

INSPECTION REPORT

RIDERS JUNIOR SCHOOL

Havant

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115908

Headteacher: John Dean

Lead inspector: Peter Lewis

Dates of inspection: 20 – 22 October 2003

Inspection number: 260505

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

© Crown copyright 2003

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	248
School address:	Kingsclere Avenue Leigh Park Havant
Postcode:	PO9 4RY
Telephone number:	023 9247 5342
Fax number:	023 9248 1139
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Andrew Martin
Date of previous inspection:	27 September 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves an area of considerable economic and social deprivation within a large estate to the north of Portsmouth. It is about the same size as other primary schools with 248 pupils who come from a narrow range of social and economic backgrounds. A very small proportion come from minority ethnic families and all pupils speak English as their first language. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is above the national average. Pupils starting school this year have attainments that are generally below average although, in previous years the range has been broader with many starting school with attainments that were well below average. The proportion of pupils having special educational needs is well above average at just over 44 per cent. Although some of these pupils are a little behind their peers, most of these pupils have more significant difficulties and two have Statements of Special Educational Needs. The percentage of pupils leaving or joining the school at other than the normal time is above average.

There was considerable disruption in the two years following the last inspection with three acting headteachers and a high turnover of staff. As a result, standards of attainment and of teaching declined dramatically and the school was recognised by the local education authority and by its community as one that required significant support.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21351	Peter Lewis	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology
19322	Caroline Webb	Lay inspector	
32123	Gill Wiles	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education
21159	Kaye Case	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Parkman Ltd in association with *PkR*
35 Trewartha Park
Weston-Super-Mare
North Somerset
BS23 2RT

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 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS	18
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	25

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** standard of education which is improving rapidly. This is as a result of strengths in the leadership and management which are **good** and in the teaching, much of which is also **good**. The school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards of attainment in English, mathematics, science and religious education in Year 6 are **unsatisfactory**, although pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.
- The headteacher, senior managers and governors have a **good** understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and, as a result, actions taken to secure improvement are effective.
- Although subject leaders have a satisfactory understanding of some features of their subjects, their knowledge of standards across the school is insufficient to ensure clear development planning.
- The overall quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory** and the school's use of its accommodation is very good.
- The quality of teaching overall is **satisfactory**, and is **good** in numeracy and literacy in Years 5 and 6.
- The use made of assessment information in planning appropriate work, especially for the more able pupils is **unsatisfactory**.
- Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is a considerable strength because of the good quality guidance that is provided and the very good use that is made of the high quality equipment and software.

The improvement since the last inspection is **good**. Following a dramatic decline in both standards and provision during a period of considerable turbulence in the school's leadership following the last inspection, the current headteacher has provided a clear focus upon improving pupils' learning through rigorous self-evaluation and effective action. As a result, standards are improving, most of the weaknesses reported have been addressed and strengths noted at that time have also improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	E	E	E*
Mathematics	E	E*	E	E
Science	D	E	E*	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

The E grade shows that in the year 2002 standards in English were in the bottom 5% nationally*

For pupils in the 2002 cohort, in the table above, achievement was unsatisfactory. These pupils entered the school with standards that were well below those normally found, although pupils entering the school now have attainments that are broadly below. By the end of Year 6, standards are now below average in speaking and listening, writing, mathematics and science and average in reading. Achievement is satisfactory overall but is unsatisfactory for pupils with higher attainment. Standards in ICT are above those expected at age eleven and standards in religious education are below those expected as a result of pupils low skills in literacy. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in class, when supported by teaching assistants and in carefully planned groups led by

the special educational needs co-ordinator and make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Potentially higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should due to work that is frequently not sufficiently challenging.

Pupils' personal development is very good. It is well promoted through the very good provision for their moral and social development and the good provision for their spiritual development. There remain weaknesses in the school's provision for pupils' cultural development. Pupils behave very well in lessons and at other times and have positive attitudes to their learning. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. Although the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, over half is good or better and so many pupils learn effectively and make good progress. This is because good relationships and interesting activities enthuse them and support their learning well. Teachers' use of assessment is **unsatisfactory** and this prevents them from planning lessons that fully challenge all pupils. Following a thorough review, the curriculum is now appropriately based on the National Curriculum and is well supported by a range of visits and extra-curricular activities and by very good links with the community. Parents support the school well which has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**, with some **very good** features. The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good and that of key staff is good because the school's analysis of its effectiveness is accurate and clearly focused on raising standards. As a result, appropriate actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning are clearly identified and this **good management** has already begun to raise standards. Governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is **good** and all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have an overwhelmingly positive view of the school and have no significant concerns. Pupils, whose views were sought at the start of this term, like being in the school, feel that they are encouraged to work hard and feel that they have an adult to turn to if they are worried.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education.
- Improve the use made of assessment so that it fully informs teachers' planning for all pupils.
- Extend the role of subject leaders so that their identification of required improvements stems from a clear understanding of standards and achievement across the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement overall is **satisfactory**. In Years 5 and 6, achievement is frequently **good**. Standards are **below average** in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils are 11. The achievement of many pupils with higher attainment is **unsatisfactory** because teachers do not always expect enough of them.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising in English, mathematics and science but remain too low.
- Standards in ICT, are above average.
- Standards in religious education are below those expected as a result of weaknesses in pupils' literacy skills.
- There are examples of very good and excellent teaching in ICT and for pupils with special educational needs which have a positive impact on standards.
- Higher attaining pupils' achievement is too low in English, mathematics and science as a result of weaknesses in assessment.

Commentary

Attainment on entry to the school is **well below** that normally found.

1. The results of the 2002 national assessments for pupils in Year 6 showed a drop from the standards noted in the last report. In 2002, standards in English were very low, while in mathematics and science, standards were well below the national average. The trend in the school's results at that point was broadly in line with the national trend following a dramatic decline in standards shortly after the last inspection.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	40 (25)	75 (75)
Mathematics	45 (42)	73 (71)
Science	77 (77)	86 (87)

There were 65 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The preliminary results of the 2003 national assessments show that there was some improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 in English, mathematics and science, but a comparison of the results with those of 2002 indicates that overall attainment in all three subjects was well below average.
3. Pupils throughout the school achieve at a satisfactory level and, in many cases, their achievement is good as a result of skilled teaching and the impact of clear strategies for improvement recently introduced by the school. Inspection evidence confirms that standards have risen to below average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and because of this, achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. In contrast, while the school has been successful in improving its provision for average

and lower-attaining pupils, few lessons are planned to cater appropriately for those with higher attainment and, as a result, their achievement is lower. Standards in ICT are above average following the significant investment in resources and training made by the school recently. In other subjects where it was possible to make a judgement, standards are broadly in line with those expected.

- There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills effectively in subjects like science, history, geography and religious education. In contrast, pupils use their skills in ICT effectively in other subjects, which has a positive impact on their achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

A welcoming, friendly atmosphere and very good relationships now characterise the school. Pupils' attendance, although close to the national average, is slightly below it and their attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. The number of exclusions has declined. Pupils' personal development is also **very good** and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good behaviour.
- Very good relationships amongst pupils.
- Very high expectations of behaviour.
- Good spiritual development.
- Knowledge and understanding of Britain's multicultural society not yet developed sufficiently.

Commentary

- The school, working very hard, has successfully improved pupils' behaviour, and their attitudes to their learning are now more positive than at any time since the last inspection. The school has worked very hard to improve behaviour and, as a result of the effectiveness of the consistently applied behaviour management procedures, exclusions have declined and behaviour is very good. Pupils like school and wait happily in the playground for the doors to open in the mornings. Their attendance has improved and there are far fewer instances of unauthorised absence. Too many holidays are still taken during the term however, and it is unfortunate that there has been no educational welfare officer in post to support the school's drive for the past two terms. Telephone calls to parents to establish reasons for absence are now rarely necessary but the punctuality of a few still needs to be improved.

The table below shows the attendance figures for the school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year

Authorised absence	
School data:	6.5
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	1.5
National data:	0.5

6. Pupils' moral and social development are very good. They have a strong sense of natural justice and try hard to follow the code of conduct which has been written by the school council. The school council is an elected body who have a perceived impact on decision making where appropriate and it develops not only each member's sense of responsibility but also other pupils' awareness of their democratic responsibilities. Paired, group and teamwork is well conducted with clear expectations held for appropriate conduct and productive collaboration and co-operation. Pupils accept that sanctions are fairly given. If 'Time Out' is not successful then an interview with either the headteacher or deputy headteacher results. Bullying and harassing behaviour are not tolerated and pupils know this. Fixed-term exclusions are well used to highlight unacceptable behaviour. There have been eight of these in the past 12 months but no permanent exclusions.
7. Social skills are well promoted throughout the school. Pupils work well together, share their equipment and enjoy their play, trying hard to ensure that no one is left out. An inclusive society, they are aware of those with difficulties and that there are people less fortunate than themselves. The additional support for those attending the nurture unit is well planned, effective and valued as is the support for all those who have special education or other needs. Specialists visit the school regularly.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No. of pupils on roll	Number of fixed-period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	98	8	7
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	149	0	0

8. Pupils' personal development is very good as a result of the many good opportunities they are given to take responsibility and the school's encouragement to do so. For example, girls who volunteer to tidy the library books and those on the rota to scan the books borrowed, perform their tasks well and with a sense of pride. School councillors take their roles seriously and are pleased to report the views of their peers. The school takes notice of these and consultation with pupils is good.
9. Pupils' spiritual development is good. The school plans well for spiritual awareness and enables some 'magic' moments through lessons, for example when mummifying fish "Ancient Egyptian style", Year 5 pupils were excited and even surprised when they realised that by adding herbs the smell became acceptable. In assembly, when the caretaker plays the piano with feeling as pupils enter, switching easily from 'Shalom' to 'He's got the Whole world in his Hands' and other well known tunes, pupils hum the familiar hymns. He sensitively accompanies their singing, and a spiritual dimension is clearly evident. Pupils' cultural development is unsatisfactory overall. They have a satisfactory understanding of their own culture but as yet their knowledge of other cultures and traditions is not good enough. Visits from the police and other agencies alert pupils to the difficulties and dangers to be found outside school and how best to deal with these, although many have already had to cope with some of these problems in their daily lives. They develop responsible attitudes as they go through the school and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

10. The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Following the appointment of the headteacher two years ago, this has improved from a very low point where the curriculum, quality of teaching and expectations of pupils' work and behaviour were in need of significant improvement. The school recognises that more remains to be done, and has appropriate plans in place, to improve further.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **satisfactory** throughout the school, with much that is **good** or better. This marks an improvement over time since the last inspection. Pupils, as a result learn at an appropriate rate. Pupils' progress is assessed thoroughly but the information available is not used as well as it might be to move pupils forward. This is because whole-school procedures have not yet been fully established.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour.
- Good relationships are evident between staff and pupils and set a firm foundation for learning.
- Very good support from learning support assistants helps pupils to move forward.
- There is good inclusion of pupils with special educational needs.
- Most teachers have an enthusiastic and imaginative approach.
- Assessment information is not used as effectively as it could be and pupils do not always have a clear picture of what they need to do to improve.
- In some lessons pupils spend too long listening to the teacher and other parts of the lesson are consequently rushed.
- In many lessons there is a good use of questioning to challenge pupils.
- Very good use made of individual teacher's strengths.

Commentary

11. The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen across the school. There is a slight difference in the quality of teaching and learning between Years 3 and 4, where there is a larger proportion of satisfactory teaching, and Years 5 and 6, where overall the quality of teaching is good. Both parents and pupils are very positive about the teaching staff. Pupils especially feel that their teachers help them to learn well.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	3	10	11	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Common strengths

12. There are some common strengths in teaching that underpin the satisfactory quality of pupils' learning. These include high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which means that pupils concentrate well on the tasks that are set. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils like and trust their teachers and learning support assistants and are given appropriate assistance in tackling their work with confidence. Good support from learning support

assistants means that those with special educational needs have opportunities to work in small groups with adult help.

The characteristics of good, very good and excellent lessons seen were

13. Interesting activities and a lively approach gripped pupils' interest and helped them to move forward quickly. Very good questioning and discussion enabled pupils to think carefully and develop their understanding while considering the contributions made by other pupils. In the best lessons, the teachers used very good subject knowledge to challenge all pupils through activities and questioning directed at individuals and the whole group. Tasks were accurately planned in relation to pupils' abilities and teachers had the confidence to adapt the planned activities in response to the work that pupils were doing, which promoted rapid learning for all groups.

Assessment

14. Assessment procedures have improved significantly since the last inspection, when they were judged not good enough. Pupils are tested frequently in English, mathematics and science. The statutory test results are very thoroughly analysed so that staff have a clear picture of pupils' attainment. However this data is not used rigorously enough to plan subsequent work. Tracking systems are new and, although they show the progress that pupils make, they are not yet sufficiently clear to show clearly whether this is good enough. Generally staff give pupils good verbal feedback on their work, but the marking of work is not always helpful. It does not give pupils a clear picture of whether they have learnt what was intended. There are no whole-school expectations for how teachers' day-to-day assessment is recorded or linked to the targets that have recently been established. Examination of pupils' previous work and teachers' planning shows that not enough thought is given to planning appropriate work to extend the most able pupils. Except in ICT, no pupils were working above the expected level and work was not planned to enable this.

The curriculum

15. Overall the school provides a broad curriculum that is well-supported by the range of clubs and the range of visits that take place. Planning for different subjects has improved since the last inspection. There are sufficient teachers and learning support assistants to provide effective support for pupils and they have been well deployed to make the best use of their expertise. The school's planning provides very good support for pupils with special educational needs but not enough consideration is given to the needs of the more able pupils. Significant improvements have been made to the school's accommodation and grounds and resources have been improved, particularly in English, mathematics and ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum meets statutory requirements and it is broad and balanced.
- Targets set for literacy and numeracy are not yet tracked through other subjects.
- The school has adopted a range of initiatives to improve the low standards in English and mathematics but these have not yet made sufficient impact on raising standards.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The range of extra-curricular opportunities is good and assists development in sport, art, technology and social development.
- The school provides effective programmes for personal, social and health education, sex and relationships education and attention to alcohol and drugs misuse.
- Curriculum planning does not support the progress of pupils with higher attainment well enough.

- Teachers' expertise and experience are well matched to the curriculum.
- Support staff are very effectively deployed and they make a very good contribution to learning.
- The accommodation is spacious, well used and very well maintained. There are very good resources for ICT and resources are good in the core subjects.

Commentary

16. The staff recognise strongly that levels of attainment and achievement need to be raised and have begun by strengthening coherence and corporate approaches to the provision of all aspects of the curriculum. Well-planned policies, carefully programmed schemes of work designed to present knowledge and skills progressively as pupils move from year group to year group are in place. Long-term plans for each subject support the appropriate coverage required by National Curriculum regulation. The school uses nationally devised schemes of work but there is not enough emphasis on how these relate to levels of attainment identified within the National Curriculum. Consequently the monitoring of progress is not sharply enough defined and leads to underachievement in some groups, particularly the higher attaining pupils.
17. Subject monitoring by subject leaders is conscientiously done and staff have a good view of what aspects need developing but their capacity to make informed judgements on standards of attainment is impaired by their uncertainty about what is expected of pupils within each level specified by the National Curriculum. Very little planning is attempted for the higher levels particularly in English and mathematics because expectations for high attainment are too low. However, lower attaining pupils receive good provision and a booster class to support learning in English and mathematics is successfully meeting this aim.
18. Pupils' achievement in other subjects such as history and religious education is below average as a consequence of weaknesses in pupils' literacy skills, particularly their writing. As a result, they are unable to probe aspects being studied with any depth of focus.
19. Teachers and others work hard to produce a lively range of extra-curricular activities that are well attended. There is a residential visit for Year 4 and Years 5 and 6, and there are plans to extend this facility to Year 3 pupils. Sporting activities such as football, badminton, and basketball extend beyond the school, for example, in inter-school matches, participation in local events, the local leisure centre sport festivals. There is a girls' football team that has successfully participated in outside matches. As members of the School Sport Foundation, planning for increased participation and effective monitoring systems for sporting activities are occurring.
20. Links with other schools indicate a commitment to forge innovative links. Year 4 pupils are currently working with the local secondary school to produce a musical. Team teaching with the Head of Department, in music, at Year 3, is a new venture which adds to the variety of the curriculum and promotes learning for those pupils.
21. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. It is planned specifically in discrete topics, following the local education authority's guidelines for PSHE and Citizenship. Circle time is an effective example of one approach. The school has also maintained good provision for sex education and relationships and for attention to alcohol and drugs misuse.
22. The match of teachers to the curriculum is good because of the deliberate management policy of capitalising on teachers' strengths. Support staff are very capable and committed to the pupils they support. They are encouraged to know the pupils well, are thoroughly briefed and have a clear view of how best to support pupils. There is a good level of liaison between them and the class teachers. These features have a positive impact learning for pupils.

23. Care has been given to ensuring that the spacious accommodation is effectively used. Any refurbishment, new projects and re-design are thoughtfully carried out to make the best use of available space and facilities. Pupils' views via the school council are sought on issues directly related to pupils' concerns such as the re-design of the school playground.
24. Adequate resources are in place to meet the needs of the curriculum in all subjects. The school has planned carefully to improve resources and to ensure that they reflect the needs of pupils. This has been particularly successful in ICT with the establishment of the very well-equipped computer suite which is well timetabled to support the use of ICT across subjects as well as the development of pupils' skills.

Care, guidance and support

The welfare, health and safety of pupils are at the heart of the school's philosophy and procedures to promote these are **very good** and effective. Pastoral care is **very good** and a significant strength in the school's provision although the academic guidance provided in lessons is less effective. The support the school has been and is receiving from Education Action Zone (EAZ) initiatives is very useful and productive. The school council is effective in seeking pupils' views and ensuring that they are involved in the work of the school and its development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good pastoral care.
- Assessment information is well used to support pupils with special educational needs but is less effective through the school as a whole;
- Very good health and safety, first aid and child protection procedures and practice.
- Very good links with infant school.
- Very good use made of EAZ initiatives, for example, home school link worker.

Commentary

25. The school provides an attractive, supportive and caring environment for all pupils. Very good mutual trust and respect and positive relationships ensure that all pupils feel confident they can speak to an adult about their concerns and that these will be dealt with effectively. Personnel trained in first aid are always on site, and all incidents are recorded and monitored well. Staff are aware of child protection issues and deal with these very well. Although health and safety procedures and practice are very good, inspectors noted that too many pupils were wearing hooped earrings and other jewellery, and that the footwear of some girls was not suitable for life at school.
26. Pupils sometimes know how well they are achieving through useful comments made in lessons and the notes made in the home school reading books although, in general, marking of their written work is not consistent.
27. Working closely with officers from the EAZ, the school has taken full advantage of the assistance offered. The home school link worker is very effective in promoting attendance and behaviour, and acts as a very useful bridge between home and school. Pupils and parents trust her advice and respect what she says. The nurture unit is an effective initiative, welcomed by parents and appreciated by their children.
28. Links with the infant school are developing very well and ensure that pupils enjoy a smooth transition. Good curriculum and pastoral liaison has been established, lessons are not repeated and useful information is exchanged.

29. The school successfully seeks pupils' views on the building, the site, and on pastoral issues through the school council. As a result they feel strongly that they are part of the community and its continuing development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Good links have been re-established with parents and the school provides **good** information for them. Following a period of considerable turmoil, it has begun to regain its **good** reputation and to be highly regarded by the local community: very good links are developing. Relationships and liaison with local schools are **very good** and ensure pupils enjoy a comfortable transition and transfer. The building is well used as a community resource.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with the local community and premises well used as a community resource.
- Good relationship with parents.
- Very good links and partnership with the -iInfant and secondary schools.

Commentary

30. The school has worked hard to regain parents' confidence and increasingly enjoys more effective links and a good relationship with them. In their turn, although few are able to offer their help in school, parents do share the aims and ambitions for their children and the questionnaire response was overwhelmingly positive. Parents are consulted at other times and the school takes note of their replies when formulating policies or deciding on future action. They demonstrate their support through their improved attendance at consultation meetings, achievement assemblies and any productions to which they are invited. Where they can, most help their children with work at home but the home-school reading records are not always used as an effective way of communicating between teachers and parents. The small but enthusiastic parent teacher association committee runs successful fund-raising events and raises considerable monies, spent according to the school's 'wish list' and for the benefit of the children.
31. The information parents receive from the school about their child's progress and events to be held and happenings at school is generally good. Regular and informative news and other letters are sent, and the governors' annual report and school prospectus contain useful data. Parents like the annual report on their child although these do not give much detail about individual's achievement and do not contain sufficiently well defined targets to help their child improve. Parents appreciate the staff's approachability and should they need help with form-filling or other information the friendly office staff are always willing to help. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very well supported through involvement in formal review meetings and regular opportunities for consultation.
32. The school tries hard to involve parents in their children's education and to support them where it can. During the weekly 'drop in' when coffee is served, guest speakers talk about local problems and many other topics are raised and discussed. This is quite well attended and all are welcome with or without their younger children, which supports the school's commitment to inclusion. Adult literacy classes have taken place although the take-up for the 'confident parents, confident kids' joint venture with the Infant school was disappointing. However, the school plans more such courses to extend parents' own knowledge and to help them to assist their children at home.
33. The partnership and mutual support given and received from local schools are impressive. Joint ventures abound and the work the headteacher has done to improve the school and its environment has been successful in contributing to the pride felt in the school by everybody

involved. Many local community groups use the school building and grounds for their activities and the school is delighted to facilitate this use, which does not impinge on pupils' access to the facilities. Liaison and links with the local community as a whole are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management **are good**, with significant strengths in some areas. The school is governed well, with some governors making important contributions. The school is led very well by the headteacher with **good** support from senior staff. **Good** management structures and procedures support the everyday work of the school and have been a significant factor in the improvements that have taken place.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is very good.
- There is a strong focus on raising standards.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior management team have created effective teaching teams.
- Improvements in the school's provision are relatively new and have yet to achieve their full planned outcomes.
- The expertise and contribution of key governors are good.
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are clear and well focused on raising standards.
- The leadership of the school's work with pupils who have special educational needs is very good.
- The site manager and administrative staff make a very significant contribution to the smooth running of the school.

Commentary

34. The headteacher has very successfully established a united and supportive staff team who are committed to securing improvement in the way in which they work and, as a result, the achievement of pupils. Managers, staff, and governors share a clear focus on raising standards; teamwork is very well exemplified by senior managers and is apparent throughout the school. Socially, the school is fully inclusive and all pupils are valued. Care is taken to meet pupil's individual needs but a focus on raising the very low standards in English and mathematics has resulted in insufficient consideration being given to the needs of higher-attaining pupils. The leadership of the work for pupils with special educational needs is very good and ensures that these pupils are supported well.
35. The school went through a considerable period of disruption in the two years following the last inspection. There were three acting headteachers and a relatively high turnover of staff. As a result vision eroded and systems that were celebrated as being newly in place but not fully secure in the last inspection became insecure. At the time of the current headteacher's appointment, two years ago, the school was recognised by the local education authority and by its community as one where standards of work and behaviour had slipped dramatically. Much has been achieved in re-igniting a sense of pride in the school amongst staff, pupils and their parents and the school is very well placed to improve further.
36. The headteacher and senior staff monitor and evaluate lessons and use the information well in determining priorities for improvement. The actions identified are already helping to raise standards. The headteacher has taken strong action, where necessary, to ensure the best possible provision for pupils. There is an effective system of performance management that is linked well to development and training priorities. New staff are inducted and supported well.

37. The role of subject leaders has been clarified since the last inspection. Time has been allocated for them to undertake the evaluation of their subjects which has included the monitoring of planning. As yet, clear systems to enable subject leaders to evaluate teaching and learning are less well developed. The school recognises that it is now in a position to fully develop the skills of its subject leaders in systematically monitoring teachers' planning, pupils' work and the work of other teachers in lessons so that they are able to build a clear understanding of standards and provision in their subjects across the school.
38. The co-ordination of special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of all aspects of provision for this area across the school. He works very closely with the well-qualified and experienced learning support assistants for special educational needs and good teamwork is evident. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported by teachers and by support assistants who are effectively deployed in this respect. The governor designated for special educational needs liaises appropriately with the co-ordinator and is involved in all aspects of this area. Special educational needs provision is given a high priority on the school development plan.
39. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are fully involved in planning for improvement. Some governors visit the school regularly and the established procedures for them to monitor what is happening in school are clear and helpful. The chair of governors supports the headteacher very well and provides appropriate challenge.
40. Budgets are set in accordance with statutory requirements and monitored well by senior staff and governors. The few audit recommendations have been implemented effectively. A good range of administrative procedures are managed well by the skilled administrative staff who also provide a very good first point of contact with the school.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	639,918
Total expenditure	693,715
Expenditure per pupil	2,746

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	52,116
Balance carried forward to the next	-1,681

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are not high enough but achievement is satisfactory.
- Lessons are well planned, setting clear objectives that pupils understand.
- Pupils are managed well and show high standards of behaviour.
- Teachers use methods which enable pupils to learn effectively.
- Assessment procedures are not yet impacting sufficiently on standards.
- High achieving pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- The curriculum manager is committed to raising standards.
- Leadership and management are beginning to have an impact on raising standards.

Commentary

41. Standards in English have remained well below average since the last inspection and continue to be below those expected for 11 year olds. Results in the 2003 national tests show that the standards in reading and writing remain well below those of comparable schools. Test results show that there is an improvement in writing and a slight dip in performance in the reading skills of high attaining pupils.
42. When pupils enter the school their skills in reading, writing and speaking and listening are either below or well below the expected standards. The school is using effective teaching strategies to address these limitations. Standards in speaking and listening remain below expectations at Year 6 but if younger pupils continue to make their current rate of progress, standards are likely to be in line with those expected nationally, in future years. During the inspection the reading heard was shown to be in line with national expectations, indicating a rise in standards and achievement that is satisfactory.
43. In lessons, pupils make progress because the good teaching has clear focus and builds on what has been previously learned. For instance in Year 3, pupils respond enthusiastically to a favourite story and learn the skills of adapting the text, in order to create a play at a later stage. Pupils know they are expected to refer back to the text to ensure that they are making an accurate adaptation.
44. Pupils throughout the school are responsive to questioning and listen whilst others are responding. There is an opportunity for all abilities to contribute to discussion in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Skilful and sensitive use is made of articulate pupils in Year 5, where they are involved in discussion about whether the conventions used in play writing are there for the actors or the scriptwriters, demonstrating a good level of spoken language.
45. Whilst the school is addressing standards in writing it is also working to raise achievement in reading. The guided reading programme is beginning to make a positive impact. Year 6 pupils show appropriate skills such as an ability to discuss an authors' intentions whilst Year 3 pupils demonstrate the ability to read fluently and accurately. Pupils say that they enjoy reading and take books home to read. Attitudes towards reading are good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in reading and, as a result, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

46. As a result of good behaviour, pupils remain attentive and are able to acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding in lessons. Pupils and teachers are able to make worthwhile assessments about the learning taking place in lessons when they discuss the original focus during the plenary session. Pupils are learning strategies for assessing their own learning and each group of pupils has a writing target to achieve each half term. In one class, very discreet thumbs up or down from pupils quickly indicate to the teacher whether they understand or not. More formal assessment procedures are at an early stage of development and are not yet sufficiently used to track individual progress closely. The school recognises the need to ensure that all pupils and particularly high attaining pupils, are challenged at an appropriate level if standards are to rise quickly. Work has already taken place, and more is planned to improve the marking of work to indicate to pupils what they need to do to improve.
47. An emphasis on writing through many different initiatives, has resulted in a rise in the achievement of younger pupils. The pace of change is secure and pupils entering the school this term have made good progress and some are now writing well constructed sentences consistently. A lack of basic literacy skills on entry to the school hinders progress across the curriculum but with the help of a literacy consultant and the determined support of the leadership team within the school strategies for improving all aspects of literacy are in place. These have not had sufficient time to impact significantly on standards in writing at Year 6.
48. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported within lessons. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable about the needs of individual pupils and are clear about the learning intentions for each lesson. Assessments made by teaching assistants are fed into the teacher's planning. Relationships between pupils and teaching assistants are good and pupils speak highly of the levels of support they are given by everyone in the school. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to the good behaviour seen in English lessons.
49. The subject leader understands the challenge involved in raising standards. She has put in place a range of strategies and exemplifies good practice. There is a planned programme of monitoring which has resulted in clear guidance about improving teaching and learning. The school's leadership team is effective in supporting the work of the subject manager. All have clear vision of the need to implement consistently effective strategies to improve standards rapidly.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. National initiatives have been implemented. The guided reading and guided writing programmes are beginning to have a positive impact on low levels of basic literacy skills. Resources are good. There is a good range of books in the school library, which successfully encourages an interest in a wide range of authors as well as providing support for the curriculum. Pupils are very positive about their library as they find it accessible and helpful. Not enough use is being made of subjects like science, history, geography and religious education to increase literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are below the national average for pupils of 11 years of age but the current Year 6 pupils are making satisfactory progress.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and mainly good in Years 5 and 6.
- Very good behaviour in every class enhances concentration and attention.

- Systems of assessment and the monitoring of pupils' progress have been put into place but are not yet making enough of an impact on raising standards.
 - Subject leadership is good.
51. National test results in year 2002 indicate well below average results, a slight improvement since 2001 where standards were very low. The findings of the inspection indicate an increasingly more positive picture. Pupils in the current Year 6 classes, who entered the school with standards well below those expected for their age group, have made progress, albeit not enough to raise their level of attainment to national averages.
52. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress but higher attaining pupils progress at a slower rate and too few of them attain the expected standards.
53. Good teaching, observed in Years 5 and 6 included a brisk pace, well-timed interventions and effective explanations. There was a high emphasis on explaining mathematical processes clearly and succinctly and a strong encouragement for pupils to try a variety of ways to arrive at correct solutions. A strong insistence on getting pupils to explain thought processes, questioning that probed for more and which targeted all ability groups enabled pupils to achieve well despite their below average prior attainment. Teachers' expectations for higher attaining pupils however, are too low because assessment and monitoring of progress are not impacting on their weekly and daily planning. Insufficient account is taken to match pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding accurately to given tasks and as a result, such tasks are occasionally either too hard or too easy. Teachers do not judge levels of expected attainment well enough and consequently do not always demonstrate how well pupils should be performing against the expected levels within the National Curriculum. This leads to a lack of urgency and consequent loss of pace and expectation in some lessons. Mental operations within the numeracy strand of the curriculum do not sufficiently improve pupils' rapidity in the use of the four rules because in the majority of classes, pace is often too slow and teachers' expectations for rapid responses are too low. This has a negative impact on the rate of progress when pupils are engaged in problem-solving and other work involving calculations. Expectations for neat and accurate presentation of work are too low in Years 3 and 4.
54. The subject leader has worked hard to lay the foundations for improved practice. Newly approved initiatives, once realised, are on course to raise pupils' levels of achievement. Clear vision and a realistic appraisal of the quality of provision have resulted in a comprehensive and realistic improvement plan that receives the appropriate action at the appropriate time.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. Pupils often use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and consequently develop a sound appreciation of the practical uses of those skills. Other than in ICT and, to a lesser extent in science, these opportunities are not planned consistently and opportunities are missed, as a result, to fully develop pupils skills and application of their mathematical knowledge and understanding.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall but achievement is frequently good in Years 5 and 6 as a result of the generally good teaching.
- There is sound emphasis on the use of specific scientific language.

- Insufficient use of skills in English, particularly writing, to support science.
- Although a good range of data has been collated, teachers do not use assessment well or consistently in planning lessons.

Commentary

56. In the statutory tests in 2002, relatively few pupils achieved the higher Level 5, and this seems to reflect the results in 2003. Many pupils currently in Year 6 are in line to achieve the expected standards by the end of the year, but standards are likely to be just below average. Little difference was observed between the achievement of boys and girls, and older pupils achieve well because of skilled and confident teachings. However, planning for lessons does not include more challenge for the higher-attaining pupils. Pupils generally undertake the same tasks, and this restricts opportunities for these pupils to achieve even better.
57. In the lessons seen during the inspection teaching varied between satisfactory and very good. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and good in Years 5 and 6. In lessons where teachers' subject knowledge was secure, and planning showed a clear focus, pupils learned well, showed interest and enthusiasm for the subject and concentrated hard. Where there was not a clear focus and too few opportunities to learn through practical activities, pupils' learning was only satisfactory. Teachers generally provide opportunities for pupils to carry out experiments, but a scrutiny of pupils' completed work indicates that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations. There were some good examples of teachers changing their planning in the light of what pupils had achieved, which resulted in pupils consolidating and reinforcing their learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 found drawing conclusions difficult, so the teacher clarified the difference between recording results and drawing conclusions. As a result of this further explanation pupils' understanding was broadened.
58. There are assessment procedures for the experimenting strand of the subject to help teachers have a clear picture of pupils' attainment in this important element of the curriculum but, in general, teachers' use of assessment to plan subsequent work is unsatisfactory. There is a some use of mathematics and ICT to support learning in the subject but, in contrast, the use of pupils' skills of writing are not used fully in science. For example, there is no set expectation of the quality or range of writing that is expected in the subject and there is no expectation of the scientific vocabulary that will be taught and learned through each year.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above expectation.
- There has been considerable improvement in resources and staff expertise.
- The teaching of ICT skills is good.
- ICT is not used consistently to support learning in other subjects.
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating provision and standards in ICT are developing rapidly.

Commentary

59. By Year 6, pupils' ICT skills are above those expected. In the lessons seen, consistently good and occasionally very good and excellent teaching enabled pupils to make rapid progress and achieve well. Since the last inspection national funding has meant that the resources for the subject have been improved and staff confidence and expertise developed through carefully focused training.

Very good use is made of the computer suite, and planned timetabling ensures that skills are taught effectively, that there is time available for pupils to use the computers to apply those skills in other subjects and further support is possible through the popular extra-curricular activities that are arranged. All of these features have a positive impact upon pupils' learning and the standards attained.

60. The use of national guidance as the basis for planning will ensure that all pupils experience the expected subject strands. Examples of pupils' work show they are learning to use ICT for word processing, graphics, the Internet and data handling as well as control, monitoring and modelling.
61. In the lessons seen the teacher's own specialist subject knowledge was used well to give clear succinct explanations and demonstrations using the digital projector. Good use of questioning maximised pupil input and a brisk pace to the learning meant that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved well. Collaborative planning means that learning support assistants are well aware of the software that is being used and of the objectives for lessons and so are able to provide good quality support which ensures that these pupils achieve as well as their peers.
62. Conversations with pupils and examples of their work show they are confident in accessing the Internet for research and presenting text. They are enthusiastic about the use of ICT, clearly enjoy their lessons and work well with partners or groups to achieve well.
63. The subject is very well led. The subject leader is knowledgeable and committed to ensuring the best for the pupils and, to this end, has overseen the development of the computer suite, its effective timetabling and staff training to ensure that the good access is used well. Assessment procedures are being revised and the new record sheets will provide a good overview of coverage and indicate the next step in learning. A portfolio of pupils' work is being assembled and will provide all teachers with clear exemplification of standards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. During the inspection little use was seen of ICT outside the direct teaching sessions but other evidence indicates that the use of ICT to support learning is developing rapidly. Pupils report that they use computers to complete programs that consolidate numeracy skills in mathematics, for writing tasks in English, to record science and design and technology investigations and to access the Internet for research.

HUMANITIES

In humanities work was sampled in history and geography. No lessons were seen in history and only one lesson was seen in geography.

History

65. No lessons were observed in history and it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching and learning but an analysis of pupils' written work, discussion with the subject leader, scrutiny of planning enables a judgement to be made about provision, pupils' achievement and progress.
66. Pupils' standard of attainment is below average.
67. Provision for history is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is supported by a recently reviewed policy and scheme of work. Long-term objectives for each year group ensure appropriate coverage. Assessment through the use of key questions related to each unit of work has been put into place, the results of which are used to inform the annual report to parents. A portfolio of work samples is

in process of collection. There are weaknesses in some aspects of delivery. Coverage of the curriculum is fairly superficial in some classes. The strands of historical interpretation and skills of historical inquiry are poorly developed. There are a few examples of pupils using their ICT skills to find out information but pupils' research skills are below average.

68. Pupils' weak writing skills prevent effective in-depth inquiry and good quality empathic writing. Teachers have low expectations for pupils in their application of writing skills. This applies particularly to pupils capable of higher achievement.

Geography

69. The quality of teaching and learning across the school cannot be judged as one lesson only, which was good, was observed. There was limited access to pupils' work as the subject is not in line for focus this autumn term except in Year 6. This and discussion with the subject leader enable a judgement to be made about provision.
70. Analysis of pupils' work in Year 6 indicates satisfactory achievement and progress by all groups. The depth of study is good and work is presented clearly and neatly. The lesson observation revealed a good grasp of their current study about mountains but there was some reluctance by pupils to express their knowledge and understanding in the writing task;
71. Satisfactory provision is made for geography. Teachers are supported in their planning by the recently revised policy and scheme of work. The subject leader has produced a plan of action that is steadily being implemented. Pupils' work has been scrutinised and teachers' planning is monitored. Assessment through the use of key questions related to each unit of work has been put into place, the results of which are used to inform the annual report to parents. A portfolio of work samples is in process of collection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in the subject is **satisfactory**.

72. One lesson only was observed in which the emphasis was on musical elements within it. It is not possible to make a judgement on teaching and learning but an analysis of work, examination of curriculum planning and discussion with the subject leader enables judgements to be made on achievement, progress and provision.
73. Standards of attainment are below average, a decline since the last inspection.
74. Provision is satisfactory in that planning is systematic and carefully aligned to both the locally agreed syllabus and to planning produced nationally but unsatisfactory in its interpretation of how much religions are a way of life for those who practice them. Pupils are taught the rudiments pertaining to specified religions but not enough is done to bring these alive so that pupils can recognise deeper meanings more clearly and value the principles of belief with greater understanding.
75. Written work in books is slim, and often poorly presented. Pupils' weak writing skills contribute to a superficial exploration of religious issues but expectations of teachers is often too low in what pupils can write and the level of detail they can attempt. There is too little awareness of what pupils should be able to do in order to raise levels of attainment and to develop pupils' own self knowledge of what it is possible to achieve.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art, design and technology, music and physical education

76. Planning indicates that pupils cover the necessary curriculum in these subjects. However no lessons were seen in physical education, art or design and technology. One lesson of religious education incorporating music was observed. There is evidence of pupils' work in art and design technology from this term so far and from previous terms. There was therefore insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement in this area of the schools' provision.
77. During the lesson observed, a member of staff from the local community school demonstrates how enthusiastic pupils are able to improve their musical skills. During a rehearsal for the forthcoming production of Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat, pupils show that they can sing using good breathing control, posture and phrasing.
78. Pupils are also sensitive to musical instruments played in a way which indicates the emotions of various characters. Pupils sing enthusiastically in assembly inspired by an excellent pianist and volunteer readily to sing or play their musical instruments spontaneously. There is a real sense that pupils' musical efforts are valued. Year 6 pupils judge music to be "A very big aspect at Riders."
79. Scrutiny of work shows that pupils in Year 6 make satisfactory progress in design and technology where they construct bridges, using a variety of techniques. Pupils understand the need for research, good designing and making procedures and they recognise the value of evaluating their finished work. Pupils' work in art is less well developed but shows their developing skills. Year 6 pupils say that they are more confident with their art and that their techniques have improved. There is evidence of keen participation in sporting activities as well as physical education lessons. An enthusiastic subject manager ensures that there are opportunities for pupils to take part in events organised with other local schools. Year 6 pupils judge physical education to be really important at Riders.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

No lessons were seen in this area of the school's work so it is not possible to make a secure judgement about provision.

Commentary

80. The school sees pupils' personal development as central to its work. There is a good programme of activities including work on diet, health, sex, drugs and personal safety. This programme helps pupils develop a safe and healthy lifestyle, gain confidence and interact with others. It is well supported by visits from outside agencies. The school council provide pupils with opportunities to take an active part in the organisation of the school and to feel that they can 'make a difference'. Pupils appreciate that their views are taken into account.

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	5
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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