

INSPECTION REPORT

WICOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Portchester

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115938

Headteacher: Mr M Wildman

Lead inspector: David Westall

Dates of inspection: 14th – 16th June 2004

Inspection number: 258422

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:	425
School address:	Hatherley Crescent Portchester Hampshire
Postcode:	PO16 9DL
Telephone number:	(01329) 237 412
Fax number:	(01329) 825 572
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Karen Moore
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

There are 425 pupils on roll aged between four and 11 years and they are taught in 14 classes. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average, as is the percentage identified as having special educational needs. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. There is one pupil who speaks English as an additional language and is at an early stage of English language acquisition. The 2001 census suggests that the socio-economic situation of parents in the area is broadly average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2414	David Westall	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music
1333	Elizabeth Forster	Lay inspector	
3856	Sandy Wellsted	Team inspector	English Religious education Personal, social and health education (PSHE) Special educational needs
24019	Ken Parry	Team inspector	Mathematics History Physical education
19302	Chris Perrett	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Information and communication technology (ICT) Geography

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school. Pupils are doing well in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 but are only making adequate overall progress in their learning in the older classes, where the teaching is less effective. Pupils' personal development is fostered well but the school does not monitor pupils' academic achievements with enough rigour. On balance, the school's strengths and sound features outweigh its weaknesses and it provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are listed below:

- The quality of teaching and learning are good in the Reception classes (the Foundation Stage) and in Years 1 and 2, including for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' standards are too low in writing and design and technology in Year 6 and in art and design in Year 2.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and the school provides well for their personal development.
- In Years 3 to 6, there is not enough good teaching and pupils' progress is sometimes constrained by teaching which is broadly satisfactory but has areas for improvement.
- Most subject leaders do not have sufficiently rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures.
- Assessment procedures are good in the Reception classes but are not sufficiently established in subjects other than English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6. In addition, teachers' marking is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- A good partnership is established with parents.
- Statutory requirements are not fully met.

Overall, the school has made insufficient progress since the last inspection, in 1998, when it was providing good value for money. Whilst the teaching was good in 1998, it is now satisfactory overall, due to a decline in its quality in Years 3 to 6. Standards have fallen in English and science in Year 6 and deficiencies in the roles of subject leaders, identified in the last inspection, have not been rectified. On the positive side, standards have improved in information and communication technology (ICT) and the good provision for pupils' personal development has been maintained.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, standards are broadly in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6 and represent satisfactory achievement.

The school did not meet its statutory targets in English or mathematics in Year 6 in 2003, and the table below shows that standards in these subjects fell in the last academic year.

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

science	D	D	C	C
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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 whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Inspection findings show that children achieve well in the Reception classes and nearly all reach the expected standards at the end of the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory but is improving due to good teaching. Pupils' standards in writing are above average in Year 2 and represent good achievement. In reading and mathematics, current standards are average in Year 2 and reflect sound achievement. However, pupils are now making good progress in reading and mathematics, so standards are rising. Standards are average in Year 2 in science, ICT, history and design and technology and represent sound achievement. In common with the situation in Years 3 to 6, all pupils in Years 1 and 2 do well in PSHE. Only in art and design is there underachievement in Years 1 and 2, resulting in standards which are below average in Year 2.

In Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall, but has weaknesses. In mathematics, current standards are an improvement on those shown in the test results in 2003 and are broadly in line with national expectations, representing satisfactory achievement. Standards are also broadly average in Year 6 in science, ICT, history and art and design, reflecting satisfactory achievement. However, standards in Year 6 are below average in English, due to pupils' underachievement in writing, and are also too low in design and technology.

The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in Reception and Years 1 and 2 and is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, reflecting the variation in the quality of teaching. Overall, the achievement of the most capable pupils is satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Relationships are positive across the school. Good provision is made for pupils' moral, social and cultural development and sound provision is made for their spiritual development.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. The teaching is mainly satisfactory and means that pupils generally make sound progress in their learning. However, there is considerable variation across the school, with good teaching and learning in the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2 and teaching and learning which is broadly satisfactory but has weaknesses in Years 3 to 6. Indeed, whilst good teaching is commonplace in Reception and Years 1 and 2, it is quite rare in Years 3 to 6. Assessment procedures are good in Reception but are not securely established in subjects other than English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6. Teachers' marking is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum is satisfactory, overall, with particular strengths in the Foundation Stage and for pupils' personal development but there are weaknesses in the promotion of pupils' writing skills in Years 3 to 6. Pupils benefit from a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. Provision for pupils' care and welfare is sound, and the school's partnership with parents is good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The work of the headteacher is generally satisfactory but he has not ensured that subject leaders have received adequate support and guidance to develop their roles. Consequently, most do not

monitor provision with enough rigour and are in weak positions to identify and target areas for improvement with sufficient accuracy. Governance is satisfactory, although statutory requirements are not met due to omissions in the governors' annual report to parents, in the prospectus and in pupils' written reports.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have positive views of the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school needs to do are listed below:

- Raise standards in writing and design and technology in Year 6 and in art and design in Year 2.
- Rectify common weaknesses that sometimes occur in the teaching in Years 3 to 6 to increase the amount of good teaching in the school and to improve pupils' progress.
- Improve the monitoring and evaluation roles of subject leaders.
- Improve assessment procedures in most subjects, and teachers' marking in Years 3 to 6.
- Ensure that statutory requirements are fully met.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. It is good in Reception and results in nearly all children meeting the expected standards at the end of the Reception period. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement is mainly satisfactory but is sometimes good. As a result, standards in Year 2 are generally in line with national expectations but are above average in writing. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is broadly satisfactory but has weaknesses. Overall, standards in Year 6 are generally in line with national expectations but are below average in writing.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils achieve well in the Reception classes.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement in writing is good, and their standards are above average in this key skill.
- Pupils underachieve in writing in Years 3 to 6 and standards are consequently below national expectations in Year 6.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in Reception and in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils achieve well in their personal, social and health education.
- Standards are below national expectations in art and design in Year 2 and in design and technology in Year 6, reflecting pupils' underachievement.
- The most capable pupils sometimes mark time in mathematics and science when their work is too easy in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

Standards on entry to the school

1. On entry to the Reception classes, there is a wide variation in children's standards but, overall, they are broadly average.

The school's results in national tests

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.5 (15.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.3 (14.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (16.0)	16.3 (16.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The table above shows that the results of the national tests in Year 2 in 2003 were well below the national average in reading, above the national average in writing and broadly in line with the national average in mathematics. When these results are compared with the average results of schools with similar percentages of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, they are well below average, below average and well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, respectively. The overall trend in the school's results in Year 2, over the last five years, is in line with the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.1 (27.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.4 (27.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.8 (28.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. The table above shows that the results of the national tests in Year 6 in 2003 were below the national average in English and mathematics and were broadly in line with the national average in science. When these results are compared with those from schools where pupils achieved similarly when in Year 2, they are also below average in English and mathematics and average in science. The school's results in English and mathematics in 2003 were lower than those achieved in 2002, and the school attributes this reduction to the higher percentage of pupils with learning difficulties in the Year 6 classes in the last academic year. The school did not reach its statutory targets in either English or mathematics or in relation to the percentages of pupils reaching the expected standard in 2003. The overall trend in the school's results in Year 6 is in line with the national trend.

Standards at the time of the last inspection

4. When the school was last inspected, pupils' standards were above national expectations in reading in Year 2, in English in Year 6 and in science in Years 2 and 6. Standards in Years 2 and 6 were above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education but were below national expectations in ICT. In all other subjects, including mathematics, standards were average in Years 2 and 6.

Inspection findings

The Foundation Stage (The Reception classes)

5. **Overall, children's achievement is good** in the Reception classes. As a result, the vast majority reach the expected standards in all areas of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage. The exception is in their personal, social and emotional development where children will exceed the expected goals.

Years 1 and 2

6. **Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory** in these year groups and is well placed to improve due to good teaching. Pupils achieve well in writing and their standards are consequently above national expectations at the end of Year 2. Current standards in writing broadly reflect the results of the national tests in 2003 in Year 2. In reading, current standards are an improvement on those shown in the test results in 2003 and are in line with national expectations, reflecting satisfactory achievement. In mathematics, pupils' achievement is also satisfactory. Current standards in the subject reflect the test results in 2003 and are broadly average in Year 2. Good teaching in reading and mathematics is

now enabling pupils to make good progress and standards are likely to rise, over time. In science, standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and reflect satisfactory achievement. They match the statutory teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2003. In ICT, standards have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with national expectations. Pupils also achieve satisfactorily in history and design and technology, and their standards are average in both subjects in Year 2. All pupils do well in their personal, social and health education. Only in art and design is there underachievement, resulting in standards which are below national expectations in Year 2. Insufficient evidence was available to judge pupils' standards and achievements in other subjects.

Years 3 to 6

7. **Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory** in these year groups, as a result of teaching which is broadly satisfactory but has weaknesses. In mathematics, current standards are an improvement on those shown in the national test results in 2003 and are broadly in line with national expectations, representing satisfactory achievement. Pupils' achievement is also satisfactory in science, where current standards match those shown in the test results in 2003 and are in line with national expectations. Standards are also in line with national expectations in Year 6 in ICT, history and art and design, representing sound achievement. In common with the situation in Year 2, current standards in ICT are an improvement on those found when the school was last inspected, and pupils achieve well in their personal, social and health education. However, current standards in English and in design and technology are lower than those found at the last inspection, are below expectations and represent underachievement. In English, standards are similar to those shown in the national test results in 2003, largely because pupils continue to underachieve in writing.

The achievement of different groups

8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in Reception and in Years 1 and 2. This results from effective teaching which caters well for their needs and helps them to make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, In Years 3 to 6, the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The one pupil in the early stages of learning English as an additional language is making good progress in Year 1. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve at least as well as their peers. The achievement of the most capable pupils is satisfactory, overall, although those in Years 3 to 6 sometimes mark time in lessons in mathematics and science when their work is too easy. No significant differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls were evident during the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, values and other personal qualities are good. Good provision is made for pupils' moral, social and cultural development, and provision for their spiritual development is sound. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, and relationships are positive.

- Good provision is made for pupils' moral, social and cultural development.
- Levels of attendance and punctuality are good.

Commentary

Attitudes and behaviour

9. Pupils of all ages say they enjoy school and they are particularly enthusiastic about the rich variety of extra-curricular activities which are provided. They speak highly of the opportunities they have through the school council to raise their own ideas about how their community could be improved, and they are confident that realistic suggestions will be implemented. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are good. Pupils feel that the school is a fair community and they speak warmly about the adults who work with them. They have positive attitudes towards learning, and this was clearly demonstrated in the lessons observed during the inspection.
10. Behaviour around the school is good; playtimes and lunchtimes are social and relaxed events and pupils mix well together. Their behaviour in lessons is also good, and pupils co-operate well together on shared tasks. The regular practice of asking pupils to discuss their ideas together works effectively, not only to ensure participation by all but also to encourage them to be receptive to the views of others. It also helps to develop pupils' self-confidence, which is evident in the enjoyment they demonstrate in drama or role-playing tasks. Incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with effectively by the school. There was one fixed-period exclusion in the last academic year.
11. Pupils are trustworthy and carry out routine classroom jobs and responsibilities willingly. They enjoy the chance to contribute to running play activities at lunchtimes and the oldest pupils speak with enthusiasm about their role as 'buddies' to help the youngest children settle into school life. The whole-school activities afternoon observed during the inspection also showed how pupils of different ages mix and support each other well.

Attendance

12. The attendance rate is above the national median, and pupils' punctuality is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
408	1	0
1	0	0
4	0	0
1	0	0

Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	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.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

13. The school makes good provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development and sound provision for their spiritual development.

14. The ethos of the school promotes and reflects respect and co-operation. Pupils' social and moral development, in particular, is underpinned by these, which are the core values of the 'Golden Rules' that govern their daily behaviour and inform their thinking from the day they first join the school. Through assembly themes and through personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. They are taught to appreciate their rights and responsibilities as members of the school and of the wider community, and are helped to understand that the choices they will face in life have consequences. Through paired discussions in lessons, through clubs and through a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, pupils are encouraged to work together and to play together. Regular residential visits to places of interest associated with their studies help pupils to develop the skills and disciplines of living with others away from home, including the need to show initiative and to work as a member of a team. The school's system of rewards and sanctions ensures that pupils gain confidence, and that they recognise the achievements of others. Pupils of all ages are given routine classroom duties to develop their independence and their sense of responsibility. Even in Year 2, pupils are made aware of ways in which they can help younger children, for example by writing simple information books for pupils in Year 1. In Year 6, pupils assume a variety of roles and responsibilities across the school: as librarians, as 'lunchtime leaders', as 'buddies' who help younger pupils, and as office monitors. Pupils of all ages are taught the value of democratic processes and social responsibility through their involvement in the school council.

15. Provision for pupils to learn about their own cultural heritage and to participate in a wide variety of cultural activities is good. There is an extensive range of cultural, sporting and 'hobby' clubs at lunchtime and after school, while 'smart-time' activities two or three times a term often provide opportunities for pupils to follow up particular interests or develop new skills during the school day. Sporting activities and drama, both in lessons and through after-school activities such as team games and drama productions, further promote pupils' cultural development. Subjects such as English, history, art and design and religious education make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' understanding of their own cultural heritage and of the wider world, both past and present. However, there remains scope to develop pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural dimension of British society.

16. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Through work in PSHE, they come to recognise themselves through the choices they make, whilst religious education lessons help them to appreciate the significance of religious faith in people's lives.

Occasionally, pupils respond with awe and wonder to unplanned incidents or phenomena that catch them unawares – the ‘magic’ in the workings of a computer or the height of a visitor, perhaps. Assemblies promote suitable themes of a spiritual, moral or social nature. Overall, however, the climate for learning is more pragmatic than spiritual, and the school should give thought to ways in which this particular aspect of pupils’ development might be fostered more effectively.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. The teaching is mainly satisfactory and means that pupils generally make sound progress in their learning. However, there is considerable variation across the school, with good teaching and learning in the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2 and teaching and learning which is broadly satisfactory but has weaknesses in Years 3 to 6. Indeed, whilst good teaching is commonplace in Reception and Years 1 and 2, it is quite rare in Years 3 to 6. Assessment procedures are good in Reception but are not securely established in subjects other than English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6. Teachers’ marking is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum is satisfactory, overall, with particular strengths in the Foundation Stage and for pupils’ personal development but there are weaknesses in the promotion of pupils’ writing skills in Years 3 to 6. Pupils benefit from a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. Provision for the care and welfare of pupils is sound, and the school’s partnership with parents is good.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and means that pupils make mainly sound progress in their learning. Procedures for assessing pupils’ progress are mainly unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage (the Reception classes) and in Years 1 and 2.
- In Years 3 to 6, there is not enough good teaching, and pupils’ progress is sometimes constrained by teaching which is broadly satisfactory but has weaknesses.
- Pupils are making unsatisfactory progress in their learning in writing and in design and technology in Years 3 to 6, and in art and design in Years 1 and 2.
- Assessment procedures are good in the Foundation Stage.
- In Years 1 to 6, assessment procedures are not securely established in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- The quality of teachers’ marking is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.

COMMENTARY

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 50 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	2 (4%)	18 (36%)	29 (58%)	1 (2%)	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.

17. The table shows that the teaching observed during the inspection was mainly satisfactory and has declined since the last inspection when it was good, overall. There is

considerable variation in the teaching across the school, with good teaching in Reception and in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory teaching, which includes important areas for improvement, in Years 3 to 6. Eight out of every ten lessons seen were good, and very occasionally very good, in Reception and Years 1 and 2. However, in Years 3 to 6, only one lesson in every ten was good, there was no very good teaching and one unsatisfactory lesson was observed.

18. In the Reception classes, the teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children and provide ample opportunities for them to take part in practical and purposeful activities. The teachers and the teaching assistants work together effectively and provide positive role models which benefit children's attitudes and achievements. Teachers' planning is good and the teaching is stimulating and captures children's interest. Children are encouraged to think for themselves and good use is made of open-ended questions such as 'Why do you think that?' or 'What do you think will happen if...?' Children settle in quickly when they start at the school and make good progress in their learning, as a result of the effective teaching in Reception classes.
19. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching is good in English and means pupils are now making good progress in reading and writing. The teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan their lessons effectively so that activities are interesting and build systematically on pupils' earlier learning. In mathematics, the teaching is also good in Years 1 and 2 and means pupils are progressing well. The teachers explain tasks very clearly, provide pupils with well-focused oral feedback during lessons and provide ample opportunities for them to discuss their work and to explain their mathematical ideas. No science lessons were seen in Year 1. However, the science teaching in Year 2 is sound, with good features which include the introduction and reinforcement of scientific vocabulary.
20. In Years 3 to 6, the English lessons seen were broadly satisfactory. However, evidence from pupils' completed work shows that the teaching is not enabling pupils to do as well as they should in writing. In particular, there are weaknesses in teachers' knowledge about the promotion of writing skills, in their expectations of pupils' achievements and in the quality of the feedback given to help pupils to improve. In mathematics and science, the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is broadly satisfactory and is enabling pupils to make mainly sound progress in their learning. However, weaknesses in teachers' questioning skills are sometimes evident, the most capable pupils are sometimes given work which is too easy and the pace of some lessons is slowed when teachers talk for too long.
21. In information and communication technology, the teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6, and reflects the increased confidence and competence of teachers since the last inspection. Insufficient evidence was collected to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 6 in other subjects. However, evidence from discussions with pupils and from a careful examination of their completed work shows that the teaching is enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress in their learning in Years 1 to 6 in geography and history. In art and design, pupils' work provides secure evidence that the teaching is not enabling pupils to do as well as they should in Year 2 but is ensuring that pupils make adequate progress in Years 3 to 6. In design and technology, the situation is reversed and pupils' work shows the teaching is not sufficiently effective in Years 3 to 6 but has secured pupils' sound overall progress in the earlier years. Teachers would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge and to raise their expectations of pupils' potential achievement in art and design in Years 1 and 2 and in design and technology in Years 3 to 6.

22. Across the school, teaching is characterised by good relationships between teachers and pupils. Pupils like and respect their teachers and it is obvious that these feelings are reciprocated. All teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond well by demonstrating positive attitudes and concentrating on their tasks. Overall, sound use is made of homework to reinforce and extend what is learned in school, and there are some examples of pupils' homework projects which show their strong motivation to achieve well. In the most effective lessons, mainly evident in Reception and Years 1 and 2, good use is made of time and teachers know just when to intervene with well-judged questions or comments to ensure that pupils are both supported and challenged. In the only unsatisfactory lesson seen, the activities undertaken in physical education were inappropriate and Year 6 pupils made inadequate progress as a result.
23. In Years 3 to 6, there is too little good teaching and this means pupils' progress is no better than adequate, overall. The areas for improvement, evident both from weaknesses in some of the satisfactory lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 and from an examination of the impact of teaching on pupils' standards, are:
- the teaching of writing skills;
 - the use of effective questions to probe pupils' understanding during lessons and of well focused feedback from marking;
 - teachers' expectations of pupils' potential achievement, particularly in writing and design and technology but also sometimes in relation to the most capable pupils in mathematics and science; and
 - the pace of learning in some lessons which slows because there is too much teacher talk and too little pupil activity.
24. Pupils with special educational needs are taught effectively in mainstream lessons in Reception and Years 1 and 2, where teachers take good account of their specific needs and ensure that tasks and resources are both well matched to their capabilities and appropriately challenging. Teachers and learning support assistants work together well to ensure that all pupils are able to play a full part in lessons and that they receive the focused support they need to succeed. In Years 3 to 6, provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Learning support assistants play a very positive role in helping these pupils succeed in the tasks they are given. However, teachers do not always take sufficient account of pupils' differing needs or of their specific targets in their planning and, as a result, tasks and resources are not always appropriate. The teaching of the most capable pupils is satisfactory although they are sometimes given tasks which are too easy in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6.

Assessing pupils' progress

25. Overall, assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. Whole-school systems for assessment are sound in English and mathematics and provide a clear picture of pupils' progress as they move through the school. Satisfactory procedures have been formulated for science and information and communication technology but have not yet been fully or consistently implemented. There are also no common procedures for assessing pupils' standards and checking on their progress in other subjects. However, assessment is thorough and effective in the Foundation Stage and for pupils with special educational needs.

26. Individual target setting is in place in English and most pupils know and understand their targets for future learning. In other subjects, however, they have very limited knowledge of the next steps in their learning. During most lessons, teachers check on pupils' understanding as they go along, especially in Years 1 and 2 where their questioning skills are particularly effective. However, in both their marking of pupils' work and when giving oral feedback, teachers in Years 3 to 6 often miss opportunities to provide specific guidance about what pupils need to do in order to improve. Work is too often unmarked in Years 3 to 6, and the overall quality of teachers' marking is unsatisfactory in these year groups.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Pupils' learning is enhanced by a very good programme of additional activities. Staffing and the accommodation are satisfactory and learning resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good and well-established programme of extra-curricular activities, visits and other events to enrich pupils' learning.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and enables children to make a good start at the school.
- The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils' writing skills are not promoted strongly enough in work across the curriculum.
- Current arrangements do not ensure the systematic development of key skills in geography, history and design and technology.

Commentary

27. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is well planned, provides a good balance of teacher- directed and child-initiated activities, and prepares children well for the National Curriculum. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is sufficiently broad and meets statutory requirements. It is firmly based on the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The balance between the subjects is mainly satisfactory but the school's curriculum plan shows that there are often quite lengthy periods, sometimes as much as two terms, when subjects such as geography, history and design and technology are not taught. This does not promote the progressive development of essential skills in these subjects. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good, and is a strength of the school.
28. There is a suitable emphasis on literacy and numeracy and the national strategies are used as the basis for planning in English and mathematics. In mathematics, this ensures that pupils' knowledge and understanding builds satisfactorily as they move through the school. Arrangements for English in Years 1 and 2 are good and pupils achieve well. In Years 3 to 6, although pupils make satisfactory gains in reading and speaking and listening, the development of writing skills is a weakness. In addition, pupils' writing skills are not adequately promoted in their work in other subjects across the curriculum.

29. Other subjects are often planned as part of an integrated approach in which they are related to a half-termly theme. Many of the links between subjects that have been created in this way make a positive contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. For example, the use of drama and role-play in history helps to bring the subject to life. However, on other occasions, these links are rather tenuous and lose their impact as a result. When undertaking its planned review of the curriculum, the school should ensure that the essential elements of each subject are retained and promoted and do not get lost in the integrated approach.
30. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and these pupils have the same access to the curriculum as their peers. Where relevant, planning for teaching and learning is suitably informed by advice from external agencies. Sometimes, pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from mainstream lessons for short periods of time to follow additional programmes of work or receive tuition tailored to their specific needs. Tuition of this kind may involve small groups of individual pupils and is usually led by well-trained learning support assistants or by the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO), all of whom have specialist skills. Most additional support focuses on aspects of work involving speech, language and literacy although effective provision for emotional literacy is also promoted. A weekly after-school club run by the SENCO for pupils with co-ordination and organisational difficulties has proved to be both popular and effective.
31. The school provides a very good range of additional activities. They are popular and well attended by boys and girls of all ages. There are extra-curricular activities involving staff and visiting specialists in music and sport. There is a very good programme of educational visits to local and more distant places of interest for all pupils and a residential experience for pupils in Years 3 to 6. 'Smart-time' provides regular opportunities for pupils to follow their own interests with others from across the age range. The activities offered make good use of the particular skills and expertise of the staff and this results in a line-up that includes French and German taster sessions, cycle-training, drama, cooking, tag rugby and computing, as well as sessions where pupils can explore their own and others' feelings and values. Although the quality of the input is variable, overall it is good. The curriculum is considerably enriched through these activities which contribute strongly to pupils' personal development as well as their learning.
32. The school has an adequate number of staff and between them they have sufficient expertise and experience to cover the National Curriculum and meet the needs of pupils. However, some teachers would benefit from increasing their knowledge about art and design in Years 1 and 2, and about design and technology, and the development of pupils' writing skills in Years 3 to 6. Classroom assistants are well trained. They use their specialisms well, working in close partnership with teachers and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
33. The school accommodation is satisfactory, overall, with many of the inadequacies from the last inspection remaining, including the two outdated temporary buildings which house four classes. However, a major building programme is well under way and will rectify these deficiencies by September 2004. The outside environment has been developed well as a resource for learning. The outdoor teaching area, the well-designed environmental area and the new amphitheatre are all beneficial developments. The grounds are well maintained and there is a strong commitment to develop the site further.

34. Learning resources are of good quality. They are well organised and easily accessible. There have been significant improvements in information and communication technology since the last inspection. The school makes good use of external sources through loans, visits and visitors to supplement its own resources and expertise within the school.

Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance and support for pupils are sound, overall. Pupils benefit from good pastoral care and support. However, some aspects of health and safety require improvement. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory. Pupils have good opportunities to express their views about the school and to put forward their own ideas.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides good pastoral care, based on positive relationships between adults and pupils.
- Accident recording and some aspects of health and safety are unsatisfactory.
- Induction arrangements are good.
- Pupils' views are listened to and valued.

COMMENTARY

35. Wicor is rightly proud of its emphasis on providing a caring and supportive community where all are valued and respected. Adults get to know the pupils well, there is good communication between staff about pupils' pastoral needs and the trusting partnership built up with parents ensures that information or concerns are shared. This leads to the provision of sensitive pastoral support for pupils, which enables them to develop positive attitudes to school. Where necessary, carefully targeted additional help is given, either in groups or individually, to enable those pupils who have to cope with particular difficulties or need extra guidance to participate productively in all aspects of school life. The assessment of pupils' academic progress is less effective, as is noted earlier in this report. Satisfactory child protection arrangements are in place but there is scope to increase the frequency of refresher training for staff.
36. The school has well thought-out plans to ensure that children new to the school have opportunities to get to know the staff and the environment before they start. Teachers make visits to the main feeder pre-schools and to homes to meet the children, who also have the chance to come to the school several times in the summer term prior to starting in September. Parents are given comprehensive and helpful documentation about the school and the routines expected, and have opportunities to raise questions and to meet the headteacher and staff at an induction meeting. They are also encouraged to join the local library and borrow ten specially designated books to share with their children over the summer. This scheme not only sets good expectations about parents' role in helping their children with reading but also gives the children an added sense of familiarity and confidence when they see these books in their classroom. Pupils at the top of the school

are 'buddies' to the new entrants and are keen to help them settle in, for example, by finding them playmates at lunchtimes.

37. The school plans regular opportunities for representatives to seek the views of their classmates about ideas they would like raised at the school council and to feed back on their progress. The school takes care to try to meet pupils' wishes; for example, the refurbishment of the toilets was given greater priority when raised as an important issue for many pupils. Pupils are also asked to review their own progress and to fill in questionnaires from time to time about their attitudes to school. These measures give pupils a worthwhile sense of involvement in their own education.
38. The school has made good arrangements to ensure that the ongoing building works are safely separated from pupil access. The school accepts that there are several aspects of the outdated temporary buildings that would need attention if they were to remain in the long term but which now only warrant temporary measures. More seriously, however, the school lacks adequate record keeping of accidents to pupils, and medicines are not safely secured so that pupils cannot gain access to them.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is **good**, and there are **sound** links with other schools and the community.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Parents are provided with good information about the curriculum and about provision for children with special educational needs.
- The headteacher and staff are welcoming and approachable.
- Parents are consulted and involved in school life.
- The prospectus and the annual governors' report do not include national comparative data on the statutory test results, and pupils' annual reports do not cover all subjects. As a result, statutory requirements are not met.

Commentary

39. Parents are provided with good information and opportunities to learn about the curriculum. As well as having information at the start of each year about what is to be taught, they receive an indication of the related trips, visits and visitors planned to enrich pupils' learning. Parents particularly appreciate having this information as it enables them to know what financial commitment might be involved and allows them to plan home activities to tie in with topics. Workshops are organised every year to give parents a better insight into what and how their children are learning. Information for new parents is pertinent and reassuring. It also makes clear the school's expectations of parents in relation to their support for their children's learning. The school takes care to ensure that if parents are not living together, both are kept informed about activities and their children's progress.

40. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed when their child's needs are first identified and at each stage of the Code of Practice. A very informative and comprehensive handbook about special needs provision has been prepared for parents. In addition, the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) also mounts exhibitions with information and resources of interest to parents during open days. Parents are invited to termly meetings with the SENCO to review their children's progress, and are encouraged to come into school at other times to talk to the class teacher or SENCO should they have any concerns. Nearly all parents value the school's work on behalf of their children and reinforce the efforts made by staff by also helping their children at home. Links with external agencies and specialists are good and are used appropriately to serve the pupils' best interests. A good induction programme is in place to ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive the support they need to move smoothly into their respective secondary schools. Special needs co-ordinators and learning support assistants from both main secondary schools to which pupils transfer visit the primary school to consult staff and to meet the pupils.
41. Annual reports on pupils are satisfactory in most respects but do not report individually on all subjects, so do not meet statutory requirements. In addition, the present prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents do not include national comparative data about statutory test results and, as found in the previous inspection, do not meet statutory requirements.
42. The school is successful in welcoming parents and encouraging them to become involved in school life. Parents value the approachability of staff and the opportunities to speak informally to class teachers. The presence of the headteacher on the playground before and after school and his ready availability for parents with pressing problems further contributes to the open and caring nature of the school. Parents are confident that concerns or complaints will be listened to and, where possible, issues will be resolved. Some parents provide valuable regular help in lessons for younger pupils and are happy to support particular projects or accompany visits for older pupils. The school seeks parents' views about issues such as the effectiveness of the induction programme or the revision of the behaviour policy. Together, these activities demonstrate to parents their role in supporting their children's learning and their importance in the school community. The school has sound links with other schools in the area, and staff attend shared in-service training sessions. Links with the community are also sound.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory but there is considerable scope for improvement. The headteacher's leadership and management skills are sound. However, the leadership and management contribution made by most subject leaders is unsatisfactory due to weaknesses in their monitoring and evaluation procedures.

School governance is sound.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher regularly monitor the quality of teaching.
- Monitoring and evaluation of pupils' standards and achievements are insufficiently rigorous in most subjects.
- Leadership and management are good in the Foundation Stage, for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) and for pupils with special educational needs.
- Procedures for the induction of staff are good.

- Statutory requirements are not fully met.

Commentary

Leadership

43. Overall, the leadership of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher is conscientious and has good interpersonal skills. He promotes a positive atmosphere in the school and his caring approach helps to provide the lead for the good provision made for pupils' personal development. The headteacher is firmly committed to running an equitable and inclusive school in which every individual matters. He has led key debates about the way that children learn and helps teachers to reflect on their practice and to try new ideas. The positive effects of this work are particularly evident in the good quality of teaching in the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2. The headteacher has worked closely with the staff and governors to create an improvement plan which soundly reflects the school's ambitions and goals. Overall, the plan has a beneficial effect on school improvement but is not having sufficient impact on pupils' standards in writing. On balance, the leadership of the headteacher is sound, although he has not ensured that all subject leaders have received adequate advice and support in order to develop their roles.
44. The deputy headteacher makes a sound contribution to the strategic management of the school, and the leadership of the Foundation Stage and of PSHE are both good. However, whilst leadership is sound in mathematics, the leadership of most subjects is not sufficiently focused, largely because subject leaders are not well enough informed about the strengths and weaknesses in provision. The last inspection also found that the roles of subject leaders needed development.
45. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), the special needs governor and the headteacher together provide effective leadership and management of special needs provision. The SENCO's management of day-to-day operations in special needs work is good, and she gives willingly of her own time to secure appropriate provision for pupils. Support staff are well deployed and well trained, and make a strong contribution to pupils' progress and attainment.

Management

46. Overall, the management of the school is satisfactory but has considerable scope for improvement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher analyse the results of statutory and non-statutory testing carefully and make sound use of this information to track pupils' progress in English and mathematics as they move through the school. They regularly watch lessons so that each teacher is formally observed each term. Well-focused oral and written feedback is provided which benefits teachers' professional development. However, in recent terms, these observations have focused on the implementation of the school's teaching and learning policy and have not given sufficient attention to the effects of teaching on pupils' standards. The headteacher has worked alongside the subject manager for English to study examples of pupils' writing but, although useful feedback about areas for improvement has been given to teachers, this has not been followed up with enough rigour to discover if it is affecting their practice. In this respect, there is sometimes a lack of tenacity in the headteacher's work.

47. Overall, the monitoring and evaluation roles of subject leaders are underdeveloped. The joint subject leaders for mathematics have observed lessons but other subject leaders have not monitored teaching in their subjects. In addition, only in English have examples of pupils' work been analysed with enough rigour. As a consequence, most subject leaders are not sufficiently informed about the quality of provision in their subjects and are in weak positions to target areas for improvement. This means that some important deficiencies are not picked up – for example: the inadequacy of marking in some classes; pupils' poorly presented work in some subjects; pupils' underachievement in design and technology in Years 3 to 6 and the fact that Year 5 pupils have yet to be taught the subject in the current academic year; and pupils' unsatisfactory standards in art and design in Year 2. Subject leaders are keen to develop their roles but require clear guidance and support from the senior management in the school in order to be effective.
48. The school's policy for performance management is being soundly implemented and staff regularly attend in-service training courses. Procedures for inducting new staff are good, including for newly-qualified teachers. However, as stated earlier, the senior management is not fostering the roles of subject leaders well enough.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,016,808	Balance from previous year	30,622
Total expenditure	1,005,011	Balance carried forward to the next	42,419
Expenditure per pupil	2,365		

49. Overall, financial planning is satisfactory. The school improvement plan is properly costed, the annual budget is debated carefully at governors' meetings and the principles of best value are soundly applied. Overall, the school makes sound use of its resources and provides satisfactory value for money.

Aids and barriers to raising achievement

50. The most significant aids to raising achievement are the good quality of teaching in Reception and in Years 1 and 2, and pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Progress is being inhibited by too much teaching which is satisfactory, rather than better, in Years 3 to 6 and by particular weaknesses in the promotion of pupils' writing skills in these year groups.

Governance

51. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The governors are highly committed and are very supportive of the school. They have attended training sessions alongside staff to develop their understanding about how children learn, and have a sound awareness of the results of statutory and non-statutory testing. The governor with particular responsibility for special educational needs is well informed and the chair of governors is a very frequent visitor who ensures she keeps her finger on the pulse of the school. However, there are no governors with specific responsibility for literacy and numeracy, and governors do not observe lessons in these key subjects in order to develop their understanding of how the national strategies are being implemented. This restricts governors' ability to ask sufficiently probing questions about the school's provision. The governors have a good understanding of the priorities in the school improvement plan

and regularly discuss the progress towards the targets which have been set. They debate the budget carefully and ensure that funds are allocated prudently. Overall, the governors make a sound contribution to the leadership and management of the school. However, there are occasions when the governing body is insufficiently rigorous. For example, it has not kept an adequate check on the development of the roles of subject leaders, which were underdeveloped when the school was last inspected and are still a weakness. In addition, the prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents have key omissions and pupils' annual written reports do not meet statutory requirements.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

52. The good provision reported in the last report has been maintained. All children achieve well because the teaching is good and the curriculum is well planned. Children benefit from a wide range of interesting and relevant activities that include an appropriate balance between direct teaching and opportunities for purposeful play.
53. Good procedures for induction ensure that children settle quickly into the school. Children's standards on entry are wide-ranging but, overall, they are broadly average. Adults monitor children's progress well to enable them to plan work at the correct level for each child, including for those with learning difficulties. The accommodation inside is spacious, although it is functional rather than inspirational, as there are few displays of children's work to inspire others. The outside provision is satisfactory, and is used well to extend learning in the classroom. There are sensible plans to develop the outside area further when the current building work is finished. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good, and adults work well as a cohesive team, ensuring that children are safe and happy and achieve well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of consistently good teaching.
- Well-established routines and good models of behaviour promote an orderly community.
- Very supportive relationships encourage children to be confident and happy.

Commentary

54. Great importance is placed on this area of learning as soon as the children enter school. All staff have high expectations, and children quickly learn the correct way to behave. The cohesive teamwork of the adults in both classes provides the children with good role models through their positive attitudes. They are consistent in their expectations, clearly value the children, and give them every encouragement to succeed. Children are friendly and take a pride in their work. They learn to consider others and value their opinions. All children know the routines well, settle to tasks with a minimum of fuss and clear up after activities. Teaching is good and activities are well planned to encourage children to work independently and co-operatively. Children learn to share and take turns amicably, and willingly work and play in small groups, supporting each other well. For example, they take turns in handling the mouse when sharing a computer, check the decisions made and correct them when necessary. The very good relationships with the adults increase the children's confidence, raise their self-esteem and ensure that they really enjoy school. All children achieve well in this area of their learning, and it is likely that most children will exceed the expected goals the end of their Reception period.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well, as all adults take every opportunity to develop the children's language skills.
- A good emphasis on the learning of sounds gives children a secure grounding for their reading and writing.
- Children are given many opportunities to talk and discuss with their peers.

Commentary

55. As a result of good teaching, children achieve well and the vast majority are on course to meet the expected goals in this area of learning. During all activities, staff encourage the development of children's speaking and listening skills by asking them probing questions and through their constant insistence that children listen to the contributions of others. Children are given many opportunities to discuss with their peers, particularly when choosing their own activities. During one good lesson, children formulated pertinent questions to ask different members of staff, linked with their topic on 'People who help us'. The quality of the questions indicated that children had really thought about what they wanted to find out, and that they were very aware of how to pose a question. Very good relationships mean that children have the confidence to talk, and all adults are genuinely interested in what the children have to say. The school places great emphasis on learning to read. As soon as children enter school, they are encouraged to take books home to share with parents and carers. There is a good partnership with parents, and many help in the classroom by regularly listening to children read. Children enjoy books and listen attentively when a story is read to them. They handle books with care and know the conventions of reading from left to right. A teaching assistant has assembled some stimulating 'story sacks', and these excellent resources are well used to excite children's interest, stimulate drama and to help them sequence events in a story. For example, children used the contents of a sack about 'The Rainbow Fish' to become thoroughly involved in the story. The teaching and learning of writing are good. From an early age, children are encouraged to make marks on paper. For example they 'write' letters to their parents and they are carefully taught how to form their letters correctly. Good emphasis on the recognition of sounds helps children to develop early reading and writing skills.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because the teaching is good and teachers plan a wide range of stimulating mathematical activities to support learning.

Commentary

56. Teaching and learning are good. A range of practical activities helps children to grasp new ideas. These promote children's interest well so that they concentrate hard. For example, during the inspection, children were given a number of identical boxes to order, from the heaviest to the lightest. This was a challenging activity and the children soon realised that they had to compare all the boxes before coming to a conclusion. Learning in this lesson was good as children's curiosity was aroused. Questioning is used well to ensure that all children understand, and to extend their learning. Most children can count to 20 with confidence, and the most able do simple calculations using the appropriate symbols. The vast majority of children are working at the levels expected for their age, with a few higher-attaining pupils working at the early stages of the National Curriculum. Support staff are used well to help individuals and small groups to learn effectively.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Overall provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular lessons in the information and communication technology (ICT) suite ensure that children develop their skills well.

Commentary

57. Children are aware that they experience the world through their senses, and have looked closely at a variety of animals during a visit to a local farm. During the inspection, children were learning about 'People who help', and were able to demonstrate a good understanding of what happens at the health centre through their role-play activities. Children have regular lessons in the ICT suite where they practise their skills. As a result of these regular sessions, pupils achieve well and the majority have above average skills in ICT. They are able to log on and, with accurate use of the mouse, guide 'The Hungry Caterpillar' around the screen. Children are becoming confident users of computers and often choose to use them in their free-choice time. Children are encouraged to use a digital camera when touring the school to take photographs of 'People who help'. Children learn about Christianity and the major festivals and are making good progress in developing their scientific and geographical awareness of the world. The teaching is good and the vast majority of children will reach the expected standards in this area of learning by the end of their Reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good balance between physical education lessons and many other opportunities for children to develop their physical skills.
- The outside area is limited as there are no opportunities for children to climb.

Commentary

58. Teaching and learning are good, and a wide range of interesting activities is planned to challenge the children. Children have physical education lessons in the hall, where they learn to move with increasing control and become aware of the space around them. There are good opportunities in lessons to enhance children's personal development alongside their physical skills, as they learn to take turns, obey commands promptly, and become aware of the needs of others. The outside area is used well where a range of activities and equipment is available to develop children's physical development, although there are no opportunities for children to climb. There are also many opportunities for children to manipulate a range of tools, including brushes, pencils and glue sticks, which they do with increasing dexterity. By the end of the year, the vast majority of children will reach the expected goals in this area of learning.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for childrens' creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's creative development is fostered well through role-play.

Commentary

59. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make sound progress when experimenting with paint, and learn to mix colours. Unfortunately, little of the children's work is displayed to celebrate their efforts. No singing or music were observed in lessons in the Reception class, but Reception children join in with Years 1 and 2 for weekly singing. Children's creative development is fostered well through role-play, for example, when in the 'Health Centre' or 'Estate Agents'. They use their imagination well when using the 'story sacks' to retell a story. Nearly all children are on course to achieve the expected learning goals in this aspect of their work by the end of the Foundation Stage.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

The quality of provision in English is **unsatisfactory, overall**. Whilst it is good in Years 1 and 2, it is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and pupils' writing skills are above national expectations in Year 2.
- Pupils' writing skills are below national expectations in Year 6 and represent underachievement.
- Pupils' writing skills are not adequately promoted through work across the curriculum in Years 3 to 6.
- Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

60. Standards in Year 2 are above average in writing and are broadly average in reading. Pupils make good progress in writing as a result of effective teaching in Years 1 and 2 and, overall, their achievement in this key skill is good. Inspection findings broadly reflect the school's results in the national tests of writing for pupils aged seven in 2003, which were above the national average. Pupils' current standards in reading in Year 2 represent satisfactory achievement and are a marked improvement on the school's reading results in the national tests in 2003, which were well below the national average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now making good progress in reading and standards are likely to rise further, over time. When the school was last inspected, standards in Year 2 were above average in reading and average in writing.
61. In Year 6, standards are average in reading but are below average in writing. Inspection findings broadly reflect the school's overall results in the national tests in English in 2003, which were below the national average and also below the results of schools where pupils achieved similarly when in Year 2. When the school was last inspected, overall standards were above average in Year 6 in English. By the age of 11, most pupils are able to read and understand fiction and non-fiction texts appropriate for their age, though few aspire to read challenging material. Evidence from lessons and from discussions with pupils about their reading shows that few have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of different kinds of fiction and non-fiction texts, and few use, with any confidence, the technical terms necessary for discussing literary genres and techniques. That said, there are some fine examples of individual project work, undertaken as homework by pupils in Year 6, which are of an appropriately high standard and reflect pupils' individual capabilities. Some of the projects seen have clearly required pupils to read extensively to find things out, and they have then organised and presented their findings coherently in their own words. By the age of eleven, most pupils are able to use the Dewey system to locate books in the library and can then find specific information by using the contents page, index and glossary in a book they have chosen. Most pupils are also able to locate information using the Internet.
62. Detailed evidence from lessons and from the scrutiny of pupils' written work shows that pupils in Years 3 to 6 underachieve in writing. Few pupils exceed the standards set nationally for pupils of their age, and too many pupils who should achieve the national standard are failing to do so because persistent weaknesses in their work have not been addressed. Whilst most pupils are able to engage their readers with the content and ideas in their writing, their work is often spoiled by poor handwriting and presentation and by weaknesses in spelling, grammar, punctuation, organisation, structure and style.
63. In speaking and listening, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards in Years 2 and 6. Most listen well in lessons and respond appropriately to teachers' instructions and questions. When given the opportunity to talk with a partner

about work in hand, they do so in a lively and animated way, although few speak confidently when addressing the class as a whole, even in Year 6. A significant minority of pupils of all ages, experience difficulties expressing their ideas clearly in Standard English. In less formal settings, pupils communicate easily and well with adults and with one another.

64. Well taught and well supported in literacy lessons, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, the additional help given by learning support assistants enables pupils with special educational needs to make satisfactory progress overall. The one pupil who is in the early stages of learning English as an additional language is making good progress in Year 1, whilst older pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are often amongst the highest-achieving pupils in their respective year groups.
65. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy are secure and lessons are well planned. Activities engage pupils' interest, and tasks build progressively on pupils' previous learning. Teachers plan for, and respond to, pupils' individual learning needs and they have high expectations of what each pupil should achieve.
66. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching was broadly satisfactory in the lessons seen. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils, the management of behaviour is effective, and learning support assistants are used to good effect. In one good lesson, in Year 4, drama was used well to prepare pupils for writing. However, the range of evidence from pupils' written work in Years 3 to 6 shows that, overall, the teaching is not enabling pupils to do as well as they should in writing. Weaknesses in the teaching in Years 3 to 6 include:
 - deficiencies in teachers' subject knowledge and their low expectations of pupils' potential achievement in writing, including in relation to handwriting and presentation;
 - insufficient intervention and feedback by teachers to help pupils improve the quality of their writing, either by verbal comment or through marking, particularly in regard to grammar, the appropriate use of Standard English, sentence structure, style and organisation;
 - ineffective use of reading to teach pupils about writing. For example, teachers do not always ensure that pupils have a strong enough grasp of the significant features of a new text type before the pupils themselves are asked to write a text of the same kind; and
 - teachers are not making pupils as familiar as they need to be with the precise criteria by which their work is to be judged in national tests, and are not routinely involving pupils in evaluating their own and others' work, according to National Curriculum criteria.
67. The leadership and management of English are unsatisfactory. The current subject leader has worked hard since her appointment to the post a year ago to monitor provision in the subject through work-sampling and to implement an action plan designed to raise standards in writing and to improve pupils' motivation as readers. She has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning directly by observing lessons, and she therefore has only a partial overview of provision. Weaknesses in pupils' writing identified through work-sampling have been clearly communicated to teachers but have not been followed up or been properly addressed by the teachers in Years 3 to 6. In addition,

relevant training led by professional experts from the local education authority has had little impact on teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6. There is no agreed format for lesson plans, and no scheme of work or other printed guidance to help teachers interpret and implement those aspects of the National Literacy Strategy about which they know least. In some classes in Years 3 to 6, the marking of work is at best superficial, and often cursory, with little or no guidance for pupils about how to improve their writing. If standards are to be raised in writing, a concerted effort needs to be made, on the part of all staff, to address not only the writing process, but also its product – the quality of pupils' own writing. Overall, adequate use is made of ICT to support pupils' work in English. In ICT lessons, pupils have ample opportunities to develop word-processing and information skills. However, ICT is not routinely used in English lessons to help pupils draft, redraft and edit their work.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

68. Pupils' language and literacy skills are soundly promoted in work across the curriculum in Year 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' speaking and reading skills are satisfactorily fostered but too little is done to develop and improve the standard of their writing. In some subjects, such as geography, religious education and PSHE, pupils have too few opportunities to record in writing, and in science, pupils in Year 3 to 6 often present their writing untidily and use insufficiently precise language.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and is enabling pupils to progress well.
- Although the teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, there are areas for improvement.
- The joint subject leaders do not check examples of pupils' work, from across the school, with enough rigour.

Commentary

69. Current standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average, although at the lower end of the average range. They are similar to those found when the school was last inspected and represent satisfactory achievement, overall. No significant differences are evident in the standards achieved by boys and girls, and pupils with special educational needs are making sound progress in relation to their starting point in the subject. The most capable pupils make adequate progress, overall, but they could sometimes do better if the work was more challenging. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds do at least as well as their peers.
70. In Year 2, current standards reflect the school's test results in 2003, which were in line with the national average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now making good progress in mathematics, as a result of good teaching. As a consequence, standards are set to rise. However, evidence suggests that this good progress has not been long enough established to impact strongly on standards in Year 2 in this educational year. Pupils are

working within the expected range for their ages, and have a sound knowledge and understanding of basic number, shape and measurement.

71. Standards of work seen in Year 6 are better than the 2003 test results which were below the national average and were also below the average results of schools where pupils achieved similarly when in Year 2. Most pupils carry out appropriately challenging number calculations correctly, deal competently with fractions and ratio, and measure angles accurately.
72. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and is broadly satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have adopted the National Numeracy Strategy as the basis for planning. This has successfully rectified the weaknesses in planning that were identified by the last inspection. As a result, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to explore a variety of strategies for calculation and to acquire a confident recall of number facts. However, there are some weaknesses in the implementation of the recommended three-part lesson. For example, teachers in Years 3 to 6 do not always make effective use of the plenary or review phase of the lesson to check pupils' understanding, and their marking provides pupils with very limited feedback. Oral feedback during lessons is used well in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, it helps to encourage and motivate pupils but often fails to tell pupils what, precisely, they have to do to improve. Current developments in Years 1 and 2, where individual pupil targets are being trialled, are helping to ensure that pupils are clearer about how to improve their work. Across the school, satisfactory use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in mathematics. Good teaching is characterised by teachers' secure subject knowledge, the ample opportunities provided for pupils to discuss their work and to explain their strategies, and by the good links made with pupils' earlier learning so that they are increasing their skills systematically. Although no unsatisfactory lessons were observed, some satisfactory lessons in Years 3 to 6 showed areas for improvement. For example, teachers do not always expect enough of pupils, particularly the most capable mathematicians, and teachers talk for lengthy periods in some lessons, which results in pupils losing concentration and slowing in the pace of learning.
73. The leadership and management of mathematics are broadly satisfactory but there are areas requiring improvement. The joint subject leaders are hard-working and share a commitment to raising standards. They welcome advice and have introduced a number of strategies, such as individual pupils' mathematics bags, number facts pockets and tables ladders, to improve provision. The impact of their work is strongest in Years 1 and 2 where teamwork and co-operative planning are more evident. The subject leaders have observed mathematics lessons throughout the school. However, their observations are not followed up with sufficient rigour to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6. In addition, the subject leaders do not monitor examples of pupils' work, from across the school, with enough rigour.

Mathematics across the curriculum

74. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils are encouraged to use tables and graphs to show the results of experiments and, in design and technology, Year 1 pupils have measured accurately when creating their model boats. However, teachers do not specifically plan to develop pupils' mathematical skills through work across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

The quality of provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some satisfactory lessons have common areas for improvement in Years 3 to 6.
- Assessment procedures are not securely established across the school, and the marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory, overall, in Years 3 to 6.
- The most capable pupils sometimes mark time in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils' scientific investigation skills need to be promoted more strongly in Years 3 to 6.
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating provision are unsatisfactory.
- There are some good features in the teaching in Year 2.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.
- In Years 3 to 6, too much work is untidily presented and pupils' writing skills are not promoted effectively.

Commentary

75. Standards in science are broadly in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6, although at the lower end of the average range. They are generally consistent with the results of the statutory teacher assessments in Year 2 and the national tests in Year 6 in 2003. However, current standards are lower than when the school was last inspected and they were above average in both Years 2 and 6. Evidence strongly suggests that this reduction in standards results from a decline in the quality of teaching in the subject. Overall, pupils' achievement in science is satisfactory, including for those with special educational needs and the most capable. However, the most capable pupils sometimes mark time in Years 3 to 6 when their work is too easy. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds do at least as well as their peers and no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls were evident during the inspection.
76. In Year 1, pupils can name the main external parts of the human body and can identify changes which occur as animals and plants grow. They also demonstrate sound standards when learning how we experience the world through our senses, and are able to describe and compare a satisfactory range of light sources. In Year 2, pupils recognise that an adequate diet and exercise are necessary for them to grow and to stay healthy. They also achieve satisfactory standards when learning about forces and when creating simple electrical circuits using batteries, wires and bulbs.
77. In Year 3, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of magnetism and about the conditions required for the healthy growth of plants. However, during a lesson observed during the inspection, many found it difficult to plan an investigation to discover whether plants needed leaves in order to flourish and had an insecure grasp of the principle of fair

testing. In Year 4, pupils can describe the main functions of the skeleton and are able to locate the major organs in their bodies. They have a satisfactory awareness of food chains and learn that these start with green plants. These pupils are able to follow their teachers' instructions to conduct systematic investigations to discover the insulation properties of different materials but do not always draw conclusions from their results. In Year 5, pupils understand that their heartbeat increases during exercise in order to pump blood to their muscles more rapidly. They show the results of their experiments about pulse rates in simple charts and graphs, sometimes through the use of ICT. However, too much of their work is untidily presented and, in a lesson observed during the inspection, the most capable pupils made inadequate progress because the teaching focused on things they already knew. In Year 6, pupils have a sound awareness of the need for a healthy lifestyle, and have a satisfactory grasp of the key facts about the Sun, Earth and Moon. They know that weight is a force which is measured in newtons and can describe situations where there is more than one force acting on an object. In one of the two Year 6 classes, pupils' completed work shows they have made sound progress when conducting simple experiments, for example to separate materials by evaporation and filtration. However, in the other Year 6 class, pupils' scientific knowledge is promoted but there is very little recorded evidence of their scientific investigations. During the inspection, lessons seen in Year 6 did not adequately stretch the capabilities of the higher attaining pupils.

78. When the school was last inspected, the teaching was good and pupils did well in science across the school. No science lessons were taught in Year 1 during the inspection so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching across Years 1 and 2. However, the lesson seen in Year 2 was satisfactory with good features, and evidence from pupils' completed work provides secure evidence that the teaching is enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress in their scientific learning in both Years 1 and 2. In Year 3 to 6, the teaching is broadly satisfactory but has areas for improvement. The teaching is enabling pupils to make adequate overall progress in their learning in Years 3 to 6, although their scientific knowledge is promoted more effectively than their investigation skills. All lessons observed were characterised by positive relationships between pupils and teachers and by pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to their science work. Good features, mainly evident in the teaching seen in Year 2, include teachers' good planning, clear explanations and effective use of questions to probe pupils' understanding. Scientific language is introduced and reinforced well in Year 2.
79. In Year 3 to 6, there are weaknesses in the teaching which are evident in the lessons seen and from a careful examination of pupils' completed work. Sometimes, there is too much teacher talk and too little pupil activity, and teachers' questioning skills need improvement, not only to check pupils' learning but also to ensure that the most capable pupils do not coast through their lessons. Teachers' expectations of pupils' standards in the written presentation of their work are sometimes too low and too many opportunities are missed to develop their writing skills in their science work. Assessment procedures are not consistent across Years 1 and 6, and the quality of teachers' marking is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils rarely benefit from informed written feedback and an examination of pupils' work in the last educational year shows that some pupils had little of their science work marked when they were in Years 3 and 5.
80. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Procedures for monitoring planning, the quality of teaching and pupils' standards are not sufficiently rigorous. The subject leader took on her responsibility in September 2003 and is

enthusiastic. However, she inherited little useful information from school records about the quality of provision and has had insufficient support from the senior management of the school in relation to the development of her role. As a result, although there is an action plan for science, it is not informed by an adequate evaluation of what needs to be done.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

The quality of provision for information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has improved since the last inspection.
- ICT is now rigorously planned in all classes so that all pupils have regular access to computers and develop their skills systematically.
- Assessment procedures are not yet used to check standards, or to inform future planning.

Commentary

81. When the school was last inspected, standards were below average in Years 2 and 6, and pupils were making unsatisfactory progress across the school. The school has addressed these deficiencies well, so that standards are now in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 6, and pupils' achievement in the subject is sound. This results from improved teacher competence and confidence, increased resources and more opportunities for pupils to use computers. Since the last inspection, resources have been significantly improved through the creation of a spacious ICT suite with sufficient computers to enable a whole class to be taught at the same time. The new computer suite means that pupils now have regular ICT lessons, enabling them to learn and practise their skills in a systematic way. The structured guidelines adopted by the school ensure that all the strands of the subject are now taught. The previous subject leader has worked hard to raise the profile of information and communication technology within the school, so that pupils become confident users of the computer from an early age.
82. Evidence from lessons seen and from samples of pupils' work shows that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers generally have sound subject expertise and use clear demonstration techniques. Skills are taught competently, and pupils are given sufficient time to practise these. All pupils show high levels of interest and the younger pupils are given good opportunities to develop early skills, such as logging on and off, and accessing their program. Plenty of opportunities are given to develop word-processing skills throughout the school and, by Year 2, pupils confidently change fonts and colours and import pictures to present work in an attractive way. By Year 6, pupils are confident users of multi-media packages. However, there are sometimes weaknesses in teaching. For example, when using a program to create different shapes and patterns, the teacher used pupils to explain procedures, which were not always clear and were not subsequently clarified, so pupils were unsure of how to proceed. On another occasion, too much time was taken with teacher talk, and insufficient opportunities given for pupils to practise their skills so that pupils became restless and uninterested. This resulted in time being wasted in behaviour control, and limited outcomes by the end of the lesson. Sometimes, pupils who have developed above average skills, partly through their work with computers at home, are insufficiently challenged in lessons. In most

lessons, pupils are encouraged to make their own choices and work together amicably, supporting each other as they explore and develop their skills.

83. The subject leader has very recently been appointed and has had no opportunities to monitor provision. However, during recent years, firm foundations have been laid, so that the new leader is well placed to develop the subject further, providing she receives appropriate support and guidance from the senior management of the school. Common assessment procedures are not in use across the school, and this makes it difficult for teachers to judge pupils' achievements and to plan for their next steps in learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. Overall, sound use is made of ICT to support work across the curriculum. Teachers are aware of the need to use ICT skills to support learning in other subjects. For example, pupils confidently use the Internet for research to find out information about minibeasts, linked with their work in science; practise word-processing skills to produce effective labels to support work done on the ancient Egyptians; and use spreadsheets to solve mathematical problems.

HUMANITIES

Geography

The quality of provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective use is made of fieldwork.
- The leadership and management of the subject are underdeveloped.
- Skills are developed in a superficial way as a result of planning weaknesses.
- Common assessment procedures are not established, and teachers' marking is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

85. At the time of the last inspection, standards in Years 2 and 6 were judged to be in line with those expected and this remains the case. Pupils' achievements in the subject are satisfactory, overall, across the school. They make steady progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of places, patterns and processes. However, the development of pupils' geographical enquiry skills is more spasmodic, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Only one lesson was observed, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching and learning.
86. The planning for geography has a thematic approach, and is loosely based on guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. In its present format, the thematic approach results in an inexact allocation of time for the subject. A careful scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the National Curriculum requirements are met but the planning does not provide either the detail or the continuity to ensure that pupils build progressively on their previous knowledge, or that key skills are developed systematically. On occasions, considerable time elapses when geography is not taught in some classes. There is limited written work in geography, which indicates that pupils are not

encouraged to develop their writing skills through work in the subject. However, effective use is made of fieldwork where pupils enhance skills such as mapping. In the one lesson observed, in Year 1, very good opportunities were given for pupils to develop their mapping skills as a result of skilful teaching. Older pupils have completed some good project work as homework. There is an element of choice for these projects, so there is no guarantee that all pupils have opportunities to develop the same skills. The marking of work in Years 3 to 6 usually gives no indication of how pupils can improve. Pupils' presentation of their work is often untidy and reflects the low expectations of pupils' writing by some teachers in Years 3 to 6.

87. At present, the subject leader is a part-time teacher so has limited time to fulfil her role. She is currently working on a new policy statement as the present one is out of date. There is no evidence of recent monitoring and evaluation having been carried out in the subject, and no agreed whole-school approaches to the assessment of pupils' work, which is unsatisfactory.

History

The quality of provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits, visitors and the use of interesting artefacts are used well to enliven pupils' learning.
- There are sometimes significantly long periods when history is not taught to some classes.
- The monitoring role of the subject leader is underdeveloped.
- Common assessment procedures are not established in the subject.

Commentary

88. In addition to the two lessons seen, judgements about provision, pupils' standards and achievement are based on discussions with teachers and pupils, analysis of their earlier work and scrutiny of teachers' planning. There is not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching.
89. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with the levels expected for their ages. This represents satisfactory achievement and is similar to the position at the time of the last inspection. The range of work examined shows that most pupils develop a sound bank of factual knowledge about the people, periods and events they study. Older pupils use a variety of sources, including the Internet and CD-ROMs, to carry out individual research, as in Year 5, when finding out about life in Britain since World War II. Some of them organise and present their work well in individual project books.
90. In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory and brought out clearly the differences between the city states of Athens and Sparta. However, the work was entirely led by the teacher with few opportunities for pupils to follow up historical questions of their own and to begin to develop higher order skills such as interpreting and evaluating different sources of evidence. Pupils' learning opportunities are considerably enriched also by educational visits in every class to a wide variety of interesting venues including Portchester Castle, the British Museum and Hampton Court. In addition, there are regular

visits to school by a theatre group, most recently to support pupils' work about Ancient Greece and the Romans. Teachers also make good use of local agencies and museums for the loan of artefacts. All of these are effective in bringing the subject to life. However, the school's curriculum plan shows that classes sometimes have gaps of two terms when history is not taught. This has a negative effect on continuity in pupils' learning in the subject.

91. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory and procedures for checking on provision and how well pupils are doing across the school are underdeveloped. There is no whole-school agreement on assessment procedures.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the overall quality of provision in religious education. However, it is possible to make some judgements based on an analysis of the very limited examples of pupils' written work, the two lessons seen and discussions with the subject leader and staff.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There is a detailed and helpful scheme of work to support teaching and learning in religious education throughout the school.
- Very little of pupils' learning is recorded in writing.
- Procedures for monitoring provision are not established.

COMMENTARY

92. Two lessons were seen, both taught satisfactorily. However, these provide insufficient evidence to judge the overall quality of teaching in the subject. In addition, too few examples of pupils' completed work were available to make secure overall judgements about pupils' standards and achievements. When the school was last inspected, standards in Years 2 and 6 were above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Discussions with staff reveal indications of a largely practical and oral approach to teaching and learning, often involving drama and role-play but rarely writing.
93. Evidence from the lessons seen, from the very limited amount of pupils' written work made available for scrutiny and from teachers' planning, shows that pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about Christianity and Judaism. They are introduced to the idea of 'special' things, people, places and events in relation to their own lives, and are encouraged to draw parallels with the 'special' nature of certain artefacts, places and people for those who follow a particular faith. For example, they learn about 'special' events in the Christian calendar such as Christmas, Easter and harvest festival, and they learn about the life of Jesus. Work produced by pupils in Year 2 showed that they had considered reasons why Christians celebrate harvest – for example to express gratitude for having enough to eat when many people in the world do not. Work planned to cover Judaism addresses a similar range of topics and interests, so that pupils learn, for example, about 'special' times such as Shabbat, Hannukah and Passover, and about famous stories from the Torah.
94. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' study of Christianity continues and is complemented by work on Hinduism and Islam. They study the significance of symbols in each religion and consider sacred writings and links between faith and the arts. For example, in Islam, they learn about the nature of worship and prayer in each of the three religions, and consider the multiple meanings enshrined in words such as 'God'. They think about the impact of each

faith on the lives of those who are believers, and they consider religious interpretations of the Creation.

95. The leadership of the subject is broadly satisfactory but its management is unsatisfactory due to a lack of evaluation strategies. The subject leader has developed a useful scheme of work, based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and informed by two different local education authority syllabuses. She willingly provides advice for her colleagues when it is requested. However, she has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning, and therefore has no real overview of provision. A focus on 'monitoring' in the subject action plan is not accompanied by any firm dates, and no time has been allocated to the subject leader to enable her to carry out monitoring activities.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN

The quality of provision in art and design is **unsatisfactory, overall**. Whilst it is satisfactory for pupils in Years 3 to 6, it is unsatisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below national expectations in Year 2 and represent underachievement.
- There are some examples of good work produced by pupils when they have been taught by a visiting artist.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

96. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' overall achievement is unsatisfactory and standards are below national expectations in Year 2, as a result. In Year 1, pupils' drawings of fruits and vegetables demonstrate satisfactory standards but their paintings of butterflies might easily have been created by Reception children. They have achieved satisfactory standards when using ICT to create simple images but have made very limited progress when attempting to copy the work of a range of artists from postcard-sized reproductions. In Year 2, pupils have made adequate progress when undertaking simple colour-mixing exercises but have used ready-mixed colours to create 'camouflage pictures' which represent underachievement. Pupils' sketchbooks confirm that their drawing skills are below average, and that they have benefited little from their drawing of cartoon characters.
97. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory and standards are in line with national expectations in Year 6. In Year 3, pupils have made interesting three-dimensional figures from papier-mâché which communicate movement well. In Year 4, pupils' self-portraits demonstrate mainly average skills but their simple prints made from card printing blocks are below average. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' drawing and painting skills are generally satisfactory for their ages. However, there are some examples of good work, particularly when pupils are taught by a visiting artist who works with each class once every term.
98. No art and design lessons were observed during the inspection so it is not possible to make a secure overall judgement about the quality of teaching. However, a careful examination of pupils' completed work shows the teaching is not enabling pupils to do as well as they should in Years 1 and 2. Evidence suggests that the teachers in Years 1 and 2 would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge and skills in the subject and to raise their expectations of pupils' potential achievement. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' work shows that the teaching is enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress in art and design. The visiting artist

makes a valuable contribution to pupils' achievement, especially in Years 3 to 6, where there are some drawings and paintings of the environment which demonstrate good standards.

99. Overall, the leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Teachers' planning is not monitored and examples of pupils' work are not examined by the subject leader in order to check their standards and achievements. In addition, there are no common assessment procedures which help all teachers to judge pupils' work. As a consequence, the subject leader is in a weak position to identify and target areas for improvement.

Design and technology

The quality of provision in design and technology is **unsatisfactory, overall**. Although it is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, it is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils underachieve in the older classes, where standards are below national expectations.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' potential achievement are too low in Years 3 to 6.
- Insufficient design and technology lessons are taught in Year 5.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.
- Assessment procedures are not established.
- Pupils do well in Year 1.

COMMENTARY

100. Pupils achieve well in design and technology in Year 1 and make satisfactory progress in the subject in Year 2. As a result, standards are in line with national expectations in Year 2, as they were when the school was last inspected, and represent satisfactory achievement. In Year 1, pupils have achieved well when making model wooden-framed boats. They have measured their wood carefully and have learned to use a junior hacksaw to cut it accurately. Pupils have benefited from well-judged support from teachers and also from the expert guidance of a parent, who works as a carpenter. As a result, pupils have good skills for their ages, are able to use bench hooks and appreciate the need for safety when using tools. They have carefully sandpapered their wooden structures and covered them with card, paper and fabric to create well-finished boats which demonstrate above average standards. In Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of simple winding mechanisms, and this is evident in their design work. These pupils have also achieved satisfactory standards when making puppets from wooden spoons and a range of fabrics.
101. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory and standards are below national expectations in Year 6. In Year 3, pupils make very limited progress when drawing designs for picture frames since they are too prescribed by the teachers, who decide the dimensions and construction methods. Pupils have assembled the components of their frames carefully but none have explored methods for making their frames freestanding. As a result, their finished products represent underachievement. In Year 4, pupils have made models which move through the use of cams. However, all models are virtually identical, again demonstrating the lack of pupil involvement in designing and deciding on construction methods. In Year 5, no design and technology lessons have been taught this year, despite long-term planning which shows that two substantial tasks were meant to be undertaken. Although the teachers say they intend to teach the subject before the end of the academic year, only six weeks were left at the time of the inspection and no detailed

plans had been made. In Year 6, pupils' model vehicles demonstrate making skills which are below national expectations.

102. No design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, so it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. However, an analysis of pupils' completed work shows the teaching is enabling pupils to make sound overall progress in their learning in the subject in Years 1 and 2 but is not enabling pupils to do as well as they should in Years 3 to 6. Evidence suggests that teachers in Years 3 to 6 would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge in design and technology and to raise their expectations of pupils' potential achievement. Currently, there are no coherent whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' achievements.
103. The leadership and management of design and technology are unsatisfactory. The subject leader is enthusiastic, willingly provides advice for her colleagues when it is requested and sets a good example through her high expectations of pupils' achievement in Year 1. However, she had had little guidance about how to develop her role since she became subject leader in September 2003, and procedures for monitoring and evaluating provision are not established.

Physical education

Insufficient evidence was collected to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision in physical education. However, some judgements can be made from those lessons seen, from teachers' planning and from discussions with pupils and the subject leader.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Whilst good teaching was demonstrated in one of the lessons seen, the teaching was unsatisfactory in the Year 6 lesson which was observed.
- The school provides a balanced range of experiences.
- The monitoring role of the subject leader is underdeveloped.

COMMENTARY

104. All aspects of the National Curriculum are covered, including swimming which is taught in Year 5. By the end of these sessions, all pupils are confident in the water and most of them meet or exceed the expected 25 metres. In the few lessons seen, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to good. The effectiveness of the lessons was determined largely by teachers' knowledge of the subject and their ability to channel pupils' natural enthusiasm into learning. In the most successful lesson, the teacher's high expectations were reflected by the way pupils in Year 2 responded immediately to her clear instructions. This ensured pupils' learning moved ahead at a good pace with good levels of co-operation as they devised a cat dance. In a games lesson in Year 6, teaching was unsatisfactory. The choice of activity was inappropriate for an indoor lesson and, as a result of the limited space, large proportions of the class spent quite lengthy periods sitting and waiting to take a turn. The teacher's strategies for gaining and holding pupils' attention were not always effective and this affected the continuity of the lesson.
105. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory but management of the subject is currently unsatisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator is well-qualified and enthusiastic. She has begun to introduce a new scheme of work to guide teachers' planning and, in two of the lessons seen, it was used well to support teaching and learning. However,

procedures for monitoring and evaluating provision are not established and there are no whole-school systems for assessment.

MUSIC

Insufficient evidence was collected to make secure judgements about provision in music.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The good provision is reflected in pupils' good attitudes and behaviour.
- The leadership and management of PSHE are effective.

COMMENTARY

106. The school's good provision for personal, social and health education is reflected in pupils' good attitudes and behaviour, in their growing confidence in themselves as individuals able to take responsibility within the school community and contribute to life in the wider community, and in the good relationships they establish with adults and with their peers.
107. The school actively seeks pupils' views, for example through the well-established school council. Pupils take pride in the changes they have initiated, for example, the introduction of water fountains. Pupils benefit from an extensive range of after-school clubs and activities, and also from 'smart-time' activities which allow them to choose from a range of options during the school day. This provision suitably enhances pupils' existing cultural interests and skills and, occasionally, also introduces them to topics which are entirely new. For example, during the inspection, pupils involved in 'smart-time' activities related to German and to planning for a party were respectively enjoying good opportunities to learn a new language and to develop basic skills associated with organisation and financial management, skills which will stand them in good stead in the future. In most classes, displays of pupils' work show evidence that pupils are encouraged to set future goals for themselves, for example by considering the jobs they aspire to and by naming those individuals who have inspired them.
108. PSHE lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss matters that directly affect them and to express their views. Both staff and pupils refer, for example, to the benefits of being able to sort out minor 'bullying' incidents such as name-calling through prompt and reasoned discussions. Provision for some pupils to discuss feelings and anxieties in greater depth, with learning support assistants trained in emotional literacy, is having a beneficial impact on their learning and well being.

109. The school's 'Golden Rules' establish a simple but secure set of guidelines for pupils' behaviour and for their attitudes towards others. From the time the pupils enter the school, the 'Golden Rules' raise their awareness of the rights and responsibilities involved in belonging to a community – the essence of citizenship. The daily routines of school life, systems of sanctions and rewards and the recognition of achievements of all kinds further serve to develop pupils' understanding of the need for rules and of the causes and consequences of their actions, good or bad. The home-school agreement and the good partnership that exists with parents mean that, for many pupils, the Golden Rules apply every bit as much at home as at school. In PSHE lessons, older pupils are encouraged to consider the needs of different groups within the wider community. For example, pupils in Year 5 learn to see beyond their own immediate interests when they examine evidence of the range of provision made for different age groups in the local community through the local leisure centre. In Year 6, a citizenship award designed by the subject leader provides a strong incentive for pupils to assume increased responsibilities within the school, to undertake voluntary tasks to help their parents and/or carers at home, and to undertake service within the community, for example by helping with Brownies. A 'Respect' campaign, introduced to remind pupils of the need to show respect to all members of the school community, is reinforced consistently by staff who give pupils timely reminders should the need arise.
110. Although the school has introduced work related to the 'Healthy Schools Project' only this year, curriculum elements are already in place to help pupils develop a healthy, safe lifestyle. For example, programmes to promote drugs awareness, healthy eating and sex education are securely established in the curriculum, and pupils are helped to make 'the right choices' in life. Many outside agencies support the school well in these aspects of its work, amongst them the schools' health team, the police, the fire service, road safety officers and visiting drama groups.
111. Teaching was satisfactory in the very few PSHE lessons observed. However, such lessons constitute only a small part of the overall provision for PSHE. The real strength of provision lies in the many strands of provision which permeate all aspects of the life and work of the school and which have a strong impact on pupils' personal development.
112. The leadership and management of PSHE are effective. The subject leader has benefited from close involvement with local education authority staff as the PSHE and Citizenship programmes of work have been developing over the last few years and she has overseen the introduction and implementation of a good scheme of work. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about every aspect of PSHE, and she has clearly helped and influenced other staff, all of whom value this important aspect of the school's work. The subject leader has worked alongside staff to 'model' class discussions related to PSHE themes, has run training sessions for staff, and has ensured that support staff are also trained in appropriate strands of work such as emotional literacy. Although she has not monitored teaching and learning directly, she has a good overview of provision, derived mainly through direct interaction with staff and pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
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	4
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	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
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).