

INSPECTION REPORT

HOULDSWORTH VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newmarket

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124546

Head teacher: Mr P Mellor

Lead inspector: Mrs J Catlin

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 25th March 2004

Inspection number: 260563

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	133
School address:	Rowley Drive Newmarket Suffolk
Postcode:	CB8 0PU
Telephone number:	01638 663214
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs V. McCormick
Date of previous inspection:	September 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is smaller than other primary schools and takes in pupils from the ages of three to nine. It is situated near the town centre of Newmarket and takes most of its children from the Houldsworth Valley estate. The estate was built primarily as local authority housing during the 1950's and the school celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 2002. The socio-economic circumstances of the families are varied but are deemed average overall. Currently there are 133 pupils on roll, with the majority from a white English background. Children enter the school, part-time initially, in the term before their fourth birthday. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is about average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average, as is the proportion with a Statement of Special Educational Need. The disabilities include speech and communication difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are no pupils for whom English is not their first language. The attainment on entry to Year 1 is slightly below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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20064	Chris Keeble	Team inspector	English Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a caring school whose current effectiveness is **satisfactory**. Over the past two years, despite numerous changes of staff, the head teacher, supported by a number of recently appointed governors, has improved a number of aspects of the school's work and improved standards in reading and writing. Whilst pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall, progress is variable between classes. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some strong features and the friendly, purposeful atmosphere around the school supports pupils' learning well. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The head teacher is a caring leader who has a clear view about what needs to be done to improve the work of the school.
- Children are given a good start to their education and in the nursery and reception class they are eager to learn.
- Many lessons are exciting and imaginative, fostering a wide range of skills.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Good links with parents.
- Teaching and achievement across the school are not always consistent.
- The school develops confidence in pupils, caring well for each individual, although the behaviour and attitudes of a minority are unsatisfactory.
- Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

Since the school was inspected in 1999, improvement has been satisfactory. Standards in national tests in reading and writing have fluctuated, but the results in Year 2 for 2003 confirm a rising trend. Although results in mathematics tests have been well below the national average for some time, standards seen in the current Year 2 indicate that the school is effectively improving this area of pupils' learning. Almost all of the key issues identified in the last inspection have been tackled. The standards in science of pupils in Year 1 and 2 have improved although few pupils are attaining the higher levels. There is now more challenge provided for pupils in information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 3 and 4 and this has resulted in pupils' increased confidence. All statutory requirements are now met including those linked to health and safety. Overall, the marking of pupils work has improved considerably although there are still some inconsistencies. Despite the school's efforts there is a small minority of pupils who continue to be late for school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Pupils' achievements are **satisfactory**. Most children start in the reception class with skills that are below those expected for their age. In the current nursery and reception class, children achieve well because the wide range of well-planned activities stimulates their learning, and teaching is good. By the time this group of children enter Year 1 many will reach the learning goals expected nationally although very few will exceed them. In Years 1 to 2, standards are at the levels expected

for their age, although they are better in reading and writing than in mathematics. Achievement for these pupils is satisfactory in literacy and numeracy. By the end of Year 4, standards are as expected for the pupils' age in English, mathematics and science, and overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) do as well as other pupils. Pupils' achievements in ICT are satisfactory and they use their acquired skills across the curriculum. Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are also satisfactory. Pupils are friendly and enjoy activities in school. The school provides lots of opportunities to develop pupils' social skills and it is a moral community in which pupils learn about right and wrong. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** with pockets of very good teaching. Teaching and learning for children in the reception class are consistently good, well-organised and teaching provides many valuable learning experiences. As a result, children are happy and confident and make good gains in their learning. Throughout the rest of the school, teaching is variable. The strengths of the teaching are the good quality of lesson planning and the good contribution to pupils' learning by teaching-support staff. In the lessons where teaching was good or better, pupils worked hard and made good gains in their learning. In a minority of lessons, teaching is not so strong and activities are not well matched to the existing attainment of the pupils. As a result, they are not challenged effectively and do not make enough progress. The curriculum is suitably planned and provides an appropriate range of activities. Systems to record what pupils know, understand and can do and the tracking of their progress through the school are comprehensive. Although these systems are very new, they are effective at a whole-school level, but teachers in some classes do not make enough use of the information to plan suitable work. The school provides good care and support for its pupils and has created a good partnership with parents. Links with the community are satisfactory. The most significant barrier to learning within the school is the poor behaviour of a significant minority of pupils which has a negative impact on the progress that a few pupils make.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are both **satisfactory**. The head teacher is a caring leader who has a clear view about what needs to be done to improve the work of the school. His involvement in the curriculum has a positive impact on teaching and learning. However, due to his increased teaching commitment since September he has been unable to follow this through with as much monitoring of teaching as he would wish. The governance of the school is also satisfactory. These factors contribute to the satisfactory quality of education offered to pupils. The good leadership and management in the nursery and reception class are significant factors that aid good quality learning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents' views of the school are positive. They appreciate the good introduction to school that their children receive when they enter the nursery and reception class. Pupils enjoy being in school, have very good relationships with their teachers and like the interesting things they are given to do.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is more consistent across the school.
- Raise attendance and improve punctuality.
- Improve the behaviour and attitudes to learning of a significant minority of pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is **good** in the reception class and **satisfactory** overall for pupils in Years 1 to 4. Standards in literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are **average** for pupils' ages.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 improved in reading and writing due to a greater focus on these areas of learning.
- Children are given a good start to their education.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils.
- Achievement is not always consistent across the school.

Commentary

1. Attainment in the school is average for the pupils' ages. The standards attained in national tests in 2003 were below the national average in reading and writing but they were well below the average in mathematics, as shown in the table below. However, results in these tests improved in writing due to a greater focus on this area of learning. The school's analysis of the reading tests and tasks for 2003 indicate below average comprehension skills for a significant minority of these pupils. This also impacts on the results in mathematics.


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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.2 (15.6)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.8 (12.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.4 (15.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 25 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. When children enter the nursery and reception class they are, with a few exceptions, attaining standards that are slightly below those expected for children of this age. However, this is not always the case and attainment on entry varies each year. This situation is supported by baseline assessment, which can be tracked back to the current group of Year 2 pupils. No baseline assessment was completed for the current Year 1. However, most children achieve well during their time in this class, due to good teaching and learning, and many are likely to reach expected standards for children of this age by the time they enter Year 1.
3. Results in national tests vary from year-to-year due mainly to the proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), but also the small numbers of pupils taking these tests has a significant impact on results. When the current Year 2 entered the reception class their attainment was below that expected for their age. Also, among this group of children there was a high proportion attaining at the lower levels in the tests on entry with no pupils scoring above average. This was also the picture in the current Year 3. Attainment on entry for other year groups and the current reception class also matches this overall picture. However, the majority of these young children achieve well. Pupils with a wide variety of SEN achieve as well as other pupils and make satisfactory progress towards the targets contained in their individual education plans. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

4. Current standards for pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 are at the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in science, by the end of Year 2, has improved since the last inspection and is now average in line with what is expected at this stage. Standards in science by the end of Year 4 match those seen in many schools.
5. National test results for 2003 show that the attainment of pupils in reading matches that found in similar schools although in writing and mathematics it was below. The school's performance is below the national trend.
6. Pupils use their literacy skills appropriately in subjects such as science and history. Numeracy skills are used in other areas of the curriculum; for example, in ICT and science, but teachers do not always provide enough opportunities to develop these because they are not always included in their lesson planning.

Subjects	National assessments at the time of the last report in 1999	2003 national assessments	Achievement for the 2003 cohort of Year 2 pupils who are now in Year 3	Attainment and achievement of current cohort of Year 2 pupils
Reading	Average.	Below average due to a below average proportion gaining the higher level 3.	Achievement is satisfactory as the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since entry into Year 1.	The attainment of the current pupils matches that found nationally. Pupils' achieve satisfactorily and standards are showing improvement.
Writing	Average.	Below average due to a below average proportion gaining the higher levels. 	Achievement is satisfactory as the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since entry into Year 1.	The attainment of the current pupils matches that found nationally. Pupils' achieve satisfactorily and standards are showing improvement.
Mathematics	Average.	Well below average due to a below average proportion gaining the higher levels.	Achievement is satisfactory as the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since entry into Year 1.	The attainment of the current pupils matches that found nationally. Pupils' achieve satisfactorily and standards are showing improvement.
Science	Not applicable but the report judged standards by the end of Year 2 to be below average.	Not applicable, but teachers assessed standards as below average.	Achievement is satisfactory because the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since entry into Year 1.	The attainment of the current pupils meets expectations and they achieve satisfactorily. Standards have improved since the last inspection.
ICT	Not applicable but the report judged standards by the end of Year 2 to be average.	Not applicable.	Achievement is satisfactory because the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since entry into Year 1.	The attainment of the current pupils meets expectations and they achieve satisfactorily. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
RE	Not applicable but the report judged standards by the end of Year 2 to be average.	Not applicable.	Achievement is satisfactory because the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since entry into Year 1.	The attainment of the current pupils meets expectations and they achieve satisfactorily. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Subjects	National assessments at the time of the last report in 1999	2002 national assessments for the current Year 4 when they were in Year 2	Achievement of current cohort of Year 4 pupils	Attainment of the current cohort of Year 4 pupils
Reading	Average.	Average.	Achievement is satisfactory as the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since they sat the national tests at the end of Year 2.	The attainment of the current pupils is as expected for pupils of this age.
Writing	Average.	Well below average.	Achievement is satisfactory as the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since they sat the national tests at the end of Year 2.	The attainment of the current pupils is as expected for pupils of this age. However, few more-able pupils are working at above average levels.
Mathematics	Average.	Well below average. ■	Achievement is satisfactory as the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since they sat the national tests at the end of Year 2.	The attainment of the current pupils is as expected for pupils of this age. However, there are few more-able pupils.
Science	Not applicable but the report stated that by the end of Year 4 standards were average.	Not applicable, but teachers assessed standards as below average.	Achievement is satisfactory because the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since the end of Year 2.	The attainment of the current pupils is as expected for pupils of this age.
ICT	Not applicable but the report stated that by the end of Year 4 standards were average. However, there was too little challenge for more-able pupils.	Not applicable.	Achievement is satisfactory because the majority of these pupils made sound progress since entry into Year 1.	The attainment of the current pupils is as expected for pupils of this age. There are few more-able pupils.
RE	Not applicable but the report judged standards by the end of Year 4 to be average.	Not applicable.	Achievement is satisfactory because the majority of these pupils have made sound progress since entry into Year 1.	The attainment of the current pupils meets expectations.

7. Although only a few lessons were observed in other subjects, a sample of pupils' work was scrutinised which indicates that attainment is average, matching that expected for pupils of this age.
8. The majority of pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are sufficient to enable pupils to make progress in other areas of the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are **satisfactory**. The school makes **satisfactory** provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The level of attendance is **below** the national average and too many pupils are **unpunctual**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils are enthusiastic about school and when teaching is good are keen to learn.
- The relationship between teachers and pupils is good.
- Children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are good in the nursery and reception classes.
- The level of attendance is too low. Despite the school's efforts, too many pupils arrive after the start of registration.

Commentary

9. Most pupils like coming to school but their attitudes to learning and their behaviour in the classroom, which are satisfactory overall, depend on the quality of teaching. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Where teaching is good, well-paced and stimulating they apply themselves to learning well and enjoy lessons. When they are kept sitting too long, or when teachers take too long to explain a task, they become restless and inattentive. The unsatisfactory behaviour of a few pupils in several classes distracts teachers' attention and as a result the majority do not learn as well as they might.
10. Behaviour outside the classroom is satisfactory. Pupils play games vigorously in the playgrounds and can self-regulate their play, for example in the many-sided football matches which take place without incident. In the nursery and reception class, children play affably and harmoniously. There were no exclusions during the last school year.
11. Attendance is unsatisfactory because figures are consistently below the national average. The school does have procedures for dealing with this and these have led to some improvement. However, the improvement has not been sufficient to ensure that the education of the pupils involved is not adversely affected. Furthermore, a number of pupils are late for the start of the school day which disrupts the smooth running of the school day.
12. When teaching is good, pupils' minds are engaged on the task and their behaviour is good. They co-operate together well in groups and their discussion about work shows that they have enquiring minds and are supportive of each other. Their high attendance at after school clubs illustrates their enthusiasm for school life.
13. A minority of parents and pupils had concerns about behaviour in the school. Pupils understand the school's systems for rewards and sanctions and are keen to receive praise for hard work and achievement. However, there are some differences between classes as to how rewards are applied. At present the management of pupils' behaviour is not sufficiently consistent across the whole school to ensure that a zero tolerance approach to poor behaviour works. The behaviour and attitudes to work of pupils with SEN are mainly satisfactory as a result of the good provision for their needs.
14. The personal development of pupils is satisfactory. It was good at the last inspection. Their satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness has helped develop good relationships between teachers and pupils. At lunchtime, pupils chat to each other in the dining room and are happy to talk to visitors about school life. The encouragement of older pupils to look after younger ones in the playground develops respect for each other. There are few opportunities at present for pupils to show other forms of responsibility towards each other or express their views about the running of the school. There is, for example, no school council nor house system. Nonetheless, pupils have concern for others and have raised considerable sums

for charity. Pupils' cultural awareness is developed satisfactorily through subjects such as music and art, but they have relatively few opportunities to communicate with children and adults representing other cultures or to learn about living in a multi-cultural society. Assemblies are well used to raise pupils' self-esteem through the recognition of their achievements and friendships. Their spiritual development is satisfactory.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	0.8
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

15. The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall but there are a few weaknesses. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides an appropriate range of learning experiences both in lessons and out of school. Pupils have good relationships with one another and their relationships with their teachers are also good. There is a good partnership with parents and links with other schools and the community are satisfactory

Teaching and learning

16. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with some strong features. There was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is consistently good in the reception class. In the infant and junior classes the quality of teaching varies between very good and unsatisfactory. Consequently, progress is inconsistent and a minority of average attaining pupils under-achieve when teaching is weak. Pupils who have SEN are supported well and make satisfactory progress. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers work very hard to encourage good attitudes to learning.
- In many lessons learning is interesting, which motivates pupils to work hard.
- Plans for lessons make it clear what pupils should learn.
- There is good use of teaching-support assistants.
- Assessment systems are in place and are used effectively.
- Many pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet.
- The needs of the few more-able pupils are not always met.
- The behaviour of a significant minority of pupils has a negative effect on the learning of other pupils.
- There are few formal procedures in place to address the poor behaviour of a minority of pupils.
- A few lessons are too slow, so pupils lose interest and concentration.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	10	6	2	0	0

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

17. There are some considerable strengths in the teaching of some classes. However, it is inconsistent and results in pupils making variable progress. This has a negative effect on the achievement of some pupils by the time they leave the school. The quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy is good overall, in both infant and junior classes, although in one numeracy and one literacy lesson it was unsatisfactory. In most lessons, there is good use of teaching support assistants which contributes well to the achievement of many pupils because of the amount of learning support offered in small groups.
18. Teaching in the mixed nursery and reception class is consistently good and is a factor that aids high quality learning for these children. It also provides a good range of interesting and challenging tasks which help children to take the next steps in learning. For example, in one session observed the children's physical and social skills were developed effectively by a variety of activities in the well-developed outside play area. In a more focused session in reception, effective teaching used games and then a story to develop the children's knowledge of letter sounds. Whatever the activities, adults provide positive support for learning, gently guiding children or questioning them to extend their thinking. The school has successfully developed the curriculum and teaching for these young children to address fully the areas of learning recommended for this age group. As a result, children's achievements have improved.
19. In the lessons where teaching is good or very good, the teachers have very good relationships with the children and are very caring and supportive. Hence, many pupils feel secure in school and most are eager to please, to work hard and to achieve more highly. The pace of these lessons ensures that time is not wasted and the activities offered to pupils are interesting. Teachers' lesson planning is of good quality and makes clear what pupils are to do and how successful they have been. Pupils' successes are celebrated and this has a positive effect on their learning and achievement.
20. In the lessons that were unsatisfactory, or in satisfactory lessons where there were weaknesses, it was often the pace and structure of the lesson that did not support pupils' learning effectively. There were a variety of reasons for this; often the introductory part of the lesson lasted too long, which resulted in pupils' becoming restless and inattentive. This was mainly due to the constant interruptions by a significant minority of pupils which resulted in the teachers having to interrupt the flow of the lesson. Consequently, the pace of the lesson slowed, pupils became bored and their behaviour and enthusiasm for learning deteriorated. In a few cases, the whole-class part of the lesson, pitched to meet the needs of all the pupils, did not challenge sufficiently the few more-able pupils. These pupils were not encouraged to make an early start on their independent activities, which would have provided a greater challenge.
21. During the past year the school has considerably improved the assessment of pupils' attainment and the monitoring of their progress, but the new systems have not been in place long enough to have any noticeable impact on the standards pupils attain. At whole-school level there are good procedures which help the school to monitor the progress of individual pupils. For example, by looking at pupils' results in national tests and internal assessments, they can now predict the standard they should reach by the time they leave the school. At classroom level, assessment procedures are less secure in lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory. Teachers mark pupils' work, but the quality of this varies. In some classes, marking includes teachers assessing the standard reached, commenting about the effort the pupil has shown, and indicating how they can do better. When this is done it is of excellent quality and makes a considerable impact on pupils' achievement. In other instances, ticks are the norm and on some occasions work was not marked at all. Where work is not well matched to pupils' existing attainment, it is because information from assessment has not been used effectively to ensure that all pupils are given tasks appropriate to their ability. The various types of target setting used by teachers have yet to become a tried and tested part of the school's assessment strategies for all subjects.

The curriculum

The breadth and balance of the curriculum are **satisfactory**. There is a **good** range of enrichment activities to extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. Both accommodation and the learning environment are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High emphasis on reading and writing has produced good improvement.
- The school library and the ICT suite are having a significant effect on the pupils' learning.
- The provision of extra-curricular activities is good.
- Homework is inconsistently set.
- Strong emphasis on planning ensures the curriculum is broad and balanced.
- The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for.

Commentary

22. The curriculum meets statutory requirements including provision for religious education and collective worship. The comprehensive medium term plans indicate learning outcomes and lesson activities. There is now a written policy for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship. The quality and range of opportunities provided are satisfactory. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and high emphasis on reading and writing has meant that standards in these areas continue to improve. The National Numeracy Strategy has yet to have the same impact.
23. The curriculum for the youngest children covers all the recommended areas of learning and pupils benefit from experiencing a wide range of well-organised challenges. The provision for pupils with SEN is good. Work is appropriately differentiated, extra classroom support is co-ordinated well and staff are knowledgeable about the needs of these pupils. The special needs co-ordinator is very effective in supporting other members of staff, and comprehensive records of pupils' achievements are constantly updated. However, a policy for promoting the development of gifted and talented pupils has yet to be fully implemented to ensure that their particular needs are met and that they are appropriately challenged.
24. The accommodation is good and has been used well to create an attractive and colourful learning environment in which the vast majority of pupils enjoy learning. The school has a well equipped ICT suite which is used to good effect and a library with internet access which has been developed into a rich learning area for the pupils and parents. There is also a designated music room with a wide variety of resources available. The school has its own open air swimming pool which it uses during the summer months. Various displays around the school are colourful and celebrate pupils' achievements across a wide range of subjects. Examples of artwork include those inspired by Kandinsky and Warhol. Some of the younger pupils' paintings reflect the style and tones of Australian Aborigines and are of a good standard. There is a tradition of Year 4 pupils making a large tapestry and giving it to the school when they leave. This contributes well to the family feel in the school.
25. The good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the opportunities for pupils to broaden their interests. These activities are led by members of staff and parents. Pupils participate in sporting competitions with other schools. The curriculum is further enriched by visitors to school and visits out of school, including a residential visit to an activity centre on the Norfolk coast.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **good**. The school provides pupils with **satisfactory** support, advice and guidance which involve them with its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school looks after its pupils' well and ensures that they work in a healthy and safe environment.
- Pupils have a trusting relationship with teachers.

Commentary

26. The school is a safe and secure place where good attention to welfare, health and safety ensures that pupils are able to concentrate on their learning. Regular risk assessments and inspections of building and equipment are undertaken and appropriate records maintained. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
27. Parents feel that their children are treated fairly and helped to overcome difficulties. A minority of parents and pupils expressed concern in the questionnaires about behaviour and bullying but when questioned, pupils expressed few concerns and were confident that teachers were approachable and would resolve difficulties. Child Protection procedures are good and members of staff are aware what to do if they have concerns about children in their care.
28. The information teachers gather about pupils' academic achievements is used satisfactorily to plan and predict pupils' achievement. Individual targets are set for all pupils in literacy and numeracy. Consequently, pupils are mostly aware of how to improve their learning and are prepared to work hard to achieve them. Targets are shared with parents, including targets linked to improved behaviour for the group of pupils for whom this is necessary. Well-kept records of targets and progress for pupils with SEN provide the basis for good support for these pupils in lessons. Children's personal and academic progress records in the nursery and reception class are good. As yet, as the school acknowledges, gifted and talented pupils have not been identified throughout the school and provision for their needs and its success is not recorded.
29. The school has involved pupils in raising money for charity successfully. It does not have a school council although pupils' views are sought through questionnaires and interviews.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is **good** and contributes well to pupils' learning. Links with other schools and the community are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good partnership with parents, based upon their confidence in the school.
- Parental involvement makes a good contribution to pupils' learning and achievement.
- Information for parents about their children's progress is good.

Commentary

30. Since the last inspection the partnership with parents has remained good. Parents have a high regard for the school and feel that they and their children are welcome. The Tuesday after-school classroom sessions are highly valued as a time when parents can look at their children's

work and talk about their progress to teachers. These sessions are beneficial because they help develop parental interest and a good understanding of their children's work.

31. The school communicates well with parents through a good range of information about the school, children's progress and the curriculum. Parents are clear of the importance of the regular reading homework and most ensure that it is done on time, thereby contributing well to their children's learning. A minority of parents were concerned that pupils moving into middle schools had not been prepared sufficiently in Year 4 for the amount of homework they receive there. Parents of children in the nursery and reception are welcomed into the Foundation Stage classrooms at the start of the day to settle children. The school's good links with most outside agencies and health professionals strengthen the support for children.
32. Annual written reports are good. However, there are minor inconsistencies in reporting the standards and progress pupils make. Most teachers do this well, but some describe what has been covered in a year rather than what has been achieved. Open evenings, as well as the Tuesday afternoon sessions, give parents alternative opportunities to find out about their child's progress. Parents of children with SEN receive good information about progress through the regular review and target setting programme.
33. The school uses local resources satisfactorily to widen pupils' learning. There is a programme of visitors to the school and pupils visit interesting local places to enrich their curriculum. The school has satisfactory curriculum links with the two middle schools to which Year 4 pupils move in September. The playgroup adjacent to the school is the source of most children entering the nursery.
34. The school draws upon parents' expertise when it can. A dedicated small group of volunteers work in the classroom and a wider group of parents help with class outings. The Parent Teacher Association is very active and most parents support its family based activities, such as discos, well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the head teacher and his staff are **satisfactory** overall as is governance. Overall, the role of subject managers is **satisfactory**. All statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher and his staff have a clear understanding of the school's priorities for development.
- There are improved procedures in place to monitor and track pupils' progress.
- The governing body has a sound grasp of the school's strengths and the areas in which it needs to improve.
- The effectiveness of the monitoring of teaching and learning is inconsistent.
- The school's improvement plan lacks detail about the action required to address developments.
- It is not clear how the governors monitor and track improvements in the school's work.

Commentary

35. The head teacher is a caring leader who has a clear view about what needs to be done to improve the work of the school. Some of these improvements have had a positive effect on standards. For example, the introduction of a system to track pupils' progress across the school, although in its early stages, ensures that teachers now have a clearer understanding of pupils' achievements. As a result, this has enabled teachers to identify pupils who are not achieving as well as they could and to provide extra support. However, on occasions the teacher's use of the information gathered is inconsistent. As a result, the progress in pupils' learning is variable. This is compounded by some weaknesses in the quality of teaching which

have yet to be addressed effectively. In the classes where these procedures and systems are fully understood and are used consistently pupils make good progress and achieve well. The below average standards of children when they enter the school and the above average number of pupils with behavioural difficulties makes raising standards to and above the national average very challenging. The head teacher has been ably supported in these initiatives by an experienced and knowledgeable deputy head teacher who has made an effective contribution to the analysis of national and local performance data. The results of these are then collated, evaluated and shared with staff and governors. The information is then used to set targets to improve pupils' achievement through a focus on teaching, learning and the curriculum. The school has a commitment to policies and practices that promote the inclusion of all pupils in the opportunities that it provides.

36. Since the last inspection, the school has experienced significant staff changes. The loss of experienced staff hindered the delegation of work to staff with management responsibilities. Staffing is now more stable and subject managers are in post for all subjects although, because of the size of the school, staff have a considerable number of responsibilities. All staff know they are accountable and their responsibilities are clearly defined and ensures satisfactory monitoring of standards across the school. The shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to improve further are secure. The good leadership and management in the Foundation Stage are significant factors that aid good quality learning.
37. Because of the significant turnover in staff in the last two years there have been several changes in the management of subjects. As a result of the head teacher's heavy teaching workload his monitoring of teaching and learning has not been sufficient in identifying and addressing weaknesses in teaching. A particular barrier to high quality learning is the poor behaviour of a significant minority of pupils which has a negative impact of the progress that some pupils make. While overall teachers do address the behaviour of these pupils they are not consistent in their approach and the use of praise is not always appropriate. Some instances were seen of pupils negotiating how they would behave rather than the teacher setting very clear expectations which were then adhered to. There were a few examples of very poor behaviour although none of these pupils have a Statement of Educational Need as a result of this and there are very few individual educational plans to identify how teachers are to manage this situation. The school has received support for the management of these pupils' behaviour from the educational psychologist and an advisory teacher. Despite this, there remain concerns in this area and otherwise good teachers have to work much harder than necessary to control a minority of pupils.
38. There are a number of recently appointed governors who are still developing their role and have yet to develop a secure long-term view of the school's work. However, they are beginning to make an increasing contribution to the management of the school. They carry out their statutory duties suitably and are aware of, and respond to, changes in legislation. A few governors, particularly those who are more experienced in the role, know the school well. They visit the school and spend time in lessons. Governors meet with teachers in working parties to discuss school policies and with the support of the head teacher, have a developing understanding of standards in the school. Collectively, the governing body has yet to develop a sound grasp of the school's strengths and the areas in which it needs to improve. They are not yet confident enough in their role of providing a balance of support and challenge so that the school is accountable for the standard of education it provides.
39. The school runs smoothly. Procedures are clear and they are generally followed. The school improvement plan outlines the school's priorities for development appropriately. However, the action required to address these priorities is not specific enough to make clear how this is to happen and who is to monitor the progress. Nevertheless, it correctly identifies the raising of standards in literacy and numeracy as a priority resulting from analysis of national test results. The head teacher has involved the governors in reviewing plans, but they are not always sufficiently involved in formulating them. Their monitoring role is not identified in the plan itself, which makes it difficult to see where their responsibilities lie in tracking improvements. The timescale is often too long and it is not completely clear how it is linked to teachers' performance

management targets. There is an above average proportion of the school's budget which has been carried forward from the financial year 2002/3. This came about through changes in staffing and is being used to maintain the current single age classes. There is also little recorded evaluation of the cost effectiveness of the spending decisions against standards of work produced by the pupils. For example, there has been no evaluation of the money spent on computers against the standards pupils attain.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	370, 166
Total expenditure	386, 067
Expenditure per pupil	3, 164

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	66, 388
Balance carried forward to the next	50, 487

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The **very good** provision identified at the time of the last inspection has been maintained.

40. Teaching and learning in the reception class are consistently good and as a result, children are achieving very well in their personal, social and emotional development and achievement is good in all other areas of learning. There is very good teamwork between the reception teacher and nursery nurse and this ensures effective support for children's learning. Lesson planning is detailed and provides effective learning opportunities for a range of prior attainment. Good assessment practices mean that the teacher and nursery nurse keep detailed records of children's development in each area of learning which provide secure information for the next steps. The smaller steps for learning outlined in the curriculum guidance for this age range are highlighted in the day-to-day lesson planning which enables adults to record progress against them throughout the year.
41. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good and ensure that these young children are given a good start to their education. The activities planned for the children are having positive effects on their learning and enabling them to achieve well. There is a good range of opportunities for them to work independently and to make decisions for themselves and therefore they achieve well in their personal and social development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children behave well, relate well to one another and concentrate on the work they are given to do.
- There is a range of good opportunities for independent learning.

Commentary

42. The well-established procedures for settling children into school and the good relationship that have developed with the nursery, means that the children very quickly become used to school and the routines they have to follow. Behaviour is good because this aspect of their development is continually promoted and expectations are high. Children relate well to one another and play happily together with no evidence of any unkindness. They choose their own activities confidently and concentrate for an appropriate amount of time. Children develop a good sense of what they have learned because the teacher shares the purpose of each lesson with them. By the time they leave reception, the majority will reach the required standards for children of this age, and the few more-able children will exceed expectations.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to develop their literacy skills and most already follow instructions well.
- Children show interest in books and handle them with respect; parents have good opportunities to share books with their children.

Commentary

43. The adults in the reception class have high expectations of children's ability to achieve well in their learning and this is reflected in the provision for communication, language and literacy. Most children write their name clearly and show good pencil control. Less-able children show some confusion in the formation of letters, but this is addressed well by the adults to ensure that they have a clear understanding. The classroom is stimulating so that children have access to good quality displays that support learning in recognising, for example, the sounds that letters make.
44. Children's listening skills are being developed well. They listen well to stories and pay careful attention to detail. As a result, they are able to answer questions about what happened in a story and many are achieving well. When small groups of children work with an adult they engage in conversations that develop their vocabulary, and give them an opportunity to express their likes and dislikes and to talk about their experiences. Many children explain what they are doing and are confident in communicating with one another. There are good opportunities for them to engage in independent activities, where their own choice and imagination dictate the focus, and this ensures that they achieve well. The work seen indicates that, by the time they leave reception, many, but not all children are likely to reach the expected standards for children of this age. There are very few children who will exceed national expectations.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and the teacher has high expectations for children's learning.
- Good use of opportunities to reinforce children's learning.

Commentary

45. Children achieve well in mathematics, due to the good teaching they receive. Their skills in this area are often used as an integral part of activities inside and outside the classroom. Adults make good use of incidental opportunities to reinforce learning in mathematics, such as encouraging the children to count the fruits in the story of "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and recognise the numbers in the magnetic fishing game. Many children can count to five and some are familiar with larger numbers in their everyday lives. Children learn to sort equipment according to criteria, such as colour, and begin to explore concepts of capacity and measures when they use sand and water to fill containers of various sizes. They are familiar with rhymes which reinforce their knowledge and understanding of number. Most children are likely to reach the expected standards for their age by the end of the reception year because some children can already count beyond ten and others are making good progress in counting. Planning for mathematical development shows that the teachers' expectations are high and the range of activities closely reflects national guidance for these children.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good questioning skills develop children's knowledge and understanding.
- Well-planned activities extend children's knowledge of the world around them.

Commentary

46. The quality of teaching is good and all adults use effective questioning skills to develop children's knowledge and understanding and to ensure that they achieve well. Most children show curiosity about their surroundings and need little encouragement to explore, investigate and ask questions. The curriculum offers them a wide range of experiences to expand their knowledge of the world around them and will enable them to reach, and in some cases exceed, the expected standards for children of this age by the end of the reception year. Activities are well planned to enable children to explore aspects of the environment and to relate the work to their own experiences. Discussion forms an important part of their work and children are encouraged to be observant and describe what they see. Some are confident users of computers. For example, they operate a mouse successfully when choosing the colours for their pictures and they also successfully print out the patterns they create using a paint program.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good development of children's physical skills, such as body control and co-ordination.
- There are good links with mathematical development.

Commentary

47. Children learn to use a wide range of tools correctly. They use scissors safely and hold pens and pencils correctly. Staff work with small groups of children in order to make sure that these skills are developed appropriately. There are good opportunities for the children to use a variety of large equipment. The outside play area is imaginative and used well. There are an appropriate number of wheeled toys and large climbing apparatus which make a good contribution to children's developing skills. Lesson planning supports a good range of activities that promote the larger-scale movements of the children who move with confidence and make good use of the available space. Children have a growing awareness of how to move over, under and through large apparatus which makes a good contribution to their mathematical development. Many children are likely to reach, and in some cases exceed, the expected standards for their age by the end of the reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many planned opportunities for a wide range of activities.
- Teaching is good.

Commentary

48. There are many opportunities for the children to experience a wide range of creative activities and as a result children are likely to reach the expected standards for their age by the end of the reception year. Through well-planned role-play based on the story of "Percy the Parakeeper" the children act out their own stories and experiences. The adults provide good opportunities for the children to experiment with paint, and many mix paints confidently. The children sing enthusiastically and with enjoyment.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory** with some good features, particularly reading.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standard of pupils' reading has continued to improve.
- High emphasis on writing has also resulted in improvements.
- Support staff are used effectively during lessons.
- Planning is comprehensive and work is appropriately differentiated.
- Some examples of pupils with poor listening skills prevent continuity of teaching and learning.
- Teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough across the school.
- The subject leader uses various data to inform planning and support pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

49. Standards for the existing Year 2 pupils are average for their age. However, standards, as indicated by results in national tests, for last year's Year 2 group of pupils were well below the national average in reading and writing. This was because a large percentage of pupils only just gained a level 2 in the tests and this was below national averages for pupils of this age. Pupils' achievement however cannot be judged on test results alone. Many pupils enter the school with below average skills in English and they achieve well. This is due in part to good teaching in both the early years and in Years 1 and 2 and the level of support the pupils receive inside and outside the classroom. By the end of Year 4, standards are broadly in line with those expected for a similar age group.
50. Most pupils' listening skills are good and the younger pupils especially are expected to listen for long periods of time. These pupils sit too long on the carpet, lose concentration and as a result they do not learn as they might. In addition, there are a significant number of pupils who are not able to listen and their behaviour has an adverse effect on the other pupils' learning. The teacher then talks specifically to those pupils and the momentum of the lesson is lost for a period of time. Most of the pupils can discuss aspects of their learning, they are confident and articulate; however, they often find it difficult to engage in discussion in small groups and the lesson becomes noisy. In the Year 2 class, the pupils were learning to read a Dr Seuss poem with expression, which they did well. During this lesson the teacher used the overhead projector to very good effect which ensured all pupils' could see the words. The pupils had to listen carefully to some of the rhyming pairs.
51. Standards in reading have improved; this is due in part to an emphasis on phonics and the introduction of a relatively new reading scheme. Pupils take these books home and are supported by their parents. Parents have an opportunity to see their children's books and work once a week when they collect them from school. Teachers present pupils with interesting texts and model expressive reading. Each pupil, if appropriate, has a reading target, which is shown on the front of their exercise book and pupils are encouraged to meet these targets as quickly as they can. Effective use is made of the extensive data that the school holds about pupils' reading ability and interest. For as well as informing parents about their child's progress this data is starting to be used to inform the teachers' planning, particularly with pupils with SEN. From the well-equipped library, pupils have the opportunity to borrow books to read for information or pleasure.
52. Teachers are generally secure in their knowledge and understanding of this subject. The training for the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been thorough and the head teacher, as subject leader, has supported staff and been the main person in developing a unified approach to English throughout the school. The medium-term planning is comprehensive and

teachers meet in groups to discuss their weekly planning, this is having a significant effect on both standards and teaching. However, because of the many commitments that the head teacher has in school he has not recently monitored the quality of teaching and this has led to some inconsistencies. The planning has also enabled pupils to have the experience of writing for a purpose across a wide range of writing activities. Spelling is taught systematically. The newly introduced handwriting scheme is consistently practised and is having an impact particularly with younger pupils. However, the presentation of pupils' written work is occasionally untidy and not enough is done to encourage these pupils to take a pride in their writing. Some of the marking is inconsistent, in one class there is too little evidence of the work being adequately marked. This leads to repetitive errors and the pupils remain unaware of how to improve their work. Teachers know their pupils well and mostly plan lessons to match their pupils' ability. Pupils' achievement in writing is satisfactory.

53. A strength of this subject is the progress made by pupils with SEN. This progress is due partly to the ability of the support staff to encourage the pupils but also the differentiated work planned and set by the teaching staff. All support staff have been on courses and are keen to develop their own skills in this area and have developed a sound knowledge of how children learn. Many give of their own time voluntarily.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. There were some opportunities to see evidence of literacy to support other subjects as in the Humanities or descriptive writing in science. The school needs to incorporate this in the overall planning so that the literacy skills that are being developed can extend across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are low and have been well below the level expected for the pupils' ages for some years.
- Teachers are working hard to improve achievement.
- There are improved systems for assessment and tracking of pupils' progress.
- The quality of teaching is too variable.
- There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other curriculum areas.

Commentary

55. The national test results at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were well below the national average. However, there are very few more-able pupils in the school and this has a negative impact on overall standards as few reach the higher level 3 in national tests.
56. At this point in the academic year, standards are as expected by the end of Year 2. In Year 4, standards meet expectations for this age group. The use of the Numeracy Strategy has had a limited effect on raising pupils' attainment in the subject. There has, however, been a recent and improved system for assessment and tracking of pupils' progress and this has enabled class teachers to focus specific teaching and support where it is most needed. Pupils are set useful and realistic subject specific targets to encourage them to improve. The school has also developed its policy to ensure that marking is consistent which tells the pupils what they are doing well and how to improve their work. However, while some inconsistencies remain, this policy has contributed well overall, not only to pupils' independent learning skills, but has also given them a secure understanding of their own learning. Additionally, a review of pupils' learning by the school indicates that pupils experience difficulties retaining knowledge. This is being addressed by building greater links with other subject areas. However, this is a very

recent initiative and has yet to show any significant results. The Year 2 teacher is confident that there will be an increased proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in this year's national tests.

57. By the end of Year 2, most pupils reach the expected standards and are confident with numbers up to 100. Less able pupils are mainly secure in their understanding of tens and units. Many pupils can recognise the multiples of 10 up to 100 and know that 12 objects can be grouped into threes, fours, twos and six. Younger pupils can recall most of the two numbers that make ten. Pupils in Year 2 are also confident in naming common three-dimensional shapes and can also measure straight lines to the nearest centimetre. Many pupils recognise different coins and understand their relative values. They make sensible decisions when deciding which coins to use to pay for different items.
58. Standards in Year 3 are slightly below that expected for pupils of this age but by the end of Year 4, attainment is close to average and progress is satisfactory overall. However, the achievement of pupils, particularly for the few more-able, tails off due to teaching which is inconsistent in quality. The considerable turnover of staff has gone some way to contributing to the lack of challenge for some more-able pupils. By the end of Year 4, pupils recognise quadrilaterals and a variety of polygons. They can also change simple fractions to decimals and read scales in litres and millilitres. Pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress overall.
59. The quality of teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. As a result of the inconsistency in the quality of teaching, pupils' progress is variable across the school. In the best lessons, teachers share the learning intentions with the pupils. During good quality class discussion sessions at the end of these lessons the teachers check what pupils have learned and assess what they need to learn next in order to extend further their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills. Also, teachers have high expectations which challenge the pupils effectively. Where teaching is less satisfactory it is due to teachers not having high enough expectations for their pupils based on what they already know, understand and can do. Much of the work pupils are asked to do in these lessons is not sufficiently challenging and the pace of learning is slow.
60. The solving of number problems and the pupils' confidence in carrying out mathematical investigations are the weakest parts of the curriculum. This has a noticeable impact on the progress of pupils by the end of Year 4 because they lack the confidence to use their mathematical knowledge in everyday situations.
61. The subject manager has good subject knowledge and teachers' lesson planning and pupils' work are monitored on a regular basis. In order to raise standards of attainment, test results are analysed in order to help the school focus on areas of underachievement and to provide suitable future targets for all pupils. This analysis and evaluation of the data has highlighted groups of pupils, such as those not making the expected progress, or those making better progress than anticipated. The outcomes of tests have been analysed suitably in order to identify key strengths and weakness within the subject and these are now being tackled through teachers' planning of lessons. There has been some monitoring of teaching but this has failed to ensure consistent standards of teaching and learning. The overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Pupils use their developing numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum, for example, in geography and science. However, there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' skills in other areas of the curriculum because they are not always considered effectively in teachers' lesson planning.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective use is made of nationally recommended guidance and National Curriculum documents in teachers' overall planning.
- Pupils show generally a good understanding of the scientific principles learnt.
- There have been good improvements in progress in Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection.
- Standards of work are not always consistent across classes.
- Pupils' work is not always well-presented.
- There is much evidence of scientific investigations throughout the school.
- Support in the classroom gives opportunities for practical work.
- Pupils are able to use scientifically vocabulary to explain what is happening in their experiments.

Commentary

63. At the time of the last inspection progress at the end of Year 2 was judged unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case. Standards, at the end of Year 2 and Year 4, are in line with nationally expected standards. Considering the below average ability when some of these pupils start school this is good progress.

64. Pupils talk about their work in science with confidence and enthusiasm, indicating a good understanding of the work they had completed this year. The work in their books indicates this also. Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of forces and their properties. They understand about fair testing and can predict the results. Year 3 pupils have a good understanding about materials, light and the solar system. The school plans work on a two-year cycle so pupils in Year 3 and 4 are covering the same topics but the work is appropriately differentiated. The pupils are keen to learn and develop ideas.

65. All lessons seen during the inspection were interesting and involved the pupils in practical activities whether it was an experiment to see what affect different amounts of water and its temperature made to the setting of jelly or how to separate different solid particles. This engaged the pupils and kept them attentive during lessons. The teachers' good understanding of scientific principles means that they are able to ask probing questions which develop the pupils' understanding and encourages them to use the correct vocabulary in their explanations. This has led to pupils working collaboratively and contributed to their social and moral development which is significant.

66. The head teacher took over the leadership for this subject after the last inspection. He has been able to use both nationally recommended guidance and National Curriculum documents to produce precise, developmental medium-term plans. This ensures correct coverage of the subject throughout Years 1 to 4. Teachers find the plans easy to use and are able to write effective daily plans from them. His insistence that teaching should ensure that scientific enquiry is foremost in pupils' minds is a significant reason for the recent success of this subject. Following a sequence of work, assessment takes place on a regular basis using worksheets. The data is then analysed and the planning and learning experiences modified accordingly. Although the head teacher has not had an opportunity to observe his colleagues teaching recently, he does have a good understanding of their strengths and weaknesses

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is improved and is now **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
- The new ICT suite has had a significant effect on teaching and learning.
- Training has improved teachers' knowledge and skills.

- The library has, with the ICT suite become a resource centre.
- The availability of an ICT technician is a valuable asset.
- There are not enough computers in the suite for all pupils in the class.
- The school does not have any interactive whiteboards or similar equipment.

Commentary

67. Standards at the end of Year 2 are satisfactory; the pupils have acquired a range of skills which enables them to exchange and share information. They can use 'clipart' and are able to produce block graphs from data that they have collected. By the end of Year 4, standards are also satisfactory. Pupils can combine texts and graphics are able to use email. The activity centre, where Year 4 pupils go to for a residential weekend, places high emphasis on ICT skills. National requirements are now much more rigorous than at the time of the last inspection; when this is considered, this represents a good improvement on the previous inspection. This has been brought about by the good leadership of the subject leader, the opportunities for staff training and the development of the ICT suite. In a relatively small school the pupils get several opportunities to take advantage of the good facilities of offer.
68. Planning is comprehensive and is based on nationally recommended guidance. Teachers are able to use the medium-term plans to develop their own weekly ones. The plans ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered in sufficient depth. The subject leader is able to monitor the progress of the subject by looking at individual planning and assessing the pupils' books. A sound curriculum for the subject is in place and teachers feel secure.
69. The teaching is satisfactory overall with some good examples. Teachers concentrate on making sure the pupils acquire the correct skills and make it quite clear what is expected of the pupils when they use the computers. Pupils are expected to plan their work and have an idea of what they want to achieve with the computers. Consequently when a class was designing an 'Easter Card' they knew precisely what was needed before they began. This means that the time on the computer was a valuable worthwhile experience.
70. The computer suite has been used by the parents so that they can acquire the skills necessary to support their children at home.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. The school has made good provision for ICT, with the installation of the new suite. There is evidence of pupils using their acquired skills across the curriculum. They have produced graphs from data produced in mathematics and science, various skills in art and a particularly interesting idea where a Year 1 class used the digital camera to take pictures of designs they had made as a class before they translated these ideas on to paper.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

72. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement of provision in religious education in all classes across the school. However, the work seen indicates that the school is providing an interesting and relevant curriculum.
73. No lessons were observed in religious education. However, there was a wide range of previous work which indicates that standards are as expected for the pupils' ages and that the school is providing an interesting and relevant curriculum. In Year 1, pupils are clear about what is important to them and know that the Bible contains stories about Jesus. In Year 2, pupils show they have a clear understanding of many Bible stories, for example, the Feeding of the Five Thousand. Work shows that the curriculum is appropriately focused on developing pupils' understanding of the Christian faith and is well-matched to the requirements of the local

authority's Agreed Syllabus. There are examples of pupils being introduced to other faiths and they learn that churches are places of worship. In Year 3, pupils have a basic understanding of the symbolism of bread and wine. Additionally, they have learned about Hindu weddings and know about the seven steps to happiness. In Year 4, pupils have a basic understanding of Hindu rules and customs. School assemblies were well planned and led, and included well-presented stories from the Bible and give pupils periods of reflection.

Geography

74. No lessons were observed in **geography**. It is therefore not possible to make an overall judgement about provision or teaching and learning. An analysis of a small amount of work in pupils' books indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress but it is not possible to make any judgments about standards. The work seen in Years 3 and 4 on comparing village life in India with that of their own is of satisfactory quality. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have tracked their journey to school and followed by drawing and illustrating their route.

History

75. Only one lesson was observed in **history**. It is therefore not possible to make an overall judgement about provision. An analysis of work in pupils' books indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards are in line with expectations. Because only one lesson was observed, no judgements are made about teaching and learning. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' work on Ancient Greece shows they have a sound grasp of the way of life at that time. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have looked at their local shops and compared them with those in the past.

76. There is a lack of clear monitoring and evaluation by the subject manager for humanities. Although the subjects were reviewed as part of the school's development in 2002 there is no effective assessment or recording of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Although this is a small school and a considerable amount of informal discussion takes place among the staff there is no clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Good use is made of visitors and visits to extend pupils' experiences and enrich the curriculum.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were not inspected in depth. Scrutiny of planning, looking at examples of pupils' work and discussion with staff and pupils indicate that the curriculum covers what it should and meets statutory requirements. With all these areas of the curriculum there is comprehensive planning based on either nationally recommended schemes or those of the local education authority. Pupils are enthusiastic about these more practical elements of the curriculum.

78. Only one lesson was observed in **art and design** and that was good. The teacher was able to use the previous art work that the children had done to inspire them to take their ideas forward. Creative use of the digital camera giving the pupils immediate feedback contributed to it being a successful lesson. There are however many varied and interesting displays of pupils work around the school. From the range of this work seen it matched what was expected for the pupils' age.

Design and technology

79. No lessons were seen but there were some examples of work on display backed up by photographic evidence. The pupils keep records of designs and any adaptations that they have made following an evaluation. It is apparent that pupils take a pride in their work in this subject and standards are in line with national expectations.

Music

The provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has a designated well-equipped music room.
- Comprehensive planning and a scheme of work are available for non specialist teachers.
- Some opportunities are missed to listen to and create 'atmosphere' during assemblies.
- An after-school music club provides pupils with opportunities to develop their music skills further.

Commentary

80. Only two lessons were observed in music and both of these were satisfactory. Although these lessons should have given the opportunity for the pupils to work collaboratively in one of the lessons there was an example of 'silly' behaviour by a small number which detracted from certain elements of the lesson. In the other pupils were required to follow action songs in time with music. A small number of pupils have a good sense of rhythm but as the lesson progressed the other pupils improved.

81. Pupils enjoy the after school club which gives pupils the opportunity to follow sequences and to play the recorder.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- There are good facilities both inside and out.
- Resources are well organised and of good quality.
- The open air swimming pool is used well in the summer.
- Unsatisfactory behaviour sometimes prevents the full objectives of the lesson being met.

Commentary

82. It was possible to observe only one lesson during the period of the inspection; therefore it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching and learning overall. However, the evidence from observation of pupils involved in physical activities and discussion with the subject leader indicates that standards attained by pupils are in line with those expected for their age.

83. Resources are good and pupils have the opportunity to experience a range of different activities including an inter-school cross country competition organised by the local middle school. There are many extra-curricular sports clubs which are well supported by pupils and parents.

84. The school is fortunate to have its own open air swimming pool in the summer. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use the local municipal pool during the winter months and the whole school use the school pool in the summer. High emphasis is placed on health and safety during swimming and other physical activities

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision is **good** and is a strong feature of the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- This is taught well across the school and is reflected in pupils' attitudes to one another and their very good relationships with teachers and other adults.

Commentary

85. The school places a high priority on pupils' personal development and social learning and the teaching of personal, social and health education is an integral part of the life of the school. Consequently, pupils are confident to express their feelings in a trusting and secure environment. The curriculum includes a wide range of relevant topics that are planned to build pupils' skills and knowledge as they move through the school.

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	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	4
Attendance	5
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	3
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	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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).