

INSPECTION REPORT

WILDGROUND JUNIOR SCHOOL

Dibden Purlieu, Southampton

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115883

Headteacher: Mr John Wright

Lead inspector: David Westall

Dates of inspection: 4th - 6th May 2004

Inspection number: 258425

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 7 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 251

School address: Armitage Avenue
Dibden Purlieu
Southampton
Postcode: SO45 4LG

Telephone number: (02380) 842 042
Fax number: (02380) 877 976

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Chris Blake

Date of previous inspection: 14th September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

There are 251 pupils on roll, aged between seven and 11 years, and they are taught in nine classes. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average but the percentage identified as having special educational needs is above the national average. Six pupils have statements of special educational needs. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and no pupils who speak English as an additional language and are at an early stage of English language acquisition. On entry to the school, in Year 3, pupils' overall standards vary from year to year but generally range from average to below average. For example, the current Year 6 class were broadly average at the age of seven, while the current Year 3 class were below average, overall.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2414	David Westall	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology
1333	Elizabeth Forster	Lay inspector	
3856	Sandy Wellsted	Team inspector	English History Religious education Personal, social and health education
19302	Chris Perrett	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI
Barley House
Oakfield Grove
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 2BN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637 833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 9
Standards achieved in subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9 - 15
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15 - 17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS	18 - 28
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a sound school where pupils generally make steady progress as a result of satisfactory teaching. It benefits from a highly conscientious headteacher who is providing a clear sense of direction and is determined to raise pupils' standards further. The school provides well for pupils' personal development, and their attitudes and behaviour are good. However, there is not enough good teaching in the school and standards are too low in a minority of subjects, including in English. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are below national expectations in writing, geography and art and design, and represent underachievement.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, and the school provides well for their personal development.
- Overall, there is not enough good teaching, across the school, and pupils' progress is sometimes constrained by teaching which is broadly satisfactory but has areas for improvement.
- The headteacher is providing the school with a clear sense of direction.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and they do well, as a result.
- Monitoring and evaluation procedures sometimes need to be more focused and to be followed up more effectively in order to secure improvements.
- Pupils' scientific enquiry skills are underdeveloped in Year 6.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by a good range of clubs, visits and visitors.
- The school is a caring community where pupils' welfare is a high priority.
- A strong partnership has been established with parents.

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection, in 1998. The leadership is now more clearly focused on the need to raise pupils' academic standards, and procedures for monitoring the school's performance are now more extensive. Assessment procedures have improved and the amount of unsatisfactory teaching has been dramatically reduced. Standards have risen in information and communication technology (ICT) but have fallen in English.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Overall, pupils' standards are mainly in line with national expectations in Year 6 and represent satisfactory achievement. Inspection findings in mathematics and science are more favourable than the school's test results in 2003, and show that current standards in Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations in these subjects. Overall, these standards represent satisfactory achievement, although pupils should make more progress in developing their scientific investigation skills. In reading and speaking and listening, pupils also make steady progress across the school and demonstrate average standards in Year 6. However, pupils underachieve in writing and their standards in this key skill are consequently below average in Year 6.

In ICT, history and design and technology, standards in Year 6 are in line with national expectations and represent satisfactory achievement. In religious education, standards are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus, and also represent satisfactory achievement. In personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils do well as a result of good provision. However, in art and design and geography, pupils underachieve and their standards are below national expectations in Year 6. Standards were not judged in music or physical education. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their starting points. The achievement of the most capable pupils is broadly satisfactory, although they mark time in some lessons when their work is too easy.

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is satisfactory. The teaching is satisfactory, overall, and means that pupils make mainly sound progress in their learning. Good, and occasionally very good, teaching was evident in a significant minority of the lessons observed during the inspection. Overall, however, there is not enough good teaching and some lessons, though broadly satisfactory, have common areas for improvement. The curriculum provides a range of worthwhile learning opportunities and is sound, overall. There are particular strengths in the school's provision for pupils' personal development and for pupils with special educational needs. However, there are also weaknesses in the provision for geography and art and design, and in the promotion of pupils' writing skills. A good range of clubs, visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning. The care, guidance and support of pupils are good, and a strong partnership is established with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher is highly conscientious and is providing the school with a clear sense of direction. Together with the members of the senior management team and subject managers, he conscientiously carries out a range of strategies to monitor the school's work. These have a beneficial effect on the quality of education provided but they sometimes need to be more focused and to be followed up more rigorously in order to make a difference. School governance is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Both parents and pupils have positive views about the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise pupils' standards in writing, art and design and geography.
- Increase the amount of good teaching in the school and rectify common weaknesses which sometimes occur in satisfactory lessons.
- Ensure that all monitoring and evaluation procedures are sufficiently focused and rigorous in order to improve, further, the quality of education provided at the school.
- Improve pupils' scientific investigation skills.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects

Standards are mainly in line with national expectations in Year 6 and represent satisfactory achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are below national expectations in writing, geography and art and design, and represent underachievement.
- Pupils achieve well in their personal, social and health education as a result of good provision.
- Pupils with special educational needs do well in relation to the targets in their individual education plans.
- Pupils' scientific investigation skills are not sufficiently developed in Year 6.
- The most capable pupils sometimes mark time because they need more challenging work.

Commentary

Standards on entry to the school

1. On entry to Year 3, pupils' overall standards vary from year to year but range from average to below average. For example, the current Year 6 class demonstrated mainly average standards when aged seven, while the current Year 3 class started with standards which were below average, overall.

The school's results in national tests

2. The table below shows that the results of the national tests in Year 6, in 2003, were below the national average in English, mathematics and science. These results were also below the average results of schools with pupils who achieved similarly when in Year 2. Although the school's results in 2002 were better, and were broadly in line with the national average in these subjects, the results in 2001 were consistently below the national average. The overall trend in the school's results, over the last five years, is below the national trend. In 2003, the school did not achieve its statutory targets in English or mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.9 (27.0)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.9 (27.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.1 (28.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 70 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Standards at the time of the last inspection

3. When the school was last inspected, in 1998, standards in Year 6 were in line with national expectations in all subjects except in ICT, where they were below average.

Inspection findings

4. **Overall, pupils' achievement is sound, as a result of satisfactory teaching.** However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in writing, geography and art and design.
5. In mathematics and science, inspection findings are more favourable than the school's national test results in 2003, and show that current standards in Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations in these subjects. Overall, these standards represent satisfactory achievement, although pupils should make more progress in developing their scientific investigation skills. In reading and speaking and listening, pupils also make steady progress in the school, and their standards in Year 6 are average. However, pupils underachieve in writing due to weaknesses in the teaching. Their standards are below average in this key skill and mean that overall attainment in English is below national expectations in Year 6.
6. In information and communication technology (ICT), standards have risen since the last inspection, following improvements to teachers' expertise and confidence and increased time being allocated to the subject. As a result, current standards in ICT in Year 6 are in line with national expectations and represent satisfactory achievement. Standards in history and design and technology are also in line with national expectations and reflect pupils' sound achievement in these subjects. In religious education, standards in Year 6 meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and represent sound achievement. In their personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils do well as a result of good provision. However, in art and design, pupils underachieve and standards are below average because teachers' expectations are too low. In addition, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in geography and standards are below average because insufficient time is allocated to the subject. Standards in music and physical education were not judged.

The achievement of different groups

7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. The achievement of the most capable pupils is broadly satisfactory, although they mark time in some lessons in mathematics and science when their work is too easy. No significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls were evident during the inspection, and the very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds do as well as their peers.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Good overall. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and values are good. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development. Provision for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. The attendance rate is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy being at school and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Behaviour is good.
- Pupils respect others' values and opinions.
- Relationships are good at all levels.
- Very good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development.
- There is scope to improve provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

Commentary

Attitudes and behaviour

8. With rare exceptions, pupils enjoy school and everything about it. Pupils of all ages comment favourably on lessons, on the teaching they receive and on the many enrichment activities and clubs that make their daily lives interesting. They particularly appreciate the fact that teachers help them when they experience difficulties in aspects of their learning. They also greatly value the many opportunities they are given to take responsibility and to make decisions, for

example, through duties in classrooms and around the school, through the work of the school council and in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. They recognise that PSHE gives them the opportunity to air grievances, to consider moral issues affecting their daily lives and to acknowledge that different people may hold different views. Close involvement with other pupils in lessons and in many other contexts, combined with opportunities to discuss issues that cause friction, gives pupils a mature understanding of the need to respect others. At all times, almost all pupils behave well. The school is an orderly place where pupils move around quietly and respect others' need for space. They wait quietly in assembly for proceedings to begin and they play happily together in the playground. Pupils say there is no bullying, most certainly not of a physical kind. Although occasional name-calling and teasing are not unknown, all pupils asked acknowledged that reported incidents were dealt with quickly by the staff. There were five short-term exclusions, involving two boys, in the last academic year. For all but a very few pupils, however, constructive relationships exist at all levels and at all times: they relate well to their peers, to both teaching and non-teaching staff and to visitors. Although some pupils lack the confidence to speak up on their own in whole class discussions, the provision made for them to take on responsibilities in less academic ways, and the opportunities they are given to participate in group discussions and in drama, all combine to boost their self-esteem.

9. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour reflect the stated aims of the school and the impact of a comprehensive behaviour policy which is applied consistently by all staff. Pupils are made fully aware of the need for rules in their lives. Lessons in PSHE and assembly themes further serve to reinforce good attitudes and behaviour.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
244	0	0
2	0	0
4	0	0
1	0	0

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

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.0	School data	0.6
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Attendance

10. **Satisfactory.** Levels of attendance are in line with the national median and very few pupils arrive late in the mornings. The rate of unauthorised absence last year was above the national median. However, by contacting parents on the first day of pupils' unexplained absence the school is improving the situation. As a consequence, the rate of unauthorised absence, is on course to decline this year.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

11. As at the time of the last inspection, provision for pupils' personal development is good overall. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development; provision for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
12. Good relationships underpin provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. In their daily interactions with pupils, staff show respect for pupils, value them as individuals and act as good role-models in terms of their own conduct.
13. The school seeks to promote spirituality through its curriculum, through assemblies and through links with local churches and their clergy. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on spiritual, moral and social themes in assemblies and are given the opportunity to join in prayers should they wish to do so. In a memorable assembly led by the headteacher, the life and work of Martin Luther King was presented as an inspirational example of the impact of religious faith on the actions of one individual and, through him, on the lives of countless Americans, white and black alike. In PSHE lessons, pupils are led to consider the values they hold dear and, thereby, to know themselves. In religious education, however, greater emphasis is placed on knowledge about religion than on what is to be learned from religion, and this remains an area for development. In addition, opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' awareness of the wonder of the world – for example, in science lessons when pupils examine seeds or when they look carefully at flowers to identify key organs.
14. School and class rules and discussions in PSHE lessons serve well to develop pupils' understanding of right and wrong and of moral and social issues that are of concern in the wider world. A drugs awareness programme and involvement in the 'Getting it Right' scheme help pupils to appreciate the need to make the 'right' choices in life. The school behaviour policy is underpinned by a fair system of sanctions and rewards that is understood by every pupil. Through work in PSHE, science and geography, pupils are made aware of the need to consider issues of moral and social relevance on a wider scale, for example, recycling, pollution, the need for 'fair trade' and humankind's moral responsibility for the care of the environment. The work of the school council has been particularly effective in helping pupils appreciate the contribution they can make towards the care of their immediate environment, and they express unreserved pride in the garden they have helped create.
15. Many other activities provide pupils with very good opportunities for social development. For example, many of the responsibilities pupils are given involve them in interaction with others, including through work in the school library and by making sure younger pupils are creatively and fairly occupied during play-times. All pupils have opportunities to participate in drama productions and to pursue other sporting and recreational interests through clubs before school, at lunchtime and after school. The school house system unites pupils in friendly rivalry, and participation in various sports teaches them to value both individual effort and team spirit. All pupils learn to consider those less fortunate than themselves when they participate in fund-raising activities for various local, national and international charities, and some pupils use their own initiative to organize events in order to support charities and causes of their own choosing.
16. Provision for pupils' cultural development is sound. In addition to the clubs and other activities outlined above, pupils visit places of interest linked to their studies, for example, in history, They learn about different cultures, past and present, through music and through religious education and history. However, more could be done to raise pupils' awareness of the multicultural dimensions of British society and to help them to recognise and celebrate the richness and diversity of other cultures.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is satisfactory. The teaching is satisfactory, overall, and means that pupils make mainly sound progress in their learning. Good, and occasionally very good, teaching was evident in a significant minority of the lessons observed during the inspection. Overall, however, there is not enough good teaching and some lessons, though broadly satisfactory, have

common areas for improvement. The curriculum provides a range of worthwhile learning opportunities and is sound, overall. There are particular strengths in the school's provision for pupils' personal development and for pupils with special educational needs. However, there are also weaknesses in the provision for geography and art and design, and in the promotion of pupils' writing skills. A good range of clubs, visits and visitors enrich pupils' learning. The care, guidance and support of pupils are good, and a strong partnership is established with parents.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, and pupils make mainly sound progress in their learning, as a result.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Weaknesses in the teaching of writing mean pupils underachieve in this key skill.
- Overall, there is not enough good teaching, across the school, and pupils' progress is sometimes constrained by teaching which is broadly satisfactory but has areas for improvement.
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons are well taught and benefit pupils' personal development.
- Pupils with special educational needs are catered for effectively.
- Teachers' expectations are too low in art and design and this contributes to pupils' underachievement in the subject.
- The most capable pupils are sometimes given work which is too easy.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	5 (16%)	9 (28%)	17 (53%)	1 (3%)	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 above shows the teaching observed was mainly satisfactory. When the school was last inspected, the overall quality of teaching was also satisfactory but there was a bigger proportion that was unsatisfactory. Improvements in teachers' knowledge and expertise in teaching mathematics and ICT have had a beneficial effect. However, there are still occasions when the most capable pupils need more challenging work, and when teachers' expectations of pupils' potential achievement are not high enough. Taken as a whole, the teaching enables pupils to make satisfactory progress in their learning across the school. However, there is not enough good teaching and a significant number of lessons, though broadly satisfactory, have common areas for improvement. These factors restrict pupils from making good overall progress in their learning. In addition, there are particular weaknesses in pupils' learning in English, which are identified below.
18. In English, the teaching observed during the inspection was mainly good. Nevertheless, a careful scrutiny of pupils' completed work, and evidence from the weaker lessons seen, shows there are important weaknesses. Whilst the teaching is enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress in developing their speaking and listening and reading skills, it is not effective in promoting high enough standards in writing. Pupils have too few opportunities to write at reasonable length, the expectations of some teachers are too low and they do not sufficiently enable pupils to identify strengths and weaknesses in their work and to address areas for improvement.

19. In mathematics and science, the teaching is satisfactory and pupils make mainly sound progress in their learning in these subjects, as a result. However, most teachers need to give more emphasis to the introduction and reinforcement of scientific vocabulary, and to promote pupils' enquiry skills more effectively. In both subjects, the most capable pupils sometimes mark time.
20. In ICT, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and is now enabling pupils to make sound progress, in contrast to the situation when the school was last inspected. Good teaching in PSHE lessons helps to ensure that pupils' personal development is fostered effectively across the school.
21. Insufficient lessons were observed to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching in other subjects. However, a careful analysis of pupils' completed work shows the teaching enables pupils to make sound overall progress in their learning in religious education, history and design and technology. However, not all teachers ensure that the skills of historical enquiry are consistently developed and, in religious education, teachers enable pupils to develop their factual knowledge but are less successful in helping pupils to understand what can be learned from religion. In art and design, pupils' completed work provides clear evidence that the teaching is not enabling pupils to achieve as well as they should. Teachers' expectations of pupils' potential achievement are mainly too low and they would benefit from in-service training to increase their subject knowledge. In geography, pupils also make unsatisfactory progress in their learning. However, evidence suggests the main cause for this underachievement is the lack of time devoted to the subject, rather than key weaknesses in the teaching.
22. Good and occasionally very good teaching was evident in about four out of every ten lessons; this good practice needs to be increased. In these effective lessons, teachers show a very secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and capture and maintain pupils' interest through lively introductions and clear explanations. Good use is made of time in these lessons and teachers know just when to intervene with well-judged comments or questions to ensure that pupils are both supported and challenged. In the very best lessons, the teaching ensures that all pupils are working at the edge of their current capabilities. Common features of the teaching, across the school, include the good relationships which are established between staff and pupils, and the effective management of pupils' behaviour.
23. Although very little unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection, areas for improvement were evident in some lessons which were satisfactory. Sometimes, teachers' expectations of pupils' potential achievement are too low and they are too ready to accept mediocre work. Their questions often need to be more focused to probe pupils' understanding, and the most capable pupils sometimes waste time on work which is too easy. The pace of learning is rather slow in some lessons, and pupils persevere with tasks rather than working with any sense of urgency. In these lessons, there is sometimes too much teacher talk and too little pupil discussion and activity. In the only unsatisfactory lesson seen, the pace of learning was much too slow, pupils' mistakes went unnoticed and the standards expected were very low.
24. Pupils with differing special educational needs are well supported. Class teachers, well trained teaching assistants and the special needs co-ordinator, all work alongside individual pupils or with small groups on different occasions and, according to need, the pupils are helped to play a full part in lessons. Some pupils also benefit from good quality teaching outside mainstream lessons, for example, to consolidate their reading skills. Pupils with special educational needs related to physical disabilities are given the help, care and challenges they need to succeed.

Assessing pupils' progress

25. Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics and ICT, and give a clear picture of pupils' attainment. Since the last inspection, strategies for tracking pupils' progress in these subjects have improved, and data from statutory and non-statutory tests is analysed

thoroughly to inform teachers' planning. In science, sound procedures are in place but they are not used consistently by all teachers. In other subjects, assessment is satisfactory. During most lessons, teachers ensure that pupils understand what they need to do to improve. However, the quality of teachers' marking is barely satisfactory. Whilst there is some evidence of good practice, opportunities are often missed to provide pupils with well-focused guidance.

26. Assessment arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are good. Effective links with the feeder infant school mean that there is continuity in pupils' learning when they transfer to the junior school. Ongoing assessments in the junior school ensure that all 'new' needs are identified early. Pupils' progress is monitored rigorously and appropriate intervention taken should their achievements fall below what might reasonably be expected of them.

The curriculum

Curricular provision is satisfactory and pupils' learning is enhanced by a good range of additional activities. Staffing is sound, the accommodation is good and learning resources are mainly satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- There are many extra-curricular activities, visits and events to enrich pupils' learning.
- Insufficient time is allocated for geography and this restricts pupils' achievement in the subjects.
- Pupils' writing skills are not fostered effectively in work across the curriculum.
- Insufficient emphasis is given to the development of pupils' scientific enquiry skills in the older classes.
- The accommodation is spacious.

Commentary

27. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and meets statutory requirements. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, and religious education follows the locally agreed syllabus. The balance of the curriculum is mainly satisfactory but needs adjustment to provide more time for geography. The current curriculum plan shows that there are long periods of time, often two terms, when geography is not being taught, and this is unsatisfactory. Curriculum planning is generally satisfactory, although the most capable pupils are sometimes given work which is too easy, and teachers do not sufficiently develop pupils' scientific investigation skills.
28. Ample time is allocated for English and mathematics, and sound use is made of this time in mathematics. However, in English, whilst pupils' reading and speaking and listening skills are satisfactorily fostered, insufficient emphasis is given to the effective development of their writing skills. In addition, whilst there is some evidence of good practice in history, pupils' writing skills are not adequately developed in work across the curriculum. For example, in geography, one-word answers are often required rather than extended sentences and there is also an over-reliance on printed worksheets for pupils to record what they have learned in history and religious education. In these circumstances, pupils have no opportunities to produce pieces of extended original writing. In science, ample attention is given to the development of pupils' knowledge but there is not enough emphasis on the development of their scientific enquiry skills in the older classes. Sound use is made of pupils' mathematical and ICT skills to support their work across the curriculum. Indeed, there is evidence of good use of ICT to support pupils' learning in history.
29. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. The principles of inclusion are fully upheld in relation to all pupils and those with special educational needs have access to

the same curriculum as their peers. Care is taken to ensure that any work out of class does not prejudice their entitlement to the full curriculum. The special needs co-ordinator, teachers, teaching assistants and external specialists combine their varied expertise effectively to ensure that each pupil's precise needs are met.

30. The school provides a good personal, social and health education programme which permeates all aspects of school life. Before they leave the school, pupils experience programmes which ensure that they are fully aware of the issues related to sex education, alcohol and drug misuse. The 'Huff and Puff' initiative is having a positive impact on pupils' involvement in health-related exercise during lunchtimes.
31. There are good opportunities for curriculum enrichment through a wide range of after-school clubs. The school participates in a variety of competitive sports, and enjoys a 'creative arts week' when visitors to school share their expertise with the pupils, thus enriching their experience. Many visits and visitors to school bring the curriculum alive. The oldest pupils have the opportunity to attend a residential week, which enhances their personal development.
32. The quality of the accommodation is good. Classrooms are spacious, and the library is well equipped and provides a comfortable and quiet learning environment. There is a specialist music and drama room which is well used, but the ICT suite is too small and gets very hot. Pupils have to share computers, and the shape of the room means they have to work in very cramped conditions. However, pupils behave very well while working in the suite, and the cramped conditions do not appear to have a negative impact on standards. There are sensible plans to relocate the ICT suite in more spacious accommodation on the ground floor. This will also mean there is wheelchair access to the suite, which currently does not exist. Resources available to support the curriculum are satisfactory overall. The school grounds are well kept, but there is scope to develop greater use of the outside area as a learning resource.
33. The school has sufficient staff and, collectively, they have the expertise and experience to cover the age and ability range of the pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound, overall, and there is a continuous programme of training available for all to extend their expertise. However, some teachers would benefit from increasing their knowledge about art and design, and need to develop further their skills in the teaching of writing.

Care, guidance and support

Good overall. The care and welfare of pupils are given a high priority by all staff. Pupils are confident in seeking guidance and support when necessary, and adults are sensitive to their needs. The school seeks pupils' views on a range of school and curriculum issues and values their opinions.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pastoral care is a strength of the school.
- Health and safety matters are rigorously monitored.
- Pupils' views are sought and valued.

Commentary

34. A comprehensive and effective approach to pastoral care is present throughout the school. Teachers know the pupils well and relationships between staff and pupils are good. All adults are briefed appropriately about the individual needs of pupils and they play their full part in providing sensitive support. This ensures that pupils with medical, social or other difficulties are able to meet the day-to-day challenges of school life with confidence and become full members of the community. The designated teacher for children in public care regularly discusses their needs with their carers and links effectively with the outside agencies involved.

A well-planned and sensitive programme is also in place to help smooth the transition to secondary school for those pupils who might find it harder to adjust to a new environment. The school believes that this has proved successful in maintaining pupils' positive attitudes at the secondary stage.

35. Because pupils know their concerns will be listened to, they feel confident about raising issues with staff. The useful booklet about who is present on the playgrounds at break and lunchtimes helps reinforce the message that adults are there to lend a sympathetic ear to their worries. The rare instances of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively. The eldest pupils volunteer to act as buddies and mediators for the younger ones and their responsible attitudes also contribute to making playtimes feel pleasant and enjoyable for all.
36. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to the school community by expressing their views and by volunteering to help with a variety of tasks around the school. The school council has played an active part in improving the facilities and environment of the school, making sensible suggestions about upgrading the playground and the creation of a pond to commemorate a favourite teacher. Teachers are interested in pupils' views about how areas of the curriculum have been taught and their opinions are taken into account when they plan the programmes of work.
37. The school takes care to ensure that all aspects of health and safety are regularly and rigorously monitored and that good practice is consistently followed. Appropriate risk assessments, including those concerning the swimming pool, are in place and all adults are well briefed about the need for awareness of safety and security issues. Training has been undertaken in the handling of hazardous substances and the use of the hoist in the medical room. There are sound procedures for the storage and administration of medicines and many of the staff have first aid certification. Routines about moving around the building and staircases in a safe and orderly fashion are also well established. Although there is no barrier between the grounds of the junior school and the adjacent infant school, the site is well fenced and provides a safe and secure environment for the pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Good overall. The partnership with parents is good. Links with other schools and the community are sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents feel they are well informed about their children's progress.
- Parents have very positive views about the school, and believe the staff are approachable and welcoming.
- The special educational needs co-ordinator, who also works at the adjacent infant school, ensures good continuity of special needs provision.
- A minority of parents never attend parent consultations.

Commentary

38. Parents are unanimous in their praise for how easy they find it to talk to the headteacher and staff; they feel that they are welcomed and encouraged to become part of the school community. Their opinions about school matters are sought from time-to-time and their suggestions for improvements are considered carefully and implemented where possible. The vast majority of parents are supportive of the school, and the Friends' Association organises a variety of successful fund raising events which enable additional resources and environmental improvements to be provided.
39. Class and celebration assemblies are always well attended and many parents of the youngest pupils have taken up the invitation, and particularly enjoyed the opportunity to see lessons in

action. They believe that homework is regularly set and are able to monitor it better following the introduction of home/school diaries.

40. Parents feel that they are well informed about what their children are learning and the progress they are making. Curriculum summaries and regular newsletters are informative and parents value the regular opportunities they have to meet teachers to discuss how well their child is doing. Written reports to parents are detailed and appropriately include targets for pupils' achievement. A minority of parents do not bother to attend reviews of their children's progress. This means that they are not well informed about how they can support their children's learning at home and is likely to have a negative effect on learning.
41. The 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. The special needs co-ordinator invites parents to meet her to discuss their concerns formally, and she is also introducing 'drop-in' sessions for those who might prefer a less formal approach. All parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs attend meetings to review their child's progress.
42. Overall, links with other schools and with the community are sound. The school benefits from sharing the employment of a special needs co-ordinator with the adjacent infant school. This means that pupils' particular needs are well known before they join the school and a continuity of provision can be maintained. Those pupils who might find the transition from infants to juniors challenging can be identified and given extra support, making it easier for them to settle quickly to new routines.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher is providing the school with a clear sense of direction and is soundly supported by other key staff. A broad range of monitoring strategies is conscientiously implemented but sometimes they need to be more focused and to be followed up more effectively. **School governance is sound.**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is highly conscientious and shows clear vision for the school's development.
- The managers for English and mathematics have a good overview of provision in their subjects, and the special educational needs co-ordinator fulfils her role well.
- Monitoring and evaluation procedures sometimes need to be more focused and to be followed up more rigorously with effective actions to secure improvements.

Commentary

Leadership

43. **Overall, the leadership of the school is satisfactory.** Soon after his appointment in 2001, the headteacher identified the need to raise the school's expectations of pupils' potential achievement and to ensure that there was a stronger emphasis on measures to improve the quality of teaching and learning. His priorities were consistent with those identified in the last inspection, in 1998, when the leadership lacked drive and direction in relation to the improvement of pupils' academic standards. The headteacher has rectified this deficiency and is providing a clear vision and sense of purpose with a strong focus on pupils' achievement. He is strongly committed to running an equitable and inclusive school in which each individual matters. The headteacher has facilitated key debates with staff and governors about the school's performance. Increased professional dialogue, informed by the headteacher's sound analysis of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, has resulted in staff and

governors sharing common ambitions and goals. The headteacher has good interpersonal skills and these have been used well to promote a positive atmosphere in the school.

44. The headteacher has worked effectively with governors to create a school improvement plan which includes sensible priorities in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In contrast to the situation when the school was last inspected, objectives are clear and there are measurable targets in relation to areas for improvement. The headteacher has ensured that all staff are fully aware of the priorities in the plan and know how they can contribute towards the intended improvement. However, the plan does not specifically identify and seek to address some important weaknesses in the teaching which are inhibiting pupils' learning, and there is no outline planning beyond July 2005. These are weaknesses which need to be rectified.
45. The leadership contribution made by other key staff is satisfactory. The work of the senior management team is sound and is becoming more effective as its members become established in their roles. The deputy headteacher provides a good role model for her colleagues through her strong commitment and positive attitudes towards change. Overall, the curriculum leadership provided by subject managers is sound and, in the key subjects of English and mathematics, the managers have a clear view of what needs to be done to secure improvements.

Management

46. **Overall, the management of the school is satisfactory.** A broad range of monitoring strategies has been introduced in recent years. These have a beneficial effect on school effectiveness but there is scope to increase their impact. The headteacher regularly observes lessons, across the school. As a result, he has a sound overview of the quality of teaching and learning and has provided staff with useful feedback which has a positive effect on their professional development. However, the weaker elements identified in the teaching in some lessons sometimes need to be followed up more systematically and rigorously in order to improve the overall quality of teaching in the school from satisfactory to good. In addition, insufficient emphasis is given to spreading the very effective practice which is evident in the work of some teachers.
47. The results of statutory testing are analysed carefully, and the subject managers for English, mathematics and science have a clear overview of the strengths and areas for improvement that these results show. Across the curriculum, subject managers are conscientious and undertake a range of monitoring strategies, including interviewing pupils and by examining examples of pupils' work. Overall, satisfactory use is made of the considerable amount of information which is gathered. However, the analysis of this data sometimes needs to be sharper to ensure that key areas for improvement in pupils' achievement are identified and targeted accurately.
48. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), the headteacher and the special educational needs governor together provide effective leadership and management of special needs provision. The SENCO manages the day-to-day management of operations in special needs work both effectively and efficiently. She spares no effort in her endeavours to secure appropriate provision for each pupil. She also ensures that all staff are given relevant guidance and training, and that support assistants are suitably deployed to maximise the benefits to pupils.
49. 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.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	693,000
Total expenditure	716,700
Expenditure per pupil	2,527

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	34,000
Balance carried forward to the next	10,300

50. 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. Prudent financial planning has enabled the school to increase its reserve funds in the last financial year. At the time of the inspection, the accounts for 2003/04 had not been finalised but the school expects to carry forward about £23,000 into the current financial year. Overall, the school makes sound use of its resources and provides satisfactory value for money.

Aids and barriers to raising achievement

51. The most significant aids to raising achievement include pupils' positive attitudes to learning, the headteacher's determination to secure improvements, and the very effective teaching skills which are already demonstrated by some staff. Progress is being inhibited by too much teaching which is satisfactory, rather than better.

Governance

52. Governance is satisfactory. The governors are strongly committed to the school, their attendance at meetings is good and they ensure that statutory requirements are fully met. A range of appropriate committees is established and all provide sound support for the leadership and management of the school. The chair and vice chair of governors ensure they keep up to date with school issues through regular meetings with the headteacher, and a group of governors have helped to shape the school's mission statement through meetings with the headteacher and staff. For all subjects of the National Curriculum, and in religious education, there are named link governors who meet at least annually with the subject managers to discuss provision. Following these meetings, individual governors write useful reports for their fellow governors which help to broaden their awareness of curriculum provision. However, visits by governors to observe teaching and learning in the school are relatively rare, and would help them to develop their understanding about how the curriculum is implemented. The headteacher has taken care to brief governors about the results of testing, and governors have a sound awareness of the school's performance in the national tests in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. These results are discussed carefully and the governors have the confidence to ask the school challenging questions in order to hold it to account.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

The quality of provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are too low in writing; many pupils underachieve in this key aspect of their work.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' potential achievement are not always high enough.
- There are inconsistencies in teachers' approaches to planning, teaching and marking.
- Pupils' writing skills are not fostered effectively in work across the curriculum.
- The subject manager monitors provision rigorously but the action plan for English is having insufficient impact on pupils' achievement in writing.

Commentary

53. Overall, standards are below national expectations in Year 6 and broadly reflect the results of the national tests in English in 2003, which were below the national average and also below the results of similar schools. Standards have fallen since the last inspection, when they were broadly average. Overall, pupils' achievement in the subject is unsatisfactory. Although pupils' standards are broadly average in speaking and listening and in reading in Year 6, their standards in writing are too low. Indeed, the school's own analysis of the outcomes of assessment confirms that there is underachievement in writing by significant numbers of pupils not only in Year 6 but also in every year group. Overall, it is the pupils with special educational needs who do best in English. These pupils are well supported and make good progress towards the literacy targets in their individual education plans.
54. Pupils of all ages listen well: they are courteous and polite and are genuinely interested in what others have to say. They follow explanations and instructions closely, and they collaborate well with others to achieve shared goals, for example, in group work. Higher attaining pupils are very articulate: they have a wide vocabulary and a good command of spoken Standard English, and they respond willingly to questions. Some lower attaining pupils lack confidence: they do not always express themselves clearly and are sometimes reluctant to participate in whole-class discussions.
55. Inspection evidence gleaned from lesson observations and from hearing pupils read shows that most pupils make broadly satisfactory progress in reading throughout their time in the school. By Year 6, most pupils read fiction and other texts appropriate for their age confidently and fluently, with sound understanding of subject matter, characters and plot. They also understand some of the key features of different kinds of writing, and, where teaching is most effective, they are able to plan and write texts of a similar kind to those they have studied. They know how to locate books in the library using the Dewey system and can use information books to find things out. Higher attaining pupils produce well researched and well organised individual projects such as those about 'Tudor times' compiled by pupils in Year 5. Most pupils, of all ages and abilities, enjoy reading, and some read avidly. Nevertheless, few choose to read books with challenging ideas and language. More could be done to raise their expectations of themselves as readers and to promote the reading of a wider variety of genres.
56. There are, in Year 6 and elsewhere, many common weaknesses in writing produced by most pupils. These include: poor organisation and a lack of overall coherence; poor sentence structure; grammatical errors; weak spelling and punctuation; ill-formed and untidy handwriting and, on some occasions, the inappropriate use of informal, colloquial language. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 write competently for a variety of purposes in English lessons and in

work related to other subjects. However, very few exceed the expected standard for their age and sometimes their writing is spoiled by basic errors which have not been addressed adequately in earlier years.

57. During the inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was observed, and it was good in more than half of the lessons. In the best practice seen, in the top set in Year 4, pupils made very good progress because they were actively involved by the teacher in thinking, analysing, explaining and justifying their ideas at critical stages of the lesson. Nevertheless, evidence drawn from a careful examination of pupils' completed work, and informed by the weaker lessons seen, confirms that the teaching often has significant areas for improvement and is failing to enable pupils to make adequate overall progress in their learning in English. Factors which are impeding pupils' achievement in writing include those listed below. These need to be addressed consistently by all teachers if standards in writing are to improve.
- Some teachers focus too much on exercises in English lessons and use too many worksheets in other subjects. As a consequence, pupils get insufficient practice in producing extended pieces of writing.
 - Teachers' expectations of pupils are often too low: pupils are not routinely expected to produce their best work, to present their work neatly or to demonstrate mastery of a wide enough range of skills when asked to produce original pieces of writing.
 - Neither marking nor verbal feedback are used sufficiently by some teachers to help pupils to overcome weaknesses in their writing. Such weaknesses are simply accepted or ignored, and mediocre work sometimes receives fulsome praise.
 - Pupils are not sufficiently well informed about what constitutes satisfactory or better performance in writing and are given too little practice in developing and improving pieces of work.
 - Some teachers do not make effective use of model texts to give pupils insights into how real writers achieve their results and to inform their own writing.
58. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to help pupils draft and publish written work, for example, when producing project books for history. There is also evidence to show that some pupils with special educational needs use word-processors to good effect to help them record their ideas and spell words accurately.
59. The subject manager leads the subject conscientiously and energetically. His monitoring and evaluation of standards and of teaching and learning are rigorous, and he has a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in provision. Good assessment procedures are already in place, with the exception of marking. The subject action plan identifies exciting initiatives designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, actions to secure improvement are not sufficiently focused and sustained. As a consequence, their impact on pupils' standards is too limited.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. In most subjects, though not always in science, teachers ensure that pupils acquire the technical terms they need to understand, discuss and write about the topics they study. In history, evidence shows that some teachers forge relevant and effective links with literacy. For example, pupils learn to take notes while listening to television presenters talking about historical events and personalities; they read information books to find out about history. The higher attaining pupils, in particular, learn to select information for a topic, record it in their own words and then communicate their findings in the form of well organised and well presented project books. However, good practice such as this is rare and overall, pupils' writing skills are insufficiently promoted in work across the curriculum. An over-reliance on printed worksheets as a method for pupils to record what they have learned in history, geography and religious education means that pupils in some classes do not get the practice they need in order to learn to express their own ideas or to produce extended pieces of original writing. Although worksheets are few in science, teachers' expectations about the clarity of pupils' written

accounts and explanations are often too low, and untidily presented writing is a common feature of much of the work in science books in Years 4 and 5.

MATHEMATICS

The provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Whilst there is some particularly effective teaching, some lessons have areas for improvement.
- Assessment procedures are good.
- The most capable pupils sometimes need more challenging tasks.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

61. Current standards in mathematics are broadly in line with national expectations in Year 6 and represent an improvement on those reached in 2003, when the results of the national tests were below the national average and below the average results of similar schools. Standards were also in line with national expectations when the school was last inspected. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs generally do well and benefit from good support from teaching assistants. The most capable pupils make adequate progress, overall, and achieve well in Year 6 where they benefit from good teaching. However, they sometimes mark time in other years when their work is too easy.
62. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection. However, there is now some good and very good teaching. In the best lessons, good explanations are given so that pupils are very clear about what they are to learn, tasks are challenging and involve all pupils, and the pace of lessons is brisk. Effective methods are used in these lessons to engage and sustain pupils' interest. For example, in a Year 5 group, particularly well chosen and interesting tasks were given to the pupils to make them think and to apply their skills. In most classes, teachers use mathematical language well, so that all pupils become familiar with specific mathematical vocabulary. All teachers emphasise the need for pupils to develop a range of different mental methods to aid calculations, and importance is appropriately given to the learning of tables. These strategies are having a positive impact on pupils' skills in mental arithmetic.
63. In some lessons, which are broadly satisfactory, there are elements which require improvement. Teachers are not always sufficiently aware of the needs of the most able pupils. This is reflected in the lesson planning and by these pupils sometimes wasting time while waiting for others to grasp new concepts, particularly during whole class introductory sessions. In some lessons, the pace of learning is restricted because there is too much teacher talk and limited time is available for pupils to develop and apply their mathematical skills. In addition, teachers sometimes need to use questions more skilfully to check pupils' understanding and to assess their next steps in learning.
64. The leadership and management of mathematics are good. The subject manager is well supported by the headteacher so that there is a very clear overview of teaching and learning in the subject, and a good plan is in place to secure further improvement. Effective assessment procedures have been established and have helped to raise standards this year. Pupils are regularly tested, and the resulting data is used well to track their progress and to inform teachers' planning. Pupils have appropriate individual targets in mathematics, and are aware of what they need to do to improve. However, in their marking of pupils' work, teachers often miss opportunities to provide well-focused guidance.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Overall, satisfactory use is made of mathematics to support pupils' work in other subjects, and ICT makes a sound contribution to their learning in mathematics.

SCIENCE

The quality of provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although the overall quality of science teaching is satisfactory, there are common areas for improvement in some lessons.
- Pupils' scientific investigation skills are underdeveloped.
- Science teaching is good in Year 3.
- The implementation of the school's assessment procedures is inconsistent.
- The most capable pupils mark time in some lessons.
- There are weaknesses in the rigour of some elements of the subject manager's monitoring.

Commentary

66. Standards in science are broadly average in Year 6, though at the lower end of the average range. Overall, these standards represent satisfactory achievement and match those found when the school was last inspected. However, pupils' knowledge of scientific facts is generally more secure than their scientific enquiry skills, which are underdeveloped in the older classes. Pupils with special educational needs make sound overall progress in science, and the inspection found no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls in the subject. The most capable pupils make mainly adequate progress but could sometimes do better if their work was more challenging. Overall, current standards in science are a little higher than in 2003, when the results of the national tests in Year 6 were below the national average and below the average results of similar schools.
67. Pupils generally do well in Year 3, reflecting the effective teaching they receive. For example, they have achieved well when learning about the growth of plants and, during the inspection, made good progress when deciding how to conduct fair tests to discover the conditions which affect the germination of seeds. In Year 4, pupils' understanding of electrical circuits is satisfactory for their ages. They can identify key bones in the human body and are able to describe the function of their skeletons. Pupils' books in Year 4 confirm that a reasonable amount of ground is covered in science lessons. However, in common with work in pupils' science books in Year 5, too much is untidily presented. In Year 5, pupils' satisfactory achievement is exemplified by their sound knowledge about the Sun, Earth and Moon, and by their understanding of why the length of shadows changes during the day. Most can name the main parts of a flower and have an adequate understanding about the life cycles of flowering plants. They are able to follow their teachers' instructions to conduct simple experiments but often fail to draw pertinent conclusions from their results. In Year 6, most pupils demonstrate sound achievement when using keys to help them to identify and group living things in a systematic way. They know that weight is a force which is measured in newtons, and that several forces can act on an object. However, their investigation skills are generally underdeveloped. Too many pupils take insufficient account of the need for precision when recording observations and measurements, do not present their results effectively, and fail to notice patterns in their results and to draw informed conclusions.
68. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, and enables pupils to make mainly sound progress in their learning. It has fallen since the last inspection, when it was judged to be good, and has a number of areas which require improvement. In the most effective lessons, teachers capture and maintain pupils' interest very well. They know just when to intervene with

well-judged comments to ensure that pupils are challenged and supported throughout the lessons. In these good lessons, teachers take particular care to introduce and reinforce scientific vocabulary and make sure that efficient use is made of the time available. In lessons which are satisfactory, overall, there are common areas for improvement. In these lessons, there is sometimes too much teacher talk and too little pupil discussion and activity. Teachers' questions sometimes need to probe pupils' understanding more deeply in these lessons, and the most capable pupils tend to coast through their work. Most teachers need to give more emphasis to the introduction and reinforcement of scientific vocabulary, and to promote pupils' enquiry skills more effectively. In the only unsatisfactory lesson seen, the teacher's expectations of pupils' potential achievement were too low, pupils' mistakes were not rectified and inefficient use was made of time. Satisfactory assessment procedures have been introduced but these are not implemented properly by all teachers.

69. Sound use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in science. However, pupils' writing skills are not adequately promoted, across the school. Often, teachers' expectations about the clarity of pupils' written accounts and explanations are too low. In addition, untidily presented work is too readily accepted in some classes.
70. The leadership and management of science are broadly satisfactory but include areas for improvement. The subject manager is conscientious and has gained useful insights into pupils' attitudes to science through discussions across all year groups. In addition, she has analysed the results of the national tests in 2003 and has provided her colleagues with a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance in these tests. However, she has not examined examples of pupils' completed work, from across the school with enough rigour in this academic year, and her observation of science lessons is very rare. These factors limit her awareness of the current quality of teaching and learning in the subject and restrict her ability to target areas for improvement with sufficient precision.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen since the last inspection.
- Good assessment procedures are established.
- The accommodation for information and communication technology is cramped, but there are plans to rectify this situation.

Commentary

71. When the school was last inspected, pupils were making insufficient progress and their standards in Year 6 were below average. The school has rectified this situation, so that standards are now in line with national expectations and pupils' achievement in the subject is sound. This results from improved teacher competence and confidence, and from more time being allocated to the subject. The structured guidelines adopted by the school are used well to enable pupils to develop their skills progressively, and the appointment of a technician has also had a positive impact on provision. The technician provides effective support for the subject manager, as he does much of the trouble-shooting, saving the subject manager's time.
72. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and there is evidence of good practice. From Year 3, pupils are given good opportunities to develop their word-processing skills, changing fonts and colours, and importing pictures to present work in an attractive way. They are able to use a menu and navigate a program to find out information about the local environment, while pupils in Year 6 interrogate the national census to research into families who lived locally at the turn of the century. Teachers give clear instructions, developing pupils' skills in a progressive way. High expectations are set of behaviour, so that the cramped surroundings do not have a

negative impact on attainment. In most lessons, pupils are encouraged to make their own choices, enhancing their personal development, and all are confident to access and close down their work. However, there are occasional weaknesses in teaching when time is not well used. In one lesson seen, there was too much teacher talk and insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their skills. Sometimes, pupils who have developed above average skills, partly through their work with computers at home, are insufficiently challenged in lessons.

73. The leadership and management of the subject are sound. The conscientious subject manager has formulated a sound action plan for ICT, has observed some lessons, and examines teachers' planning to ensure that all elements of the subject are taught. Good assessment procedures have been established and are having a beneficial effect on pupils' achievement. Resources are good but the ICT suite is too small and becomes very hot. However, there are plans to relocate it in the near future in more spacious accommodation.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. Sound use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects. Teachers plan the use of ICT in a range of subjects, and this results in pupils confidently using the Internet for research, practising word-processing skills and solving mathematical problems.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision for geography is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below national expectations in Year 6.
- Pupils underachieve because insufficient time is allocated to the subject.

Commentary

75. Insufficient lessons were seen to judge the quality of teaching, but a careful examination of pupils' completed work and discussions with pupils show that standards are below those expected and represent underachievement. This is a deterioration since the last inspection when standards were average and pupils were making satisfactory progress in the subject. An examination of the long-term planning shows that there are long periods of time, often two terms, when geography is not taught and that the subject receives insufficient attention over time. This results in the superficial coverage of topics, and in pupils not learning as much as they should. There is some evidence of the effective use of ICT in geography, in relation to the use of the internet to search for information. However, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills through work in geography since pupils are rarely expected to write at reasonable length.
76. Evidence suggests that there have been previous weaknesses in the leadership and management of the subject, given the current situation. However, the recently appointed subject manager has made a sound start by reviewing the planning and by proposing an increase in the time allocation to geography.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits, visitors and drama enrich pupils' experience and bring the subject to life.
- Most teachers make effective links between history and literacy. However, printed worksheets are sometimes over-used as a means of recording what has been learned.
- Pupils' key historical skills are not consistently developed across the school.

Commentary

77. No lessons were seen, but there is ample evidence from discussions with teachers and pupils, from pupils' written work and from teachers' planning to allow secure judgements to be made about pupils' standards and achievement in the subject. No judgement can be made about the overall quality of teaching.
78. Evidence from pupils' written work shows that their achievements are sound and they generally attain average standards for their ages. Standards were also in line with national expectations when the school was last inspected. Through the use of dates and timelines and by considering and comparing distinctive periods of British history, pupils develop an appropriate awareness of the passage of time. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of past events and of the personalities involved. Higher attaining, older pupils are able to recognise some of the causes and consequences of events and can explain them. When given the opportunity to do so, these pupils can also work independently to research particular aspects of a period of history. For example, more able pupils in Year 5 used a variety of resources, including the Internet and CD-ROMs, to find out about different aspects of life in Tudor times. They organised their findings well and communicated them clearly, to a wider audience, in the form of individual project books.
79. The range of work shows that, over time, most pupils develop a satisfactory grasp of key historical skills. Even so, planning and teaching do not yet guarantee the consistent and progressive acquisition of those skills year on year. In one Year 6 class, for example, almost all recorded work is in the form of worksheets, and pupils have clearly had little opportunity to find things out and communicate their ideas in writing. Visits to places of historical interest and other enrichment activities are planned for all year groups. The benefits are evident in pupils' enthusiastic and informed comments about such events.
80. Evidence from the work in most classes shows that teachers make some relevant and effective links between history and literacy with a view to enhancing pupils' learning. For example, in Year 4, pupils write 'letters home' from Roman soldiers forced to endure the vagaries of the English climate on their tour of duty; pupils in Year 5 practise the skill of note-taking while watching a TV programme about the Tudors; and pupils in Year 6 pen prayers to Aphrodite when they study Ancient Greece.
81. The leadership and management of the subject are sound. The subject manager has a secure overview of provision and has worked steadily, over a number of years, to improve teaching, learning, assessment and resources. She is currently developing a common approach to assessment based on the progressive development of key skills, a measure which should address the most significant weaknesses in provision. She routinely helps teachers with planning and examines pupils' work, although she has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning directly through classroom observations.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of the stories, customs and traditions associated with Christianity and other major religions.
- Too little emphasis is placed on what is to be learned from religion, and pupils have few opportunities to record their ideas in their own words.

Commentary

82. A careful scrutiny of pupils' completed work from all year groups shows that their overall achievement in the subject is satisfactory. In Year 6, standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, as they were at the time of the last inspection. It is not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching in the subject. However, in the single lesson seen, teaching was satisfactory and enabled pupils to make sound progress in their learning.
83. In all year groups, pupils' written work shows that they have acquired a sound knowledge and understanding of the stories, festivals, customs and traditions associated with Christianity and with other major world religions. They use appropriate terms when referring to religious symbols, beliefs and practices, noting, for example, that while Hindus worship at 'shrines', Jews attend 'synagogues' and Christians congregate in 'churches'. They know about the principal events in the life of Christ, and they are aware of some similarities and differences between the beliefs held, and the practices followed, by people of different faiths.
84. Occasionally, pupils reflect upon what they have studied in religious education and make links to their own lives. For example, pupils in Year 6 reflect on their own need for a special, quiet place to which they can retreat when they feel sad, when they need to calm down or when they simply need time and space to think quietly on their own. Overall, however, pupils' recorded work in religious education lacks true spirituality. Indeed, much of it takes the form of worksheets with only very short captions or statements of fact recorded by the pupils or, occasionally, word-searches and puzzles that test their factual knowledge. Pupils have few opportunities to gain insights into their own values and beliefs as a result of what has been learned in religious education lessons, and should record their ideas in their own words more frequently. Overall, pupils' writing skills are not adequately promoted through their work in religious education.
85. The subject manager has assumed responsibility for religious education only very recently, and has therefore had very little opportunity to develop her role. As a consequence, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of leadership and management in the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design

The quality of provision in art and design is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average in Year 6 and represent underachievement.
- Overall, teachers' expectations are too low.

Commentary

86. Standards are below average in art and design in Year 6 and have declined since the last inspection, when they were in line with national expectations. Pupils' achievement in the subject is sound in Year 3 but is mainly unsatisfactory for older pupils.
87. In Year 3, pupils have achieved satisfactory standards when creating simple landscapes, using paint and collage, and when learning to mix their own paint colours. Their pictures of plants are carefully observed and mainly well drawn, representing good achievement. In Year 4, pupils' drawing skills are generally underdeveloped, although their painting is mainly satisfactory for their ages. In Year 5, pupils have discussed the sunflower paintings of Van Gogh and have created their own pictures of flowers, using paint and collage. However, these pictures lack interest and vitality, have little evident links with the work of the artist and represent underachievement. During the inspection, a Year 5 class taught by the subject manager achieved well when creating bold paintings which reflected elements of the work of Georgia O'Keeffe. However, in the main, drawing skills remain underdeveloped in Year 5. The situation continues in Year 6, and is evident in pupils' very simplistic drawings of their classmates and in their charcoal and pastel representations of chairs. These demonstrate standards which are usually achieved by considerably younger pupils. In addition, Year 6 pupils derive little benefit from exercises in perspective or in shading techniques, largely because teachers' expectations and expertise need to be increased.
88. Insufficient art and design lessons were observed during the inspection to make a secure overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, evidence from pupils' completed work shows that the teaching does not enable most pupils to make adequate progress, and that teachers' expectations for pupils' potential achievement are usually too low. Evidence strongly suggests that teachers would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge in art and design.
89. The leadership and management of art and design are satisfactory, overall. The subject manager had just re-started at the school at the time of the inspection, following leave for two terms. She has good expertise in the subject and has created a very useful scheme of work which was introduced from September 2003. However, her absence from the school meant she has not been able to monitor its implementation. She is appropriately aware of the need to improve provision and to ensure that the sound assessment procedures that she has introduced have a more beneficial effect on pupils' standards. Her strong commitment, enthusiasm and good subject knowledge mean she is well placed to foster improvements.

Design and technology

The quality of provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 5 pupils achieve well when using cams to control the movement of toys.
- There are some weaknesses in the rigour of evaluation by the subject manager.

Commentary

90. Standards are in line with national expectations in Year 6, and reflect those found in the last inspection. Pupils' achievement in the subject is satisfactory.
91. In Year 3, pupils have examined and evaluated a range of commercially made puppets, and demonstrate satisfactory skills when designing and making their own finger or glove puppets. These pupils have also achieved sound standards when designing and making simple 'marble maze' games, using card and wood. In Year 4, pupils have made satisfactory progress when designing boxes from card and wood, and their finished boxes demonstrate sound making

skills. In Year 5, pupils have learned about the control of movement through the use of cams, and their completed models demonstrate the considerable care taken in their construction. Pupils have used triangular pieces of card effectively to strengthen the corners of the wooden frames for their models, and the overall quality of the finished models is above average. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate satisfactory standards when evaluating the quality of a range of commercially made breads and when designing and making their own breads. They are aware of the importance of food hygiene and have made reasonable evaluations of the success of their food products.

92. No design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, a careful examination of pupils' completed work shows that the teaching is enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress in their learning in the subject.
93. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, overall. The subject manager has worked closely with the adviser from the local education authority to create a sound scheme of work for design and technology, which is being satisfactorily implemented. The subject manager has gained useful insights into pupils' attitudes to design and technology through discussions, across the school, but needs to analyse samples of pupils' completed work more rigorously to increase her awareness of their standards and progress in the subject. She has introduced very sound assessment procedures but is not sufficiently aware about what they show.

Music and Physical education

94. Insufficient evidence was collected to make a judgement about provision in these subjects.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

The quality of provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- PSHE is a strength in curriculum provision and pupils achieve well, as a result.
- Teaching in PSHE lessons is good.

Commentary

95. Pupils achieve well in PSHE as a result of good provision made for the various aspects of their development. The school finds many ways to help pupils develop confidence and responsibility and to draw on their own resources for the common good. For example, pupils of all ages undertake routine classroom duties. They also learn to work in harmony with other pupils, for example, through membership of the school council or when working as monitors in the school library. Year 6 pupils are encouraged to mediate between younger pupils, where necessary, when disputes arise in the playground, and to use their initiative to devise and supervise playground games. Pupils rise well to the challenges involved: they take their duties seriously, behave responsibly and face each new task in a constructive way. Through the auspices of the school council and when raising funds for charity, pupils learn the importance of managing money and often make their own suggestions for ways in which funds might be raised.
96. Routine activities such as the annual creation of classroom rules help pupils to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens. A drugs awareness programme and a 'Getting it Right' programme show them the importance of making the 'right' moral choices and provide many opportunities for pupils to consider, and discuss, their own positions in regard to significant issues that trouble society at large. Older pupils are taught about parliamentary

democracy. Having seen a short excerpt from a video recording of Prime Minister's question time, they have appreciated the role of the Speaker in ensuring fair and equal debate and are pleased to involve pupils in the role of arbitrator in their own debates. Pupils are aware of the dangers of drugs and already appreciate the principles that underpin healthy eating. School, classroom and playground rules reinforce pupils' awareness of the need for safety.

97. The teaching of PSHE lessons is good. Teachers relate well to the pupils and, as a consequence, most pupils feel confident to air their views and to discuss their feelings. In their own attitudes and behaviour, teachers and support staff conduct themselves as good role models for the values they present to their pupils. Assemblies, enrichment activities, visits and visitors strongly reinforce the themes covered in PSHE lessons and combine to create provision which is a strength of the school.
98. It is not possible to judge the current leadership and management of the subject, since the manager has been absent for some time on long-term sick leave. However, it is clear that he has helped to ensure that PSHE has a high profile in the school and that pupils benefit from good provision.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

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

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

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

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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