

INSPECTION REPORT

WHIPTON BARTON FIRST SCHOOL

Exeter

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113092

Headteacher: Mrs Y Baitup

Lead inspector: David Penney

Dates of inspection: 21st - 23rd June 2004

Inspection number: 258397

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	294
School address:	Hill Lane Whipton Exeter Devon
Postcode:	EX1 3JP
Telephone number:	(01392) 467 556
Fax number:	(01392) 460 370
Appropriate authority:	Local education authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Taylor
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This school serves an area of Exeter that is relatively underprivileged. It is larger than most First Schools and has 292 boys and girls on roll, aged from four to eight years, with a further 77 children in the Nursery class. Overall, there are more boys than girls, especially in the Nursery and in Year 2. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and of pupils with special educational needs is higher than average at 26.1 per cent and 24 per cent respectively. A greater proportion of pupils have statements of special educational needs than is the case nationally. Standards of children's attainment on entry to the school have been declining in recent years. Currently, they are well below those expected nationally overall, and particularly in aspects of communication and social development. Pupils come from a predominately white ethnic background, although there are very small numbers of representatives of other heritages. Two pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. Education in the city is currently undergoing reorganisation and the school is set to become an Infant School from September 2005. During the inspection, one of the Year 3 classes was on a residential visit and was not, therefore, in school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23039	David Penney	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Information and communication technology Geography History Religious education
8986	Philip Andrew	Lay inspector	
12116	Christina Morgan	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Art and design
16038	Jill Bavin	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Design and technology Physical education
33612	Stella Beardmore	Team Inspector	English Citizenship Music

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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 - 8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9 - 14
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14 - 15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	16 - 26
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school. It gives sound value for money. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and Year 1, irrespective of gender or background, and satisfactorily in Year 2. However, pupils' progress is unsatisfactory in Year 3, overall, as a result of the low expectations of some teachers. On entry to the Nursery class, children's attainment is well below that expected nationally, with particular weaknesses in communication and social skills. Standards remain well below the national average at the end of Year 2, as measured by the national tests, and in Year 3. Nevertheless, teaching is satisfactory in the school as a whole because of the high proportion of good teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage¹ and Year 1. The school cares well for the pupils and its ethos and the quality of relationships generally are strong. The leadership and management of the school are sound following a period of disruption brought about by the illness of the previous headteacher and the reorganisation of education in Exeter.

THE SCHOOL'S MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ARE:

- Much of the teaching is good or better, especially in the Foundation Stage and Year 1, and this contributes well to pupils' achievement. However, pupils do not achieve satisfactorily in some Year 3 classes because teachers' expectations are not high enough.
- The school provides a very good range of activities outside normal lessons.
- The ethos of the school is good because of the trusting relationships between pupils and adults.
- Parents very much appreciate what the school does for their children.
- There is no regular system of monitoring what the school provides and the standards of learning and teaching to see whether or not standards are being raised.
- Some assessments are not accurately referenced to national standards. Assessment information, including teachers' marking of pupils' work, is not used consistently throughout the school to inform planning and to set targets for pupils to improve their performance.

Since the last inspection in 1998, the school has improved satisfactorily considering the delays occasioned by the long-term illness and subsequent retirement of the previous headteacher and the uncertainty caused by the reorganisation of education in the city. Initiatives have been introduced to improve the standard of pupils' writing but standards in national tests have remained well below average. A new information and communication technology (ICT) suite is beginning to improve pupils' competences and skills but the full potential of the subject has yet to be realised in other subjects. The school now fulfils all statutory requirements.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	E	D	E	E
writing	E	E	E	D

¹ The Foundation Stage is the name given to the Nursery and Reception classes in a school.

mathematics	E	E	E	D
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*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Overall, achievement is unsatisfactory. This is because pupils in some Year 3 classes are not challenged to produce their best work at all times and because these teachers' expectations of what pupils could achieve are too low. Achievement, overall, is good in the Foundation Stage and Year 1 and is satisfactory in Year 2. There is no difference in achievement between boys and girls or because of ethnic origin or prior attainment. Children enter the Nursery with standards of attainment that are well below those expected nationally, with particular weaknesses in aspects of communication and social skills. Their language development through the Nursery and Reception classes is satisfactory, although they achieve well in other areas of learning and in their love of stories and reading; however, their standards on entry to Year 1 are below those expected, except in their social development, where they match expectations. In the rest of the school as a whole, achievement in English is unsatisfactory because of a lack of opportunities in some classes to write for a variety of purposes and to exploit opportunities for speaking and listening. At the end of Year 2, standards are well below average in English and below expected levels in mathematics and science. By the end of Year 3, standards are well below those expected in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal development is good. Their attitudes are good, as is their behaviour in and around the school. Their **spiritual, moral and social development is good**, while their **cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, and is good in the Foundation Stage and Year 1. However, some teachers in Year 3 do not have high enough expectations to ensure that pupils, especially the higher attainers, make adequate progress over time. This adversely affects pupils' learning. Nevertheless, in the school as a whole, **the quality of learning is satisfactory.** The management of pupils' behaviour is good, as is the contribution made by the teaching assistants; these strengths make a good contribution to learning. However, the accuracy of assessments, including the marking of pupils' work, and the use to which they are put are inconsistent across the school. The opportunities for pupils outside normal lessons are very good and enhance their personal development. Relationships are a strength, reinforcing a good, caring ethos. Links with parents, other schools and the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The newly appointed headteacher has a sound vision for the future and is fully committed to improving standards and provision. Teamwork is sound but the roles of the senior and middle managers are not developed fully enough. Whilst strategic planning is sound, procedures for evaluating the work of the school have been recognised to be in need of further development. The governance of the school is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. They greatly appreciate what the school does for their children and place great trust in the staff. These links aid pupils' education. The pupils enjoy school and have generally positive attitudes to the work they do.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE ARE:

- Raise pupils' standards in mathematics, science and, especially, English, including the key skills of speaking, listening and writing.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to write for a variety of purposes in all appropriate subjects.
- Improve teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve, particularly in Year 3.
- Improve the accuracy of assessments throughout the school and use the information gained to inform planning and to set challenging curriculum and pupil targets.
- Establish procedures to ensure that key members of staff monitor the school's work regularly and frequently and evaluate its effectiveness rigorously.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

Achievement overall is **not high enough**. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve well from a low baseline. A good rate of progress is continued into Year 1 and it is satisfactory in Year 2. However, a combination of low expectations and unsatisfactory challenge for pupils in some Year 3 classes results in them not making the progress they should in this part of the school over time.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards of attainment on entry to the Nursery class are well below the nationally expected levels, with particular weaknesses in communication and social skills. These weaknesses have a continuing adverse effect on standards throughout the school, which are below or well below those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 3.
- Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Year 1. However, achievement in Year 3 as a whole is unsatisfactory, which means that pupils do not attain the standards they could.
- Pupils' poor literacy skills have a considerable impact on their learning across the curriculum. Opportunities are lost throughout the school to reinforce and extend pupils' writing, speaking and listening skills.

COMMENTARY

1. Typically, children enter the Nursery class with levels of language and communication and social skills that are well below those expected nationally of children of their age. Great emphasis is placed throughout the Foundation Stage on developing children's social skills through leading by example. This is effective in creating the right climate for effective learning for the future and has a positive effect on learning and behaviour throughout the school. As a result, children achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their language development is satisfactory, given their low starting point. Teachers recognise that they miss opportunities to promote children's speaking and writing skills; nevertheless, they adopt very successful strategies for encouraging children to enjoy stories and books. At the end of the Foundation Stage, children's standards are below those expected in most areas of learning except personal, social and emotional development, where they match expectations. No judgement can be given on standards in physical development, as it was not possible to see a wide enough range of activities due to the nature of the inspection.
2. Good rates of achievement are sustained in Year 1 because of the quality of the teaching; seven of the nine lessons seen in this year group were of good quality or better. In particular, teachers assess pupils' work sensitively and amend their planning to match the pupils' developing needs. Achievement is satisfactory in Year 2, as it is overall in Years 1 and 2. Nevertheless, standards at the end of Year 2 remain well below average in English and below average in mathematics. In science, standards are below those expected nationally. In information and communication technology (ICT), art and design and religious education, standards match those expected.
3. The table below gives average points scores for pupils in the national tests in 2003. Each level in the National Curriculum is given a specific number of points. Pupils are expected to move on by one point each term, so that if a school's scores are one point above the national, their

pupils are, typically, one term ahead. It can, therefore, be seen that by the end of Year 2 in 2003, pupils typically were about two terms behind the national average in reading and about a term and a half behind in both writing and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.7 (14.8)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.1 (12.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.9 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 75 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. Indications from the school's own data are that the results in the national tests in 2004 are likely to show little, if any, improvement over those of 2003.
5. Because of the low expectations of some teachers in Year 3, pupils, overall, do not achieve as well as they should. Standards in the presentation of their work are often poor and teachers' marking does not provide the help that it should to ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve. In many subjects, there is little evidence of written work of the quality or quantity expected normally. There is little evidence of a regular insistence on reasonable spelling, handwriting or punctuation standards, for example. By the end of Year 3, pupils' standards are well below those expected in English, mathematics and science. They are broadly in line with those expected in ICT, art and design, geography and history. There was insufficient evidence available to make a judgement on standards in religious education by this stage; very little written work was offered for scrutiny and the pupils were unable to recall much of what they had studied.
6. No judgements are offered on standards and achievement in design and technology, music or physical education, as these were not the focus of the inspection.
7. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve at the same rate as their peers.
8. In many aspects of learning, pupils' standards are adversely affected by their lack of language and ability to explain what they think or see. There is room for the school to exploit opportunities for promoting and extending pupils' skills of speaking, listening and writing more consistently and effectively.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

Pupil's attitudes, values and personal qualities are **strengths of the school**. The good provision reported at the previous inspection has been maintained. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Good behaviour is evident across the school.
- The way that the school ensures good relationships across the school and freedom from bullying or racial harassment.
- Good achievement in children's personal, social and emotional development in the Foundation Stage.
- The positive attitudes of pupils to learning and the interest in the wide range of activities provided.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.

- Lack of opportunities for pupils to undertake responsible tasks in the school community.
- The level of late arrival is relatively high.

COMMENTARY

- Pupils' behaviour across the school is good both in lessons and around the school. There are a few pupils with challenging behaviour but they are helped by the good management strategies used by all adults. The good school ethos is enhanced from the time children start in the Foundation Stage, where much emphasis is placed on helping children develop their social skills well in a secure and caring environment. High expectations of good behaviour characterise the school's work. No instances of bullying or racial harassment were seen during the inspection and pupils confirm that bullying is not a problem.
- The good relationships between the pupils are a key factor in the co-operation in lessons and on the playground. The pupils use the wide range of outdoor equipment sensibly and amicably at playtimes. They have positive attitudes to learning and work well together during lessons. Children's attitudes are very good in the Foundation Stage because of the emphasis placed on this area of learning. There are good levels of support for, and interest in, the wide range of activities provided by the school.
- The pupils have good respect for the feelings and values of others in the community and are well aware of what makes people special. During the inspection, for example, there was a powerful assembly helping them understand the true nature and value of friendship. They are developing a good awareness of moral principles and of how to contribute to life in a community and have a secure understanding of cultural matters. However, the school gives pupils only limited opportunities to undertake duties in the school community to help them develop their self-confidence and become more confident members of society.
- The level of attendance is satisfactory. Registration is efficiently and promptly carried out at the start of each session. The school has good procedures for promoting attendance and works hard to overcome problems when they arise, although the level of late arrival is still relatively high.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.1	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

EXCLUSIONS

- There were no exclusions in the latest reporting year.

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	234	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which is greatly enriched by the very good range of activities provided outside the normal curriculum.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**, overall. Half of the teaching seen was good or better. However, there are variations within the school; teaching over time in Year 3 is unsatisfactory and this adversely affects the pupils' achievements in this year group. By contrast, teaching is of good quality in the Foundation Stage and in Year 1, enabling pupils to achieve well. The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work and the use to which assessment information is put to influence planning are also inconsistent across the school and are, therefore, unsatisfactory overall.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and Year 1 are good, ensuring that pupils achieve well.
- Teachers' expectations of the standards pupils should routinely achieve are not high enough in some Year 3 classes. As a result, pupils do not receive enough challenge to ensure they make satisfactory progress over time.
- The management of pupils' behaviour is good, overall, and in most classes pupils are encouraged to do well.
- The contribution made in lessons by teaching assistants is good.
- The effectiveness of teachers' use of assessment information to influence planning varies too much between year groups and is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers' marking of pupils' work does not consistently give indications of how pupils could improve their standards.

COMMENTARY

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	5 (13%)	14 (36%)	18 (46%)	2 (5%)	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.

14. All but one of the good or very good lessons were taught in the Foundation Stage or Years 1 and 2. Lessons where teaching and learning were very effective were observed in the Reception classes and in Year 1. This good quality of teaching aids pupils' achievement and standards.
15. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Teachers plan thoroughly together and make satisfactory use of continuing assessments to amend plans to the developing needs of individuals and groups of children. Relationships are good, as is the management of behaviour; teachers are firm but fair and so children know what is expected of them and conform readily because they are encouraged and interested in their work. Teachers use all the available resources, including teaching assistants, effectively and this promotes good learning. However, they recognise that opportunities to promote children's speaking and writing skills are missed; nevertheless, they adopt very successful strategies for encouraging children to enjoy stories and books.
16. Two-thirds of the lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 were of good quality or better; this high quality has a good effect on pupils' learning and achievements. The quality of teaching and learning was never less than satisfactory in Year 1, where seven of the nine lessons seen were effective in promoting good or very good learning. In Year 2, teaching and learning were good in about half of the lessons seen and satisfactory in nearly all of the remainder; one lesson was unsatisfactory. Teachers generally expect good behaviour of their pupils and encourage them well, making good use of teaching assistants. The use of assessment to influence future planning is inconsistent in this key stage. In both year groups, some marking is of good quality with comments about how pupils can improve their work. Equally, in some classes teachers' marking of pupils' work does not evaluate success or show them ways for further improvement. Teachers' comments are sometimes over-congratulatory, indicating low expectations of pupils' efforts and standards, or work is not marked at all. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning over time is judged as only satisfactory.
17. All but two of the lessons observed in Year 3 were satisfactory in quality, although in some, strengths and weaknesses were finely balanced. One lesson was of good quality, promoting good learning; the other was unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, the analysis of pupils' work over this academic year shows that the overall quality of teaching and learning over time is unsatisfactory. Too many Year 3 pupils do not achieve as well as they should because the quality of the marking of their work is inconsistent and insufficiently focused on telling them what they could do to improve their work. Too often teachers do not use the results of on-going assessments to amend subsequent planning to cater for and match pupils' developing needs. Expectations of pupils' standards of presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are too low in many cases; this has an adverse effect on pupils' progress and achievements, especially for those who are potentially higher attaining. In some lessons, the teachers' management of behaviour is fragile and pupils talk when being instructed or shout out answers inappropriately. Nevertheless, nearly all pupils apply themselves reasonably well to work individually or in groups at the appropriate times.

18. In general throughout the school, pupils' behaviour in lessons is managed well and teachers expect good behaviour, which they get. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and make a good contribution to the learning of those groups they work with.
19. Where teaching is most successful in promoting good quality learning:
- The teacher shows a very good understanding of how pupils learn and uses a range of strategies very effectively to capture and retain pupils' interest and imagination.
 - Very good relationships result in pupils who are very well motivated and work hard to please their teacher.
 - Explanations of what the pupils have to do are clearly given, ensuring that tasks are started and completed with a minimum of fuss and the pace and flow of lessons are sustained.
 - The teacher has high expectations of pupils' attention to task so that all pupils focus and participate productively and little time is lost.
 - The teaching assistant is well prepared by the teacher and works effectively in partnership with them to provide good assessments of what has been accomplished and what remains to be done.
20. Where teaching has weaknesses that adversely affect pupils' achievement, it is because:
- Teachers are abrupt in dealing with pupils and pupils' answers are not accorded enough value, which discourages participation and slows the pace of the lesson.
 - Lesson objectives are imprecise and often become a description of what is to be done rather than an indication of what the teacher intends pupils to learn.
 - The teacher's organisation of learning and management of behaviour are insufficiently robust. Good order and attentiveness are, therefore, not established securely enough at the start of a lesson so that there is an undercurrent of noise that disrupts learning and adversely affects the flow and pace of the lesson.
 - Teachers' questioning fails to probe pupils' understanding and so does not ensure that all pupils are fully involved in all parts of the lesson.
 - Teachers' expectations of pupils' standards and presentation are insufficiently high to ensure that there is suitable progress over time.
21. Although the planned assessment schedule is sound, the accuracy and effectiveness of teachers' assessments are inconsistent across the school. Where tasks in lessons are closely matched to the needs and capabilities of individuals and groups of pupils, it is because the teacher has assessed work accurately and has used that information thoughtfully to inform and possibly amend future plans. As indicated in the previous paragraphs, however, this is not always the case and pupils' achievements suffer as a result. Targets for improvement are set regularly for pupils at meetings with parents in the Autumn Term. However, these targets are not always reviewed frequently enough during the course of a term or half term and so their potential to drive up standards is less than it might be. The headteacher, who has a good grasp of assessment matters, is very clear about what is needed to effect the necessary improvements.

THE CURRICULUM

The school provides a **broad and balanced** curriculum that meets all statutory requirements and is enriched by a very wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities. The accommodation and the resources are good, overall.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
- The school is developing useful cross-curricular links that help pupils make meaningful connections between different subject areas.
- Too little use is made of computers in classrooms to support and extend work in other subjects.
- The school's provision for special educational needs is good and support staff make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. However, there is too little regard in the timing and content of some withdrawal sessions for the implications of what pupils will miss.

COMMENTARY

22. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum with appropriate emphasis on the core subjects of English and mathematics. It is flexible in its approach to the content of the curriculum. Although it is using national guidelines, these have been evaluated and modified in the light of the school's particular needs. Links between different areas of the curriculum are soundly built into teachers' planning, ensuring that pupils make appropriate connections between different aspects of their learning.
23. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is suitably broad and balanced, fulfilling all requirements. The good emphasis placed on settling children into school and developing the personal, social and emotional aspects is fundamental to the good relationships, attitudes and behaviour evident in the school as a whole. It is recognised that there is room to provide more opportunities for children to practise their speaking, listening and writing skills in a range of contexts.
24. The National Numeracy Strategy is firmly in place and adapted suitably to meet the needs of the pupils. However, the development of the National Literacy Strategy is less effective in ensuring a sharp focus on the development of pupils' writing skills because of a lack of consistent emphasis on regular phonic and spelling work throughout the school and the ineffective use of assessment information to identify what individuals and groups of pupils need to do next. Although other subjects are often used as a focus for work in literacy lessons, pupils' poor literacy skills are having a considerable and adverse effect on their learning in other curriculum areas, including mathematics and science. Equally, there is no daily guided reading session.
25. The new computer suite has enabled teachers to improve pupils' basic information and communication technology (ICT) skills and is used soundly to extend pupils' learning in some other subjects. However, there is scope to improve still further the use of ICT to support learning in other curriculum areas, particularly through exploiting the potential of computers sited in the classroom.
26. The school is aware of the need to widen the pupils' cultural horizons and a wide range of well attended after school activities is offered. The art and design, music and physical education curriculum is considerably extended by a variety of clubs, visiting artists and musicians and sports coaching. The immediate locality is used well as a focus for learning in both history and geography. The residential visits are particularly valuable in extending pupils' experiences and make a valuable contribution to their personal and

social development. The work the school does to give pupils the opportunity to learn more widely than just in lessons is very good.

27. The school makes good provision for the high number of pupils with special educational needs and relationships with outside agencies are close and effective. The quality of pupils' individual education plans is satisfactory. Targets are precise and measurable and addressed through additional work with support staff. The large number of well trained and committed support staff are used well to address pupils' specific learning difficulties. The school strives to achieve an appropriate balance between in-class support and the withdrawal of pupils for additional individual or small group support. Whereas the in-class support allows teachers to provide a good range of tasks that meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils, the criteria for withdrawing pupils are less clear. The activities for which they are withdrawn do not always match their specific difficulties precisely enough. In addition, pupils tend to be taken out of class at the same time each week, which means that they continually miss the same lesson, and there is too little regard for making up for what has been missed.
28. Accommodation and resources are good, although the school hall is small for some physical activities and has poor acoustics. The on-site swimming pool is a good feature that enhances pupils' opportunities in physical education and much effort has been put into making the playground areas interesting places for pupils to relax and play. In addition, the school has access to large grassed areas for play and recreation.

CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The care, guidance and support for the pupils are **good**, creating a safe and secure environment in which they are able to develop their talents to the best of their abilities. Pupils' ideas and views are taken into account well.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Child protection procedures are good.
- Procedures to ensure that the school is a healthy and safe place are good.
- Pupils place great trust in the adults in the school.
- Pupils' views are sought and valued and the quality of the advice they are given is good, especially for their personal development.
- Induction arrangements into the nursery and reception class are good.

COMMENTARY

29. Child protection procedures are fully in place; all members of staff are appropriately trained and aware of the correct procedures. The school is fully meeting all its statutory responsibilities. All routine health and safety checks have been carried out to the agreed schedule. There is a proper number of staff trained in first aid procedures. All the pupils who were asked knew the proper drills for evacuation in case of fire and the reasons behind the regulations.
30. The school's procedures for the monitoring of the pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Pupils receive good advice and guidance, overall, on how best to develop their talents and abilities, because of the high quality of the support and advice to do with personal, social and emotional matters; the school is aware of the need to bring advice

on academic matters up to this standard. The school is currently trialling a programme to help pupils to understand their feelings and emotions to enable them to deal better with their day-to-day problems.

31. Arrangements for the induction of pupils into the Nursery and reception classes are good. There are home visits and a half-day visit to the Nursery in the term before starting. Before starting in reception class, the children use the school hall for physical education and spend some time in the reception classrooms. The appropriate members of staff visit other playgroups in the catchment area, thus ensuring a smooth transfer for all the children.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

The school has **good** links with the parents and they have a positive view of the school. This has a positive effect on the achievement of the pupils.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The parents have a positive view of the school and value the school.
- The school has good links with the parents.
- The school provides good information on pupils' standards and progress.
- The school has good links with other schools and the community.
- Parents' views are sought and valued.
- The efforts the school makes are not fully reciprocated by some of the parents.

COMMENTARY

32. The school makes a great effort to maintain good links with the parents but some parents do not take full advantage of the opportunities offered. At least fourteen parents and other members of the community come into school on a regular basis to help but other opportunities for involvement, for example at evenings to discuss aspects of the curriculum, are not well supported by parents or carers.
33. The information provided by the school on pupils' achievements is good. There are meetings in the autumn and spring terms to discuss with teachers what progress has been made and to find out the targets for further improvement. At the spring term meeting the parents are also given a written report on their child's progress. The annual written school reports, issued at the end of the school year, are very good and give a clear picture of the progress made during the year, including the personal development of the pupil. Parents have the opportunity to discuss the reports if they wish.
34. The headteacher seeks the views of the parents regularly by means of a questionnaire and values their views. All members of staff ensure that concerns and ideas are acted upon promptly; this is good practice. At the end of school every day the class teachers ensure that the pupils are given into safe care for the journey home and they are also readily available for informal discussions with parents. Talking to parents during the inspection confirmed that they felt communication with the teachers was easy and informal.
35. The links with the community are good and are particularly strong with the parish church. These links widen the outlook of the pupils and help them to a better understanding of the

community. The school has good links with other similar schools and close links with the middle school on the campus. The arrangements for the transfer of the pupils are good and ensure that the pupils are well briefed about routines and life in their next school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**, overall.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The headteacher and teachers are fully committed to meeting the needs of all pupils.
- Appropriate priorities for improvement are identified in the school development plan.
- Daily activities are managed well by the headteacher.
- Governors and senior managers do not monitor and assess the impact of planned developments on pupils' learning regularly or rigorously enough.
- The professional development of staff is good.

COMMENTARY

36. The headteacher has only recently been appointed to the permanent post. She provides satisfactory leadership to the school and smooth day-to-day management of the school. She has provided a good degree of stability in her role as acting headteacher during the absence of her predecessor and has maintained a secure focus on the school's identified priorities. This has been supportive and helpful, particularly during the recent consultation period on the future reorganisation of the school into an infant school as part of a citywide process. The headteacher provides a good role model for other staff and pupils. She and the staff promote a caring inclusive approach to pupils, particularly in assemblies, where pupils' achievements and contributions to the school are valued and celebrated.
37. The school has now established broadly satisfactory procedures for school self-evaluation and is realistically identifying areas that need immediate attention. For example, the school has correctly identified the need to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills as a way of supporting the improvement of their writing and reading. Suitable training has been delivered and staff are including these skills within their teaching. However, there is no planned programme for the senior management team for lesson observations and work sampling to assess the impact of this work on the pupils' learning. The newly-formed senior management team correctly recognises that rigorous monitoring of the school development plan and of learning and teaching is an urgent and immediate priority if they are to lead the staff with sufficient vigour to ensure that standards rise.
38. Provision for special educational needs is good because it is managed well by an experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator who provides good liaison with outside agencies and good training for support staff. However, her role in the monitoring of provision is limited, as it is for other key staff. She has already started to track the progress of specific pupils. A pastoral care co-ordinator provides very good support for pupils and their families.
39. The importance that the school attaches to staff development is demonstrated in its work towards gaining the Investors in People Award. Teachers and teaching assistants have

opportunities to attend training that relates to their personal or school targets. All staff, including teaching assistants, have an annual performance management meeting where performance is reviewed and new targets are set. All staff are valued and contribute effectively to the smooth running of the school. The school has good procedures in place for the induction and support of newly qualified teachers. All statutory requirements are met, ensuring a positive start to their teaching career. The school contributes positively to the initial training of teachers by welcoming students from the teacher training college into the school for their school experience.

40. Governance is satisfactory. The governors are very supportive of the school and fulfil their statutory duties fully. During the past few months, they have worked hard to appoint a new headteacher and to support the school with the reorganisation process. They attend training regularly and meet with the Local Education Authority to keep up to date with developments. There is an effective committee structure with committee reports received by the full governing body half-termly. Governors receive the school development plan for approval after it has been written by the headteacher and senior managers in consultation with staff and the chair of governors. They are fully aware of all the actions within the plan and use it as a constant reference for their work throughout the year. However, they are not fully enough involved in the initial formulation of the plan and they do not monitor the effect that any changes are having rigorously enough or provide enough challenge to the school to improve standards. They make informal visits to the school and meet with subject co-ordinators but concentrate more on support than on monitoring.
41. The school improvement plan is a useful tool for directing the development of the school because it has identified the most important areas for improvement, such as pupils' speaking and listening skills and their writing. It has a clear approach, reviewing the previous year's progress and breaking actions into short-term targets. Actions are suitably costed and linked to the budget. However, the senior management team does not carry out evaluations to assess the impact of planned actions with sufficient rigour or regularity.
42. The financial arrangements are administered well. The budget is set annually, reflecting the needs of the school, as identified within the school development plan. The school has rightly considered the effect of the reorganisation for September 2005 and is budgeting appropriately. The school implements 'best value' principles and provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	863,162
Total expenditure	864,583
Expenditure per pupil	2,312

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	15,009
Balance carried forward to the next year	13,588

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is **good**.

Most children join the Nursery with attainment that is well below expectations for their age, in particular with very poor speaking and social skills. This understandably has a detrimental effect on most areas of learning. Teaching and learning are good overall and children enjoy a range of suitable activities. This means that they achieve well and make good progress. However, when they leave the Reception classes they are still working below expectations for their age overall. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Teachers plan together but there are inconsistencies in some elements of their work, such as the extent to which children's writing is encouraged and celebrated. Induction procedures are good and contribute to children settling well when they start school. Since the previous inspection, requirements for the Foundation Stage curriculum have changed nationally, as have the staff team and the attainment of the children joining the school. It is not possible, therefore, to make a reliable comparison and a secure judgement about improvement since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Children make good gains in self-confidence and social skills.
- Adults have good relationships with children and manage their behaviour very well.
- Opportunities for children to make their own choices and to select equipment independently are missed in the Reception classes.

COMMENTARY

43. Teaching in this area of learning is good overall and consequently children achieve well. Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are close to those expected nationally.
44. Adults in the Nursery and Reception classes place a suitably high emphasis upon providing consistent routines and expectations. This means that children settle quickly and soon feel secure in their classes. The Nursery children show an impressive sense of purpose and level of independence when they select an activity from all those available when they first come in. Children in the Reception classes demonstrate their growing social skills when they visit a local church; they enter sensibly, and respond to the vicar's questions with a good level of interest and respect. There are good relationships between adults and children, so behaviour is managed sensitively and positively. This means that adults are teaching effectively by example, and within this secure environment children become increasingly confident and inquisitive. Consequently, they understand the class rules and abide by them well, and most importantly, have very positive attitudes to new activities and challenges. However, whilst children increasingly make choices

from what is offered, there are too few opportunities for children to select equipment and activities for themselves.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There is not always enough time for children to voice their ideas.
- Children achieve well in the key skills associated with early reading.
- Adults successfully promote children's interest in books.
- There are too few opportunities for children to write independently.

COMMENTARY

45. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory overall and most children make satisfactory progress. Staff recognise that, in their desire to give children information and to extend the language they hear, they often miss opportunities to give children a chance to speak. Staff in the Nursery are making good use of contact with a speech and language therapist to address this issue with a project that is planned to begin in September 2004. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, adults are very successful in developing children's interest in books and stories. There are several reasons for this:
- Adults plan sensibly to read stories that are relevant to other work that the children are doing.
 - Adults tell stories and read books expressively, often using puppets to add further interest.
 - Children in the reception classes share books with reading 'partners' from Year 3.
 - There are special 'book weeks' that enhance the curriculum.
46. As a result of all these strategies, children's achievement in learning early reading skills is good and exceeds their achievement in acquiring early writing skills, which is satisfactory. However, standards in reading overall are below expected levels because few children attain more highly than expected for their age and most children do not fully meet expected levels of reading. Standards in early writing are well below expected levels for their age because there are too few opportunities for children to write independently. Although all teachers concentrate on improving children's letter formation, expectations of how much and how often children will write independently vary between classes. Similarly, there are missed opportunities to celebrate children's writing and raise its profile through displays of children's work.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Children achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of numbers.
- Adults successfully stimulate children's interest in numbers and calculation.
- Opportunities for children to work outside are limited.

COMMENTARY

47. The teaching in this area of learning is good because teachers successfully enthuse children, and promote a good level of interest in numbers and calculation. As a result, children achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of number. In the Nursery, good use is made of number rhymes and songs. Children make good gains in becoming familiar with numbers in various activities, such as painting five ducks. In a good lesson during the inspection, more confident children in a Reception class were so inspired that, working in pairs, they challenged each other to find several ways of making ten, with a few using up to five numbers to do so. In this lesson there were examples of a minority of children exceeding expectations for their age. However, attainment overall is below expected levels, for example very few children use mathematical language correctly or spontaneously in play or in conversation. Opportunities for children to extend their experience of games involving mathematical ideas using outside space are very limited. The Nursery and Foundation Stage co-ordinators recognise that they need to develop more regular access for children to learn outside.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There are strengths in the planning for early scientific and technology work.
- Children have good opportunities to reflect on their beliefs.
- Adults do not consistently support children's play and opportunities to extend individual skills are missed.

COMMENTARY

48. Teaching and learning are good overall because teachers plan carefully for this wide area of learning. For example, in the Nursery adults provide good opportunities for children to discover snails, ants and woodlice outside. Helpful links are made across different areas for learning so that, for example, children use movement to enrich their understanding of mini-beasts when they move slowly like snails in the school hall. In the Reception classes, teachers plan well for children to use computers. For example, children use a computer program to illustrate the development of a bean, and print the sequence out. Good links with the local vicar and regular visits to his church successfully help children to reflect on their beliefs and those of others. Children have regular opportunities to explore their growing understanding of the world around them through play. However, these activities are not always sufficiently supported by sensitive and well-timed adult intervention. This means that opportunities for children to express their ideas and for adults to meet individual needs are often missed. Overall, children achieve well in this area of learning but standards at the end of the Reception year are below those expected nationally.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Adults have a good understanding of the value of children learning through their imaginations.
- Opportunities for children to express their own ideas are sometimes missed.

COMMENTARY

49. Teaching and learning in this area of learning are satisfactory and so children's achievement is satisfactory. Adults have a good understanding of the value of children learning through their imaginations. During the inspection, this was evident in the Nursery when the teacher successfully used attractive finger puppets to keep children interested in identifying bees, caterpillars and butterflies, their sounds and their movements. During a very good music lesson in a Reception class, the teacher enthralled the children by linking a story about animals with musical sounds. Because she so successfully engaged the children's imaginations they learned how to distinguish between sounds and to use these to represent different creatures very well. However, the displayed artwork indicated a high level of adult intervention that was not balanced with work that was clearly child led. Children do not reach expected levels in this area of learning overall because most do not express themselves to the extent expected for their age, remaining overdependent on adults for ideas.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

50. It is not possible to make secure judgements about the overall quality of provision in this area of learning because no lessons developing physical skills were observed. Nevertheless, during the previously mentioned puppet session in the Nursery, those children who moved as bees and butterflies lacked the level of confidence associated with their age. However, from a general observation of children in the Reception classes moving around the school and using tools such as scissors and pencils, skills of co-ordination and control are at expected levels.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

When pupils enter school in Year 1, the standards in reading and writing are well below average. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in writing are still well below the expected level although, in reading, they are in line with national standards. By the end of Year 3, standards in writing are well below those expected; standards in reading are below expected levels.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils enjoy reading and are keen to take their books home.
- The subject co-ordinator is committed and enthusiastic.
- Improvements in speaking and listening are correctly identified as a priority focus.
- Standards in writing and reading are not high enough.
- The quality and effectiveness of teaching are inconsistent and affect learning.
- Planning is not based on the results of accurate assessment.

COMMENTARY

51. By the end of Year 2, attainment in the National Curriculum tests in reading and writing is well below the standard expected for girls and boys of this age. By the end of Year 3, the standards in writing remain well below the expected level and standards in reading below the expected level for this age. The achievement of pupils is unsatisfactory, overall. They make satisfactory progress in Year 1 but failure to build on this productive start inhibits progress. There has been unsatisfactory progress in improving the standards of English since the last inspection. Although the school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy and has received additional support from the Local Education Authority (LEA), there has been no improvement in the results for the national tests in English.
52. The standards in speaking and listening are below those expected. However, the school has identified this area as a focus for their work for this year and has made good plans to develop pupils' skills in this area. In every lesson seen, there were planned opportunities for pupils to engage in discussion before attempting to write. Pupils are asked to give opinions and reasons, vocabulary is extended and in one lesson the pupils were being asked to debate. In a few lessons, teachers talk for too high a proportion of the time, which results in pupils sitting and listening for too long. They listen well, but their speaking is limited to short replies in response to undemanding questions.
53. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading in Years 1 and 2 but unsatisfactory progress in Year 3. Standards are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2 but are below those expected nationally in Year 3. This represents an improvement in the Year 2 standards this year, compared to those attained in the national tests by last year's pupils. Pupils of all abilities said they enjoyed reading and reported that they took books home to read to an adult. Pupils generally read with appropriate fluency and expression and talk with confidence about characters and settings within the text. They demonstrate suitable skills for working out unknown words, for example by the use of picture clues and initial letter sounds. Pupils who find reading difficult rely on adult support before attempting unknown words. The school has many volunteer helpers who come in to school to hear individual pupils read and pupils have reading partners where older pupils work with younger pupils. Although the pupils enjoy this, guided reading groups conducted by teachers or trained teacher assistants within the class are not planned with sufficient frequency to exploit the pupils' enjoyment of reading or to develop reading skills securely. A useful video has been produced to show parents how they can help their children with reading and literacy skills at home.
54. On entering Year 1, pupils have standards of attainment in writing that are well below those expected nationally. By the end of Years 2 and 3, standards are still well below average. Simple words are spelt incorrectly. The use of full stops and capital letters is inconsistent and in some cases it is very difficult to understand the meaning of the writing. The presentation and handwriting of the pupils are generally very untidy, with very few pupils using a joined script. In Year 3, pupils are beginning to structure their writing so that ideas are understood but many still have difficulty in conveying meaning in a logical sequence. Vocabulary and basic grammatical sentence structure are developing broadly satisfactorily. However, a significant proportion of pupils continue to misspell simple words and to produce handwriting that is poorly developed. Expectations of presentation vary from class to class but standards remain unacceptably poor overall. In some classes in Year 1, when pupils are just beginning to make marks for writing, there is an over reliance on copying on top of or under letters rather than encouraging pupils to have

the confidence to attempt words for themselves. Teachers are developing good writing opportunities in other subjects, such as science, history and religious education.

55. Although satisfactory overall, the quality of teaching English is inconsistent. The result is a difference in pupils' achievement depending on which class they are in. Where teaching is very good, the lessons move at a good pace with teachers demonstrating good subject knowledge and pupils being encouraged to contribute through discussion. All possible opportunities are used for pupils to practise reading skills and to reinforce their grasp of spelling and phonics. Lessons are suitably planned to cater for pupils of different abilities and time is spent during the lesson to work with targeted groups. Lower attaining pupils are included in discussion by skilful support from teaching assistants.
56. Where teaching is satisfactory, strengths and weaknesses are often finely balanced. For example, there is a lack of pupil involvement and the teacher talks at the pupils for long periods of time; for example, there is little use of partner discussion, individual whiteboards or teacher demonstration. Teaching is interrupted by too many instructions about behaviour and pupils lose the flow of the lesson. The termly plans indicate that lessons are based on the National Literacy Strategy framework but the planning does not reflect the results of the half termly assessments in the progress books nor the curricular targets for each year group. With the exception of Year 1, there is little evaluation of the effectiveness of the planning and there is no indication that effective tracking procedures are being used to match work to pupils' developing needs. In addition, the planning does not appear to reflect the need to support pupils' writing skills by the teaching of phonics and spelling rules on a regular basis. Marking of English work is inconsistent. Where it is good, constructive comments help pupils understand what they have to do to improve their work but in many of the books offered for scrutiny there are weaknesses; work is left unmarked or has only crosses and ticks, and inappropriate comments such as 'excellent' are used where the work is clearly not of this standard.
57. The subject co-ordinator is providing satisfactory leadership. She has a good knowledge of what improvements should be made and has developed a thorough literacy action plan, which appropriately identifies areas for development. This year, the school has rightly focused on the development of speaking and listening skills and has incorporated opportunities for these skills to be included in all lessons in the curriculum. In addition, the co-ordinator has organised good staff development opportunities, in partnership with the LEA Literacy Consultant, focused on the teaching of reading and writing. She monitors standards through looking at planning and she has carried out three lesson observations during the year. The monitoring of standards, for example through sampling and analysing pupils' work to ensure consistency of provision across classes within year groups or a planned programme of class observations, is not regular or robust enough to evaluate the impact of staff development and its effect on practice within the classrooms. The LEA has selected the school to receive intensive support in English this year and will be working closely with the co-ordinator and all teachers to improve standards.
58. Reading scheme books, which are mainly kept near the classrooms for pupil access, are generally in good condition. Pupils are encouraged to take their reading books home each evening in a school book-bag. A good range of books is borrowed termly from the Education Library Service to support current topic work within the classroom. The school library is a large, bright, attractive area to which pupils enjoy going and in which is a computer, which is used by the pupils for reference use via the Internet. However, there are few books or displays reflecting a variety of cultures. The library would also benefit

from even more fiction books to encourage pupils to read for fun rather than be restricted to reading progressively through commercial schemes, and from more areas where books are displayed attractively to catch the pupils' imagination.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

59. Pupils' low achievement, particularly in writing, affects achievement in other subjects. Opportunities for pupils to experience and practise writing in a meaningful context in other subjects such as history, geography, science and religious education are planned in most classes. However, these planned opportunities are not exploited sufficiently because their effectiveness depends on the quality of teachers' expectations of the outcomes, which is too variable. Handwriting and presentation of work remain poor in most subjects. A satisfactory amount of opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills, such as discussing, questioning and making predictions, are being planned. In the best lessons, pupils use appropriate research skills well to discover facts for themselves to inform their learning and every opportunity is taken to reinforce reading and spelling skills. Throughout the inspection, no ICT was observed in use to support learning specifically in literacy lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Attainment is below average at the end of Year 2 and well below average in Year 3.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory in Year 3.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning across the school.
- The quality of marking is unsatisfactory in Years 2 and 3.

COMMENTARY

60. The majority of pupils enter Year 1 with mathematical skills that are below average. Teachers in Year 1 and 2 work hard to improve these skills and there is a strong emphasis on the development of basic number skills. As a result, pupils' achievement by Year 2 in this area of mathematics is satisfactory in relation to their prior ability. Pupils' poor communication, language and literacy skills, however, have a significant impact on their ability to understand number problems and to apply their number skills. Consequently, pupils find it very difficult to make connections between different aspects of mathematical learning or to apply their knowledge in other areas of the curriculum.
61. The school's own assessment data indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 3. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work undertaken as part of this inspection does not support this judgement. Some teachers' expectations of what the Year 3 pupils can achieve are too low. Pupils largely consolidate the work covered previously, with little significant increase in their understanding or ability to apply their basic skills. By the end of Year 3, pupils' standards are well below those expected nationally.
62. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but varies considerably between year groups and between classes in the same year group. Evidence from the scrutiny of work and observation of lessons indicates that most teachers plan satisfactorily for the range

of ability within their class. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported. Teachers plan together for parallel classes. Although this ensures parity within year groups in the coverage of the curriculum, in practice there are considerable differences in the expectations of individual teachers with regard to the standards pupils should achieve and the efforts they should make. As a result, pupils make better progress in some classes than in others.

63. In nearly all classes, learning is underpinned by the good relationships between pupils and teachers, although in a minority of classes strategies for encouraging good behaviour are unsatisfactory and learning is adversely affected. The majority of teachers work hard to provide a range of interesting activities to motivate pupils and encourage them to participate fully in lessons. These teachers are aware of the different ways in which pupils learn and try to vary their approach to take account of this. The mental/oral sessions are well integrated into the main lesson focus and this gives lessons an overall cohesion. However, the range and variety of strategies used to develop pupils' mental number skills are limited in some classes and do not provide opportunities for teachers to assess individual progress.
64. The quality of marking is unsatisfactory overall. There is considerable evidence, particularly in Year 3, of unmarked work, of mistakes marked as correct and of pupils marking their own work, un-moderated by the class teacher. Too often work is marked by a general tick at the foot of the page. There is no evidence of targets for further improvement being set in the marking of pupils' books. As a result, pupils do not know how to improve their work, teachers have no clear idea of how well pupils are progressing and summative assessments are made on the basis of insecure evidence. The presentation of pupils' work is frequently poor and undermines accuracy in calculations.
65. The co-ordinator is experienced and has good subject knowledge but has no clear understanding of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Her monitoring role is underdeveloped and there is a lack of rigour in the setting of high standards for teaching across the school. This has resulted in inconsistencies in approach and expectations of what pupils can achieve.

MATHEMATICS ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

66. Opportunities for using mathematics in other curriculum areas are occasionally built into teachers' planning. However, this is not consistent between classes. Pupils find it difficult to apply their basic number skills in problem solving activities and do not always make connections between different aspects of mathematical learning. In a Year 3 lesson, data handling skills were applied to a design and technology project but the mathematical content was very limited. Links with information and communication technology are not yet developed fully enough.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Achievement for pupils in Year 3 overall is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils make reasonable progress in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils benefit from, and enjoy, the suitably high emphasis upon practical work.
- There are weaknesses in work on materials throughout the school.

COMMENTARY

67. Whilst standards are below the national averages by the end of Year 2, this represents satisfactory achievement for the pupils because of their previous lack of understanding of scientific matters at the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils enthusiastically discuss the difference between cake mixture before and after cooking, although most have a limited vocabulary. Their understanding of different materials and how they may change is very superficial. For example, in spite of the practical work undertaken to freeze water and melt icecubes, which seems to be understood at the time, pupils are unable later to explain the scientific concepts and processes correctly. Pupils extend their knowledge of 'mini-beasts' well but are less confident about where you find them and why. They are fascinated by the life cycles of ladybirds and butterflies and increase their knowledge of such processes satisfactorily, including good use of computer programs. Nevertheless, they cannot begin to explain the differences and similarities between plants and animals.
68. Standards are well below the national average for the pupils in Year 3. This is because there are far more pupils with difficulties in the subject than there are pupils with strong scientific knowledge. Pupils recall investigations, such as determining the best liquid for plant growth, with evident pleasure. However, most have difficulties in expressing themselves and using scientific vocabulary; for example, they are hesitant about the meaning of 'liquid' and 'solid'. Similarly, they describe chalk in water as 'slowly melted off'. These pupils have not achieved well enough because the teachers do not always have high enough expectations of them. This is especially evident in the very small amount of work that pupils are expected to record on paper, which also means that the subject does not use and extend pupils' writing skills as much as it should. In addition, much work is not dated and some is not marked. This is a failure to show appreciation of the efforts pupils have made and means that teachers are not using the results of assessment to shape their future lessons, which is unsatisfactory.
69. Although standards have fallen since the last inspection, overall, satisfactory progress has been maintained. Given the recent instability in the school's leadership and management, improvement has been satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has recently introduced potentially good systems for assessment; however, they are too recent to have had an impact on raising standards. Similarly, she has extended the range of practical work. Again, whilst this means that pupils enjoy the subject and the curriculum is now satisfactorily balanced, the initiative has not had sufficient time to raise standards. She has not had enough opportunity to monitor the impact of her initiatives or the quality of teaching and this situation is unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Provision in ICT has improved since the last inspection.

- There is a good level of modern hardware and software in the ICT suite, although the room is difficult to use when there is only one adult present.
- Insufficient use is made of the computers in the classrooms.
- The subject leaders' role is underdeveloped.

COMMENTARY

70. Provision has improved since the last inspection. The scheme of work is now satisfactory and fulfils all requirements. The computer suite has been established since the last inspection and has subsequently been extended. Developments have been led well by the subject leaders, who have ensured that teachers' expertise and confidence have been enhanced and that the programs available are relevant and stimulating. They are committed to further improvement but there is scope for developing their role further to include regular monitoring and rigorous evaluation of standards and practice. The leadership and management of the subject are sound.
71. Standards in ICT are close to those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and in Year 3. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. Year 2 pupils correctly formulate questions requiring a simple yes/no answer when designing branching databases and drag images confidently across the screen before dropping them into the required place. They produce colourful pictures in the style of Mondrian, using line and fill tools effectively. By the end of Year 3, pupils combine text and graphics competently and produce reasonably accurate graphs and charts, with higher attaining pupils combining and interrogating data from a small number of fields.
72. Teachers are now confident practitioners, following effective training that focused closely on their group and individual needs. This ensures that the direct teaching of skills is effective and that any problems that pupils encounter in their work are dealt with swiftly. Pupils enjoy working in the suite and cooperate and collaborate well because of the good expectations teachers have of their conduct and application to tasks and because of the quality of the software.
73. The new suite, which is a useful addition to the school's provision, contains 15 computers that are networked and an interactive whiteboard, which is used effectively to teach classes and groups of pupils. However, there is a solid wall running down the middle of it for about two-thirds of its length, which means that the room is often difficult to work in unless extra adult support is available to keep an eye on whichever part of the group is not being directly instructed.
74. The computers in classrooms are not connected to the network in the suite. During the inspection, very few were switched on and fewer still were being used. This is an inefficient use of resources and represents lost opportunities to reinforce and extend the work being done in the suite.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

75. There is a good level of software in the computer suite to support work in other subjects, such as English and science. Some teachers use this effectively, for example to encourage children in the Reception classes to classify various kinds of fruit though asking questions that require a yes/no answer. However, there is room to extend this provision with more rigour. In addition, the computers in classrooms are not used effectively or efficiently enough to reinforce and extend pupils' learning, either in ICT itself or in other subjects.

HUMANITIES

76. History and geography were not a focus of this inspection. However, from the evidence of the pupils' work sampled, discussions with pupils and the observation of one geography lesson, together with a scrutiny of teachers' folders and planning, it is clear that provision in both subjects is **satisfactory**. Schemes of work for both subjects are sound and good use is made of visits to enhance pupils' experiences. A particularly good part of provision is the residential visit made by Year 3 pupils each year.
77. However, it is not possible to make reliable judgements about the standard of pupils' work in either subject in Year 2. Pupils' work is collected into a loose-leaf wallet file and is not always dated, which makes it difficult to judge their achievements over time. Year 3 written work is similarly collected and very little work was offered for scrutiny. Nevertheless, although pupils found it difficult to recount what they had studied or learned in geography, and no reliable judgement can be made on this subject, it is clear that they greatly enjoyed their study of the Romans and Celts and that they have a satisfactory grasp of both knowledge and skills in history.
78. In the one geography lesson seen, teaching and learning were broadly satisfactory. The lesson built securely on the residential visit that the Year 3 pupils had just experienced, although they did not respond with any enthusiasm initially and were largely unable to remember the sequence or details of the walk they had made around the village. The objective of the lesson was clear and sharply focused but the teacher did not insist effectively enough that pupils should listen to everybody else in the classroom. As a result, there was an undercurrent of murmuring and pupils called out answers without being asked. The teacher did not probe pupils' understanding fully and tended to accept the first correct answer. Alternatively, the pupils' answers were finished off by the teacher, losing the opportunity to reinforce and extend pupils' oracy skills as well as their geographical understanding.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching is good, so learning successfully underpins the school's ethos and pupils' behaviour and their personal and social education.
- Good use is made of visits to enhance pupils' experiences and understanding.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are extended well, although opportunities to extend their literacy skills are not exploited enough.

COMMENTARY

79. Standards in Year 2 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils achieve satisfactorily. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils understand the relevance to their own lives of what they have learned. No judgements are possible for Year 3 pupils because there was almost no written work for analysis and the pupils talked to were unable to say in any great detail or depth what they had learned.
80. The quality of teaching in two of the three lessons seen was good. Good relationships mean that pupils are confident to ask questions about concepts and words they do not understand. Because teachers take good care to make relevant points when telling stories, for example, of people who have inspired others, such as Dr Barnardo, pupils in Year 1 readily understand the

good such people have accomplished. Good use is made of paired discussions to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills and teachers' questioning is thorough, probing and effective in extending pupils' understanding of the main characteristics of religion that have relevance in their lives. This feature is also evident in Year 2, where pupils formulate their own 'Commandments', such as "Do not swear", and "Do not do drugs". They have a good recall of special places that different religions use for worship, such as a synagogue or church. Teachers' planning is well focused on clear objectives and lessons are delivered at good pace, gaining and retaining pupils' attention well. Year 3 pupils know some stories from the New Testament, such as that of Christmas, and realise that a candle is a Christian symbol.

81. In the books offered for analysis, there was no evidence that pupils' literacy skills are regularly or systematically reinforced or extended through religious education. This is a lost opportunity. Good use is made of visits, for example to places of worship such as a synagogue, to interest pupils and extend their experience of life. In addition, the local vicar makes a good contribution to pupils' learning and their spiritual development by, for example, conducting acts of collective worship regularly and helping to explain Church rituals, such as baptism.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY, MUSIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Work in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education was only sampled, as these subjects were not the focus of the inspection.

82. Only two art lessons were observed in **art and design** during the inspection, but teachers' planning and the portfolio of displays indicate good coverage of most aspects of the curriculum, including clay work and looking at the work of different artists. There is an appropriate emphasis on the development of basic skills and pupils' attainment is broadly average. There are good cross-curricular links and art and design is used appropriately to support learning in other curriculum areas. For example, a recent residential visit inspired good observational drawings of buildings in a Devon village. In Year 2, pupils make three-dimensional mini-beasts in connection with their science topic. A regular arts week enriches the curriculum through visiting artists and whole school projects.
83. **Design and technology** was not a focus of the inspection. In the only lesson seen, teaching was good because it was well planned and pupils were fully involved in working on their construction, a toy version of a piece of playground equipment. Part of another lesson was seen where pupils were working on the same project later in the week. This indicates that pupils have sufficient time to develop their ideas and to discuss and evaluate each other's work.
84. No **music** lessons were observed. Pupils were heard singing in assembly with reasonable pitch and timbre. Their singing was supported well by the use of prompt cards with the focus of each verse written on them and by appropriate piano playing by the music co-ordinator and the use of recorded music.
85. **Physical education** was not a focus of the inspection. In the only lesson seen, teaching was satisfactory and pupils worked hard and sensibly. They practised striking a ball with a bat with increasing control and accuracy and made satisfactory progress. Pupils make regular use of the school pool and clearly most enjoy their swimming lessons enormously.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. The school places a high priority on pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) and this is reflected in the pupils' generally good behaviour and attitudes in lessons and around the school. The fact that the school largely operates as a harmonious community and has a firm and effective policy on inclusion is rooted in the effectiveness of its PSHE provision. Although PSHE permeates all aspects of the curriculum, the school is aware that the existing taught programme is not fully meeting the needs of its pupils. It is currently trialling a specific programme for its more vulnerable pupils and is constantly reflecting on the most appropriate ways of delivering this vitally important aspect of provision. The work of the pastoral care co-ordinator with individual pupils and families is effective in developing pupils' self esteem and positive attitudes.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5

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

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