directly with their concerns. Parents are very supportive of the personal support and guidance given to their children. However, the quality of academic support and guidance is less effective, because assessment data is not being rigorously monitored and used by all teachers.
46. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good and is having a positive effect on their achievement. Individual needs are very well assessed at an early stage. However, targets in individual education plans are mostly inaccessible to pupils because of the vocabulary used.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has developed a **good** relationship with parents and carers. Links with the local community and with other schools and colleges are also **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information provided for parents encourages the parents' involvement in the learning of their children and keeps them well informed of the progress they are making.
- Parents are very well involved as the school seeks, values, and acts on their views.
- Links with other schools and nurseries enhance pupils' social skills and academic development.

Commentary

47. Links with parents are good. The school provides weekly newsletters giving parents detailed information on the life of the school, acknowledging pupils' achievements and providing an updated diary of events. A letter is sent home at the beginning of term outlining the areas of learning to be covered in each subject. The annual reports on pupils' progress provide parents with a good understanding of how their children are progressing. The school also runs evenings for parents, on topics such as reading and mathematics, to enable them to help their children with their learning. Several of them assist in school, carrying out tasks such as making story sacks and listening to readers. They receive training where appropriate. Parents often take their involvement further by becoming learning and school meal supervisory assistants. The Westfield School Association involves parents in a number of fundraising activities. The monies raised are used to provide the school with resources and the Association was also involved in raising finance for the development of the swimming pool. Parents' involvement clearly has a positive impact on their children's learning.
48. Teachers see parents as an integral part of the school and their views are valued. The school recently carried out a survey of their views which was analysed in great detail. The results were reported back to them identifying behaviour management, the state of the accommodation and quality of teaching as their main concerns. The report also included steps the school is taking to address these issues. The headteacher sees this as part of an ongoing dialogue with parents enabling them to have an influence on the education of their children.
49. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are informed each time the targets on individual education plans change. There are good links with local authority support services and the school uses these very well when pupils' individual needs cannot be fully supported. Links with another local special school are making a significant contribution to this good provision.
50. The school has developed very close links with the neighbouring parish church whose vicar is a regular visitor and sits on the governing body. There are also visits to local police and fire stations, whose officers also visit the school. School premises are used widely by local community groups. There are links with local businesses who provide

sponsorship, raffle prizes and furniture. Such contacts are valuable to the school and help develop pupils' social and personal skills. However, there is a need to make greater use of the opportunities provided by local organisations for the development of projects bringing the outside world into the classroom.

51. The school is a member of the ten-school Network Learning Bath involved in sharing best practice in teaching to develop pupils' independence in learning. It also belongs to the Midsomer Norton and District Primary Schools Games Association and attends regular competitions in sports such as rugby, cross country, football, swimming, tennis and football. There are good transition arrangements with the pre-school providers and the secondary schools to which most Year 6 pupils transfer. Close contact has been established with their staff and transition units in English, mathematics and science are studied by pupils and continued when they join the secondary school. There is also a close relationship with the adjoining special school. The creation of the new swimming pool was very much a joint effort and its pupils and staff join in physical education lessons with Year 5 pupils. Pupils also work together in organising the 'children's world' project each year. All these links with other schools are of clear benefit to the social and academic development of pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The headteacher's leadership is **good** and he has identified a clear way forward. He is well supported by his deputy and senior team, who work effectively alongside governors. Governance is **satisfactory**. Governors are well informed and fulfilling their responsibilities conscientiously. Management is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good leadership of the headteacher inspires the confidence of the whole school.
- The senior management team is providing a strong focus for improvement.
- Monitoring and self-evaluation procedures are in place but have not had time to impact on performance.
- There is a strong commitment to educational inclusion.

Commentary

52. The headteacher is providing good leadership, giving the school a clear sense of purpose which is focused strongly on school improvement. After a period of instability, with three headteachers in as many years, he has approached his task with rigour, clear-sightedness and a firm understanding of key priorities. He has the committed support of governors, staff and parents and his vision and values are widely shared. The school is ambitious for improvement.
53. The deputy headteacher and three team leaders provide effective support to the headteacher, working confidently in their areas of responsibility. The culture of shared leadership in which all staff make a contribution to school improvement is increasingly effective, and the team approach has enabled effective consultation, greater involvement of staff and a shared vision of development. Management and monitoring procedures are now in place, but have had insufficient time to impact on overall school improvement. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, for example, have been identified by the school and action has been

taken to address areas of weakness. Lessons are being monitored by the senior team; whole-school training in effective teaching and learning strategies has been undertaken; team leaders have been involved in paired teaching. However, as yet, practice remains inconsistent.

54. The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning and in leading and supporting developments in their subject is not well developed. Time to undertake these important responsibilities has been limited and currently subject co-ordinators are not being held sufficiently accountable for provision in their subjects.
55. The headteacher's identification of the school's strengths and weaknesses shows both insight and realism. The school is increasingly reflective in its approach but the outcomes from monitoring are not yet providing a secure basis for self-evaluation. As a result, management at all levels is no more than satisfactory. The school's systems for line management are effectively in place. Appropriate links are made between performance management, continuing professional development, and school improvement planning. As yet, however, self-review procedures are not fully embedded.
56. The school has a strong commitment to educational inclusion. Leadership by the special educational needs co-ordinator is good, and she has very clear ideas regarding the development of provision. Monitoring of individual education plans is effective and teaching assistants are well managed to ensure high quality support.
57. The school improvement plan is a three-year plan and is detailed and comprehensive. It has a clear focus on raising standards in English, mathematics and science through improvements to teaching and learning, and developing assessment practice. The improvement planning process provides a good framework for improving standards, and issues identified by the inspection team have already been largely identified by the school in the improvement plan.
58. The work of governors is satisfactory. Governors have a good understanding of the school and are able to talk about it with authority. They are undertaking a review of their committee structure to ensure that their procedures for challenging and supporting the school are more effective. Whilst they have been aware of the need for greater consistency in the school's provision, action to bring about improvements has not yet been effective.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	954,551
Total expenditure	945,938
Expenditure per pupil	2,425

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	45,629
Balance carried forward to the next	54,242

59. Financial planning and administration are very good. Governors are very well informed and involved. The school uses its lower than average financial allocation very wisely and applies the principles of best value very well. The school provides only satisfactory value for money because, although educational provision and pupils' achievement are sound overall and the school operates on a below average budget, managers do not ensure that

teaching is of at least a consistently sound nature across all classes and serious weaknesses in teaching exist.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

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

60. Children make a good start to their schooling in the Foundation Stage. Attainment on entry covers the full range, but has significantly more children than normal with levels that are below the national average. The children enter Reception in the September before they are five, the majority having attended local nurseries or playgroups. Some have speaking and listening problems, and language and literacy skills in particular are below average. Good routines and work habits are established straight away and children make good progress in developing basic social and academic skills and all children achieve well, including those of higher ability and those with special educational needs. By the end of the Reception year, the majority of children achieve the early learning goals which children are expected to reach in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. In communication, language and literacy only about half of the children achieve the early learning goals.
61. Since the previous inspection, improvement in provision at this level has been good, reflecting the effective leadership of the team leader. The quality of teaching and learning is good, despite some short-term inconsistencies at the time of the inspection as a result of a maternity leave. The well-designed accommodation and the outdoor hard surface and rural playground which have been developed since the previous inspection, are used effectively to provide a good range of suitable indoor and outdoor activities which are securely based on structured play. Lessons are well planned and detailed records of children's individual development and progress are kept and used well to plan future lessons. There is a wide range of activities and children are good at selecting tasks for themselves for part of the day.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Supportive relationships are established so children feel confident and happy.
- Opportunities for choice enable children to develop appropriate levels of independence.

Commentary

62. The majority of children start at levels that are below average. They make good progress and achieve well, many attaining the goals expected for them. Children learn how to behave well in school by following regular routines and the good examples set by adults. Children work with interest in response to teachers' encouragement to make choices about their play and this contributes very well to their personal development. Children suggest ideas, particularly for imaginative play, such as working in the Westfield Vets, and this greatly enhances their confidence. Children also benefit greatly from the shared outdoor activity areas. This provision helps children in both classes very well with aspects of social and moral development, by learning to co-operate with each other. The quality of teaching is, overall, good, with strengths in the range of well-planned opportunities that are provided. Good relationships are established between adults and children, and these are the basis for the good progress made during the Foundation Stage.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well from low starting points as a result of a good balance of activities.
- Good opportunities for language development are incorporated in each area of learning.

Commentary

63. Teaching is good and encourages all children to achieve well at their different levels. Children's achievement is good and around one half achieve the goals expected of them. All adults use every opportunity available to talk to children and extend their communication skills. Adults value children's contributions and this gives them confidence and self-esteem. In one lesson in which the children were shown a mystery box with labels on the outside, they were asked to give ideas about what animal could possibly be inside and encouraged to give reasons for their choice. Children enjoy and read books with their teachers and build on learning the initial sounds of words. Good progress is also made in children's writing. Some children are beginning to write by developing their hand-eye co-ordination and forming recognisable letters, and others are able to write independently using their knowledge of sounds to build up new words. This is encouraged by a good range of activities which makes writing fun, for example, writing different labels for their animals.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults use every opportunity to encourage children to count.
- A good balance of activities ensures that children have a range of mathematical experiences.

Commentary

64. Teaching and learning are good, resulting in good achievement for most children. Adults take every opportunity to develop the children's mathematical skills and particularly the development of mathematical language. They can all use number names to ten, saying them in order, and the more able can use numbers to 20 and beyond. Good use of 'Pedro' the barking dog encourages the children to predict and then count his number of barks. Children are encouraged to scribe their answers on the board. They are provided with a wide range of well-planned activities. The early learning goals are achieved by most pupils with some children exceeding them.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are based on first-hand experiences that encourage observation and finding out.
- A good range of indoor and outdoor activities stimulates children's interests and helps them understand more about the world around them.

Commentary

65. Good teaching through carefully planned themes and activities enables children to achieve well. They have a reasonable knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live, for example of plants and animals. Adults provide children with good opportunities to gain practical understanding as for example, when 'Toni' the tortoise arrived for a visit and they were encouraged to take care of her. Frequent use of the digital camera by both adults and children documents the evidence of the interests and responsibility children are given in developing their own learning. The involvement of the school in the 5x5x5 project in conjunction with the local education authority is enabling pupils to develop increasing independence in their learning through their observations, and using the outdoor and local environment. Children achieve well and most achieve the early learning goals expected of them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good focus on the need for pupils to improve their control and co-ordination using a range of equipment.
- Good use is made of outdoor equipment to support physical development.

Commentary

66. Children achieve well and most reach the early learning goals by the end of the year. All children have good opportunities to enjoy well supervised activities inside and outside to ensure that they learn how to balance, climb and jump well with due regard for their own safety. They use wheeled toys regularly, selecting and using them safely with good awareness of others around them. The quality of teaching is good and children follow instructions closely and replicate the demonstrations by the teacher accurately. Emphasis is given to developing hand control through drawing, writing and painting skills and most children have a firm pencil grip and form most letters correctly.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a good range of activities and resources to stimulate children's imagination.
- Children are developing their ability to select activities and they achieve well.

Commentary

67. Teaching is good and children achieve well and the majority reach the early learning goals by the end of the year. Carefully planned activities extend what interests the children and what they already know. There is good opportunity for role-play in a well-planned area and children use their imagination well in this activity. At the time of the inspection, the activity focused on 'Westfield Vets'. The children talked about this and what they are doing with great enthusiasm. Children have easy access to water, sand and modelling materials. Their creative work is linked well to other areas of their learning, for example, when they were dividing up and making 'bones' for the animals from soft malleable materials. This supports their mathematical development very well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are improving and are average by the end of Year 2 and 6.

- Reading in Year 2 and speaking and listening standards in all years are below average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory in Years 3-6 because it varies too much.
- Boys tend to achieve less well than girls.
- Teaching assistants make effective contributions in lessons.
- Library provision is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

68. Overall standards in work seen in Year 2 are below average and in Year 6 are average. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Test results in 2003 at the end of Year 2, using average point scores, showed that performance in both reading and writing was well below average. This was lower than previous years, where results had been around average. Test results at the end of Year 6 were also well below average, and lower than in previous years. The school admits that there was underachievement amongst this group of pupils, despite the fact that more able pupils did a little better. Underachievement was more marked amongst the boys than the girls.
69. Test results for Year 6 pupils have been falling for two years, but the school's monitoring of the current Year 6 pupils indicate a reversal of this trend, with pupils achieving results in both reading and writing much closer to the national average. This is borne out by inspection evidence. In work seen in Year 2, standards of writing are average, but reading remains below average. Skills in speaking and listening are below average in all years. Given the pupils' below average standards of language and literacy skills when they enter the school, this represents satisfactory achievement for pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6. However, rates of progress still vary a little from class to class, through Years 3-6 in particular.
70. The achievements of high attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, are more consistently satisfactory than lower and middle attaining pupils through the school, and girls achieve better than boys. Underachievement is most marked amongst lower and middle attaining boys, and there are more girls than boys in the upper sets in Years 5 and 6. The school has deployed some specific strategies to help boys improve, for example, the provision of additional reading books, which are beginning to impact on raising standards. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported and every effort is made by staff to raise their attainment by carefully planned work.
71. Speaking and listening skills are below average across the school and boys in particular do less well, especially in Years 3-6. Some pupils speak confidently, especially when reading aloud. However, pupils often struggle with answering questions and have difficulty in speaking complete sentences. They often hesitate and forget what they were going to say. In some classes, a significant number of pupils fail to listen and require instructions to be repeated or have to ask supplementary questions when beginning a task. Developing pupils' speaking skills has been identified as a key priority by the school and staff are working hard to help pupils extend their vocabulary. A number of teachers use open-ended questioning and paired discussions effectively to encourage pupils to develop and extend their confidence in speaking. However, approaches are inconsistent and not all teachers adopt effective and deliberate strategies to promote good speaking and listening skills.

72. The reading skills of many pupils in Year 2 are limited. Whilst they enjoy reading and some read with understanding and sustained concentration, many are hesitant and mistakes are commonplace. Some pupils rely heavily on memory of the text when reading and are unable to recognise familiar words. By Year 6, standards of reading are average. Pupils in Years 3-6 talk enthusiastically about books. They express preferences for particular genres, mainly fiction, and many are fluent, expressive readers. There are good opportunities during the school day for pupils to engage in reading. Older pupils are clear about the strategies that they need to use to work out how to read words and sentences and most tackle new reading material confidently. Although they know how to access information in non-fiction books, skills in researching information using other sources, for example, locating specific information in a library, are less well developed. Library provision is unsatisfactory inhibiting the development of skills associated with research and independent learning. The use of ICT to support learning is patchy.
73. Standards in writing are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection and a reflection of the specifically targeted teaching strategies adopted by the school. Higher attaining pupils use interesting and varied vocabulary and handwriting is accurate and legible. Simple words are spelt correctly and good attempts are made to spell more difficult words. In Year 6, writing is often lively and thoughtful. Ideas are developed convincingly and organised and structured to good effect. The quality of handwriting and presentation is satisfactory but varies, and there are some weaknesses in grammar, spelling and punctuation. Pupils are developing skills in writing in a good range of different styles and formats and are beginning to use a more extended vocabulary. The collection of short adventure stories written by Year 6 entitled 'The Quest' is particularly impressive. Throughout the school, pupils are introduced to a wide range of styles of writing. However, pupils do not make enough use of word-processing to draft and edit work.
74. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but ranges widely in Years 3-6 and is therefore unsatisfactory, despite much good and very good teaching. Teachers are creating good working environments and forming good relationships and this is reflected in the enthusiasm pupils show towards English. In a very good literacy lesson in Year 3, pupils extended their use of verbs and synonyms through writing stories about monsters. The teaching was well planned and set high expectations. All pupils readily accepted the challenge and as a result of skilful questioning by the teacher made considerable progress. The pupils' capacity to work on their own was very impressive, and self-assessment was used effectively to give pupils a greater awareness of what they had achieved and what they could improve. Class management skills are good and teachers successfully ensure the participation of pupils through active encouragement. Lessons are well planned and a brisk pace ensures pupils are fully engaged. Work presented is generally well matched to pupils needs. Support for the less able is good and is having a significant impact, enabling these pupils to achieve as well as possible. Very effective support by teaching assistants is having a considerable influence in helping pupils to improve.
75. However, the good teaching seen during the inspection masks much that is less effective. The scrutiny of work completed by pupils since the beginning of the year reinforced the judgement that progress in some classes in Years 3, 4 and 5 in particular is very variable.

This has been picked up by the school's own monitoring of pupils' work and inspectors agree. In one Year 4 for example, there was little evidence of a wide range of writing formats in some weeks and relatively little extended writing. In Year 5, work is sometimes not completed. Presentation and handwriting are not always of a good quality. Marking in Year 6 is often regular, and offers positive and constructive comments on how to improve. In other years, whilst comments are usually positive, this approach is inconsistent and marking sometimes consists only of ticks. Sometimes basic errors are allowed to be repeated. Rarely are comments linked to the lesson objectives or the individual pupil's learning targets. The school has recently introduced new procedures for marking and improvements are now evident.

76. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There is clear vision for the improvement of the subject and a well-designed improvement plan. Monitoring of teaching and learning, alongside sampling of pupils' work have been undertaken and points for action identified. As yet, however, the impact of this has been mixed, and improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

77. Satisfactory use is made of language and literacy skills in other subjects. Below average speaking and listening skills, however, are hindrances to more rapid progress, and many pupils often struggle to express themselves clearly. In mathematics, for example, pupils are not always able to explain their working in detail. The school has identified improving speaking and listening skills as a key priority but, as yet, the strategies are not being consistently implemented. In most classes, pupils write reasonably well in different subjects, such as history and geography. Although some opportunities are created for independent use of reading skills, activities tend to rely more heavily on verbal instructions. Library and research skills are below average. Displays, especially in the lower years, contain good examples of pupils writing for different purposes, for example, World War 2 booklets produced by Year 3 and work connected to 'The Lighthouse Keepers Lunch' in celebration for World Book Day, linked to design and technology.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching follows closely the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy and this assists teachers in ensuring that pupils' skills are developed steadily in most classes resulting in satisfactory achievement overall.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in Years 3-6, because there are too many inconsistencies in the teaching.
- Pupils have good attitudes to mathematics and engage positively in the tasks set.
- Assessment of pupils' work is generally sound but the assessment data assembled are not yet being used fully to push up pupils' achievement.
- Too few real-life applications and contexts are provided in which to solve problems using mathematics.

Commentary

78. Standards are currently broadly average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. The results of national tests in 2002, for pupils in Years 2 and 6, were average but results fell in 2003. The 2003 test results were below average for pupils in Year 2 and well below average for pupils in Year 6. The 2003 results of the Year 6 pupils were well below those achieved by pupils in similar schools, whereas in 2002, Year 6 pupils had achieved far better than similar pupils elsewhere. The school was disappointed and somewhat surprised by this drop in standards as in the previous two years results had been at or above national averages. The 2003 test results combine with previous ones to show a three-year downward trend in both Year 2 and Year 6 that has clearly worried the school. Appropriate actions have been taken to reverse this trend, some of them relatively recent.
79. Current standards indicate some improvement and they are close to average. Pupils make reasonable progress as they move through the school although the school's own records, as well as inspection observations, show that pupils in some classes progress at a significantly faster rate than in others. Teaching assistants work in effective partnership with teachers to ensure that pupils with special educational needs also make sound progress. Pupils in Year 2 have a reasonable grasp of reflective symmetry, for example, and can name two-dimensional shapes accurately, adding if they are regular or not. Some pupils in the middle years display poor recall of multiplication tables or work rather slowly to calculate simple divisions, occasionally forgetting that 'sharing' must be fair so that the divided parts are equal in size. Year 6 pupils generally handle numbers confidently, undertake computations correctly and use mathematical vocabulary appropriately. Pupils' speaking skills are generally below average and pupils' verbal answers in mathematics are usually very brief so that fuller explanations of methods used, reasons for strategies applied or statements with suggestions, questions or hypotheses are rare. Most pupils can read mathematics problems accurately but some have difficulty in interpreting these problems and making sense of what calculations or operations need to be done to solve them.
80. Teaching and learning are sound in Years 1 and 2, but because of the inconsistencies in teaching in Years 3-6, teaching at this level is unsatisfactory. Pupils are supported in developing their computational and other mathematical skills soundly and systematically, using support from the national guidance materials and through considerable practice on test questions in Year 6. Lessons are generally planned to include a suitable range of tasks to match the wide range of needs in each class. The strong features in teaching and learning are very good classroom management, good relationships and behaviour in lessons and good preparation of resources for learning. Pupils generally enjoy their work in mathematics and set about their tasks briskly. However they sometimes learn too slowly or become muddled. This occurs when the teacher is over-dominant and does not give pupils a chance to practise new techniques for themselves or when a teacher's subject knowledge is insecure so that explanations are not clear or helpful resources are not provided. Most learning in mathematics is in the abstract so that numbers or shapes are generally not used in context. When a technique is taught an application does not usually follow or precede it. Good examples of mathematical contexts were provided however, in the Year 6 booklet containing mathematical problems relating to a recent residential visit and in Year 3, work on pizza sections and sharing out the mushrooms. Pupils' work shows very little use of ICT and no use of ICT was seen in mathematics

lessons. Relatively little work was seen on data-handling, either in mathematics lessons or elsewhere, in geography or science books, for example. The quality of work in pupils' exercise books, and the usefulness of teachers' comments or other learning support strategies (such as learning or target check lists) in them, vary too greatly from class to class.

81. A new mathematics co-ordinator has recently been appointed. She has an accurate understanding of the current strengths and weaknesses in provision and in pupils' outcomes but it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of her work. The school is actively seeking to improve provision for mathematics and has, for example, introduced changes in the way pupils are expected to present their work in exercise books; these changes are having a positive impact. Some pupils are supported extremely well in understanding the extent of their own learning, as in a Year 4 class, but this is not widespread. Assessments of pupils' work are undertaken regularly and appear to be accurate and related to what each pupil can be expected to achieve. Some analysis of this assessment information is undertaken but its full potential for maximizing pupils' achievement is not yet being harnessed.
82. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Standards were average in Years 1 and 2 and above average in Years 3 to 6 in 1998; they are broadly average now, showing some recovery from a dip. In 1998, the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 was judged to be good whereas it is now unsatisfactory. Some improvements have occurred in teaching, mainly through the adoption of ideas from the national numeracy strategy but shortcomings still exist in teaching and learning and progress is still inconsistent across different classes.

Mathematics across the curriculum

83. Pupils' competence in mathematics is average. Very little was seen during the inspection of pupils making use of and developing their mathematical skills in other subjects and opportunities are missed to develop their skills in practical applications across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The emphasis on investigative work is developing scientific skills well.
- Teachers work successfully in developing pupils' confidence in understanding a scientific approach.
- Assessment is not being used effectively to set targets and plan work for the next step.
- The use of ICT to support learning is underdeveloped.

Commentary

84. RESULTS IN THE 2003 NATIONAL TESTS AT THE END OF YEAR 6 WERE WELL BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE AND VERY LOW AND WITHIN THE BOTTOM

FIVE PER CENT OF SCHOOLS WHO ACHIEVED SIMILAR RESULTS AT THE END OF YEAR 2. HOWEVER, IN COMMON WITH BOTH ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS, PERFORMANCE IN 2003 WAS LOWER THAN PREVIOUS YEARS. IN 2002, RESULTS HAD BEEN WELL ABOVE AVERAGE, AND TAKING THE AVERAGE OF THE LAST THREE YEARS, RESULTS HAVE BEEN CLOSE TO THE NATIONAL AVERAGE. THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PERFORMANCE OF BOYS AND GIRLS. TEACHER ASSESSMENTS AT THE END OF YEAR 2 IN 2003 WERE BELOW AVERAGE, ALTHOUGH THE PERCENTAGE OF ABLE PUPILS ACHIEVING LEVEL 3 WAS AVERAGE. PERFORMANCE WAS SLIGHTLY BETTER IN EXPERIMENTAL AND INVESTIGATIVE SCIENCE THAN IN OTHER ASPECTS.

85. In work seen during the inspection, standards are average at the end of Year 2 and below average in Year 6. However, pupils' achievements are satisfactory through all years and pupils of all prior attainment, including those with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress. However, this overall judgement masks the fact that pupils in some classes make less satisfactory progress. There is some good quality work produced by higher attaining pupils throughout the school. Pupils demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science. Pupils' understanding of scientific concepts, as demonstrated through their approach to investigative work, is increasingly well developed as pupils move up through the school. All teachers give a strong emphasis to this particular aspect of the curriculum, which was criticised at the time of the last inspection, but is now much improved. In Year 2, pupils are able to group and categorise foods and understand that materials change through heating and cooling. They are able to measure and record data from their investigations accurately. In Year 6, pupils are guided to a sound understanding through an emphasis on investigative work and a proper scientific approach to the subject. In planning their investigations pupils understand the importance of ensuring a fair test, record their results accurately and analyse the data against their predictions. Many average and lower attaining pupils are less confident in drawing conclusions from their results. Relatively few pupils are using their scientific knowledge to explain their results and make generalisations, preferring merely to confirm whether their prediction was accurate or not.
86. Science makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of pupils' language and numeracy skills. Specialist vocabulary is used appropriately, and Year 6 pupils understand words such as "photosynthesis" and "reversible reactions". However, pupils' use of bar charts, pie charts and line graphs to represent their findings is underdeveloped. There is also less use of ICT than might be expected; there is little use for example, of sensing equipment to measure external events.
87. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in all years, although there is some that is unsatisfactory. The most effective teaching is focused sharply on clear learning targets, which are clearly understood by the pupils, clear explanations and good classroom management. Careful thought is given to the management of the learning, and there is good use of praise to build pupils' confidence. Effective questioning ensures pupils are challenged to think more deeply. In one good Year 4 lesson on habitats, the teacher constantly questioned the pupils to check understanding and to encourage pupils themselves to contribute ideas about different habitats. Very good relationships and positive, co-operative work characterised the learning. Support from other adults in

classroom is often of a good quality. The sensitive yet challenging support from the teaching assistant in a Year 3 lesson observed ensured all pupils felt involved.

88. In less effective teaching, pupils are not always given work which matches their individual needs. As a consequence, they are not consistently challenged to improve. Planning to meet the wide range of different prior attainment in each class is more usually focused on ensuring additional support is provided rather than developing specific activities with more or less challenging outcomes. Marking of pupils' work is conscientiously carried out and is always encouraging. More often however, the assessment of pupils' progress is not sufficiently focused on what the pupil needs to do next.
89. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A clear set of appropriate priorities for the development of the subject has been devised. Some monitoring and support are being undertaken, but the process is insufficiently rigorous to ensure the variability in teaching quality is ironed out. Since the last inspection there is a more systematic approach to developing investigative skills, teaching has improved and standards have been improving, despite the dip in 2003. Improvement overall since the last inspection, when the subject was identified as a key issue, has been satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning in different subjects.
- Some multi-media work in Year 6 is of a high standard.
- Resources have improved considerably since the last inspection.
- Assessment is not being used to plan future work.

Commentary

90. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils' attainment overall is average, and their achievement is satisfactory. In Year 2, pupils word process their writing and can produce a series of instructions to control a roamer. They are beginning to make use of the Internet to find information and can create simple spreadsheets. In Year 6, pupils use word-processors and spreadsheets confidently. Some work is of a high standard. A multi-media presentation, incorporating graphics, sound and moving text showed a very good understanding of how to use a range of ICT skills to maximise the impact. The short video clip entitled 'Thor is Hungry', produced by three Year 6 pupils, was of a very high quality.
91. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In a satisfactory lesson, Year 5 pupils used control technology reasonably effectively. The work was presented at an appropriate level for different groups and the software provided progressively more challenging activities capturing the pupils' interest. Resources were appropriate and excitingly presented but the overall impact was reduced by technical problems with the computer suite and a lack of confidence by the teacher in her knowledge and understanding. Lessons usually have good structure and teachers are skilled in managing pupils. Where teachers themselves are confident in their own ICT skills, pupils usually learn quickly. They respond with

enthusiasm to activities which involve them in working out problems by themselves. Interventions by the teacher are effective in ensuring that pupils persevere and try to solve problems independently. However in one Year 3 lesson, the teacher's failure to understand how to use the technology effectively, combined with some challenging behaviour from some pupils, led to unsatisfactory learning. In this case the teacher failed to intervene sufficiently, or explain with sufficient clarity to enable the pupils to learn with confidence. Good teaching in other classes was characterised by a clear explanation of the task, effective questioning to encourage pupils to explain and consolidate their learning, and very good relationships which helped to establish a positive working atmosphere.

92. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory, and day-to-day planning is not sufficiently related to pupils' previous learning. Although the co-ordinator has a simple and effective recording system operating for Year 6, this is not being used in other years. Consequently, teachers do not plan ICT lessons to build progressively on prior attainment and the co-ordinator has no mechanism for monitoring the progress of individual pupils or identifying under-performance.
93. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of ICT. He is aware of the issues for improvement and is currently putting work together in a portfolio to demonstrate expected standards in order to raise expectations. However much remains to be done to ensure a more consistent approach, that teachers are confident in their use of ICT, and that there is ready access to ICT by pupils. There have been very limited opportunities so far to monitor the teaching of ICT in lessons, and support for other teachers is at an informal level. Resources are much improved since the time of the last inspection, and improvement overall since then has been satisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

94. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory, and there is insufficient use in English, mathematics and science in particular. Subject schemes of work need to be reviewed in order to ensure that opportunities are identified to use ICT in all subjects. Some examples of ICT were observed. In art, Reception pupils use computers to make pictures; in history, Year 4 pupils created a PowerPoint presentation which imported photographs and text about Henry VIII and the Tudors; Year 3 pupils had produced some information leaflets in geography about the local area; and in mathematics, Year 4 pupils produced pie charts in mathematics to show the results of a survey. These examples show that pupils have reasonable skills in ICT but opportunities are limited, as some teachers lack confidence in using ICT to support learning in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

95. Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. Both geography and history were sampled. Although no lessons in history and just one lesson in geography was observed and therefore no firm judgement on provision can be made, the pupils' previous work was scrutinised and inspectors had discussions with staff and pupils.

96. Standards in the Year 2 **geography** lesson observed were average and pupils were achieving satisfactorily. In comparing the Isle of Struay with their local environment, pupils showed a reasonable knowledge and understanding and expressed their views confidently. The work scrutiny indicated that pupils cover a broad range of topics, although there was limited evidence of geographical work in Year 6. Work seen indicates attainment is average. However, the residential trip made to the Isle of Wight had provided good opportunities for pupils to study coastlines, and the erosion of bays and headlands. There are no records of assessment or recording of pupils' progress in geography. The co-ordinator, who only recently took responsibility for the subject has had limited opportunity for monitoring the quality of provision.
97. No **history** lessons were seen during the inspection. Whole-school curriculum plans show that the main features of the National Curriculum for history are included as required. Pupils' exercise books and displays of work in classrooms show a sound coverage of the topics. They can talk with reasonable confidence about their work in history. Some Year 3 pupils, for example, explained the key events they had learned about in studying the Romans and World War II and Year 4 pupils talked about their work on the Tudors and the Egyptians. History gives rise to some links with other subjects, such as art, although these are not fully exploited. The school has not stated overtly enough how history contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assemblies are well planned and make a strong contribution to religious education.
- Good use is made of outside speakers to enhance the curriculum.
- Assessment is not used to monitor pupils' progress.

Commentary

98. Only one lesson was observed in Year 4 and this was led by a local minister. As a result, no judgement about the quality of teaching and learning is possible. However the evidence from this lesson, together with evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work, the subject portfolio and discussions with staff and pupils, indicates that standards are average and meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus in both Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory.
99. Pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory knowledge of different world religions and some understanding of their rituals and services. They have used the Internet to explore the major festivals, such as Ramadan and created an interesting quiz about Islam. They acknowledge the links between religion and moral codes of behaviour. In Year 4, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the role of the church minister and articulately phrased questions and answers to the visitor. They listened attentively and showed good skills of concentration. Speaking and listening skills were promoted skilfully during the lesson. Good links were made with contemporary issues such as the D Day

Remembrance services. Assessment is not being undertaken regularly and teachers have no secure basis on which to plan the next stage in the pupils' learning.

100. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The post-holder is currently on maternity leave and a temporary co-ordinator is in place. The subject file is detailed and there is a clear action plan for development of the subject. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

101. These subjects were sampled during the inspection. In **design and technology**, scrutiny of planning, the portfolio of work and discussion with pupils showed they are gaining experience of a range of materials and techniques and developing the expected subject skills through designing and making a variety of products. Year 3 had designed three-dimensional monsters and had linked these to story writing in English lessons. Year 6 pupils had designed slippers and made bridges that supported specific weights. However, pupils do not always fully evaluate their own work or that of their classmates. The use of ICT to support learning through planning or modelling is underdeveloped.
102. In **music**, two lessons and a singing assembly were observed. The subject, under the enthusiastic leadership of the subject co-ordinator is beginning to develop well. Standards in the Year 1 lesson observed were above average with pupils singing well and with a sense of expression and phrasing. They learnt a new song quickly and made a good response to the different characteristics of Britten's *Playful Pizzicato*, making appropriate movements to the music. The singing assembly for pupils in Years 1 and 2 was led in a confident and assured manner by the co-ordinator, who was given good support by other staff. Singing was reasonably accurate both melodically and rhythmically, and most pupils joined in well.
103. Music provision in other classes is dependent on the skills and confidence of the classteacher. As a result, provision is patchy. The Year 5 lesson observed was unsatisfactory. There was no clear focus to the learning and as a result, the pupils became increasingly poorly behaved as the lesson progressed. The co-ordinator has begun to address this problem, through the introduction of a new music scheme. Because teachers' confidence is very variable, much support is needed from the co-ordinator to ensure consistent standards in all classes. As yet, she has had no time for supporting the implementation of this new programme.
104. There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular activities, including a choir. Around twenty-five pupils in Years 3-6 are learning instruments with visiting specialist teachers.
105. **Art and design** was sampled. The two lessons seen both had some good and very good features. In the Year 1 lesson, the teacher had particularly good questioning skills, drawing out from pupils their views on how chalk pastels might be used and gently insisting that they describe the effects in clearly articulated sentences. This lesson contributed very well to the development of many other skills, those of collaboration and speaking, for example. In the Year 6 lesson on learning how to handle clay, pupils were

helped to make good progress through the teacher's very good subject knowledge and carefully structured demonstrations and opportunities for pupils to rehearse the skills before making a gargoyle. In both lessons, pupils learned with interest and their behaviour was very good. Scrutiny of pupils' work in sketchbooks and on display, however, revealed a mixed picture. Displays of pupils' artwork are good in Years 1 and 2. Displays in Years 3-6 vary too much from class to class. In the better displays, work shows some good observational drawing and creativity. Pupils work in different styles and a reasonable range of media; for example, batik, clay and various paints and pencils or crayons. Work based on the work of famous artists is also on display and pupils can explain how they and the artist achieved the artistic outcomes. Some sketchbooks are poor in quality and content and assessment is weak. Pupils' skills in art are not developed systematically over Years 3-6. The school has rightly identified creative arts as a priority for development.

Physical education

106. Only a few lessons were seen and a judgement about pupils' standards and achievement by the end of Years 2 and 6 was not possible. Nevertheless, based on discussions with pupils, parents, scrutiny of timetables and subject documentation, physical education is a strong area of the school's work. The school devotes a good amount of time to PE and each class experiences a wide range of activities, including swimming once a week right through the year. Pupils enjoy PE greatly. In the few lessons seen, teaching and learning were good overall and pupils' engagement and behaviour were also good. Teaching takes very good account of the need to ensure pupils' health and safety during the activities and in setting aside time for warm-up and warm-down and taking pupils into the shade periodically in very hot weather for a drink. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities in PE and school teams have had considerable success in competitions. The subject co-ordinator works with commitment and enthusiasm.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

107. Only one personal, social and health education lesson was seen, and no judgement can be made about overall provision. Teachers see this area as making an important contribution to pupils' development and the overall curriculum. The overall programme for each year focuses on pupils learning to relate to themselves and then increasingly to close relationships and finally to the community and local environment. It includes all the appropriate age-related elements, including sex education and drugs awareness.

108. In the lesson observed Year 6, pupils made good gains in their learning about themselves on their recent residential trip away. This opportunity to reflect on personal experiences was well managed by the teacher, who drew out some good responses whilst giving pupils the confidence to express their feelings and articulate their views in a clear and assured manner.

109. Much of the programme is taught during Circle Time which provides a good framework and where the conventions are understood by all pupils. The co-ordinator has some sensible plans for development, but has limited opportunity for monitoring how well the subject is taught.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Students' achievement	4

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well students learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Students' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for students	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	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	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).

