

INSPECTION REPORT

LONGHOUGHTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST SCHOOL

Longhoughton

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122277

Headteacher: Mrs J Henderson

Lead inspector: Mrs M Fitzpatrick

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd December 2003

Inspection number: 260592

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	143
School address:	Lacey Street Longhoughton Alnwick Northumberland
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs A Jamieson
Date of previous inspection:	May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Longhoughton First School is a small rural school, with 143 pupils on roll. In the current school year there are mixed age groups in all of the classes except the Reception class, though there are six children of Reception age who are taught with Year 1 pupils. Pupils join the school in the year that they are four and leave in the year that they are nine. A large proportion of the pupils (about 70 per cent) are from families based at RAF Boulmer whose stay in the area averages about two years. This results in high pupil mobility and class sizes can vary widely from term to term, with an inevitable impact on relationships between children as they adjust to change. The pupils currently in the school have nearly all attended since the beginning of this school year, since September a further nine pupils joined the school. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The school is made up of children from a predominantly white European heritage and there are no pupils whose mother tongue is not English. There are four pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need, which is above average for a school of this size and their needs are associated with physical and emotional difficulties. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and who do not have a Statement, is below the national average and these pupils have weaknesses in literacy and numeracy. The attainment of pupils when they join the school in the Reception class is above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
24326	Mrs M Fitzpatrick	Lead inspector	English
			History
			English as an additional language
19741	Mr T Smith	Lay inspector	
23578	Mrs J Edwards	Team inspector	Mathematics
			Art and design
			Geography
			Physical education
			Special educational needs
12631	Mrs M McLean	Team inspector	Foundation Stage
			Design and technology
			Music
			Religious education
11611	Mr J Hall	Team Inspector	Science
			Information and communication technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Longhoughton First School is a fairly effective school which provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Nevertheless, it is an underachieving school because there is a lack of challenge and slow progress for a significant number of pupils in mathematics and writing, and there is too little good or better teaching in some classes. Leadership and management strategies are not effective in bringing about improvement in standards in areas of known weakness. Despite these shortcomings, the school is judged as giving satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in mathematics are above average in Year 4.
- Pupils' attitudes, relationships and behaviour are good.
- Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good.
- Provision in the Reception class is very good.
- The school has good links with parents, the community and other schools and institutions.
- Standards in English and mathematics are too low in Year 2; standards in writing are too low in Years 3 and 4.
- The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory.
- The school's monitoring and evaluation procedures are unsatisfactory.
- Teachers' use of assessment to plan work for different groups of pupils' is unsatisfactory.
- Standards of presentation are poor in most work seen.
- There is not enough use of information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects.

At the previous inspection, improvements were needed to the overall leadership and management of the school. While the school has addressed these issues to some extent, for instance, by producing a four year development plan, and monitoring teaching as part of the performance management cycle, none of the measures has had enough impact on raising standards. The school's self-evaluation procedures remain unsatisfactory, as important weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been insufficiently addressed, and as a result standards have declined. The improvement in the effectiveness of the school since the last inspection is judged to be unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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' achievement is satisfactory overall, although it is good in the Foundation Stage.

However, the trend in the improvement in standards for Year 2 has been below the national trend since the last inspection. The performance of boys has been better than girls in the last three years. Pupils now in Year 2 reach average standards in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing are below average and well below those achieved by Year 2 last year. This is because pupils do not have enough planned opportunities to practise their writing skills. Pupils in Year 4 reach above the expected standard in mathematics. In English, the majority reach above the expected standard in reading, but too few pupils reach above the expected level in writing, mainly because they do not have enough opportunity to write for different purposes. There was not enough evidence available to make firm judgements about standards in science, ICT, geography, design and technology, music or physical education. In religious education, history and art and design, all pupils reach the expected

levels. This marks a decline in standards in religious education and art and design since the last inspection. In the Reception class, pupils achieve well and most are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the year because they are very well taught and are keen to learn.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour and personal development are good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. **The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching is satisfactory overall.

However, there is considerable variation in the quality of the teaching seen. While it is very good in the Reception class, there is unsatisfactory teaching in English and mathematics in the Year 1/2 and Year 2/3 mixed age classes, where the level of challenge for pupils is often too low. Teachers' use of assessment to plan the next stage of learning is unsatisfactory overall, because it does not take into account what pupils need to learn next. However, there is some appropriate use of assessment in mathematics in the Year 3/4 class. Very good teaching was seen in history and in mathematics in Year 4, where pupils were set good levels of challenge. Overall, teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' presentation of work which is untidy and often incomplete. Teachers' marking is unsatisfactory because it does not point out weaknesses or tell pupils how they can improve their work. In the Reception class, thorough assessment helps the teacher plan well for the next stage of learning.

The curriculum and the provision for enrichment of the curriculum are satisfactory. However, there are weaknesses. Because the school's monitoring of the curriculum has not been rigorous enough there are shortcomings in time allocation and in the match of tasks to pupils' abilities in some lessons. Planning in English and mathematics does not ensure an appropriate curriculum for all pupils in mixed age classes and too much time is allocated to teaching physical education. The curriculum provision in the Reception class is good and has improved since the last inspection. The school's partnership with parents is good and encourages good support for pupils' learning. The school has good links with other schools and training institutions.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. They have too little impact on improving the quality of provision or on raising standards. The role of subject co-ordinators is in need of further development. The governing body have a satisfactory knowledge of the school's strengths but are less well informed of the school's weaknesses. They ensure that policies are in place to support the school's aims and that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views about the school. They feel that their children are happy and are expected to work hard. They find teachers approachable and helpful. The inspection team agrees with parents views of the school, but while children are expected to make a strong effort they are not always given work which challenges them.

Pupils are happy in school and feel they have adults they can trust and confide in.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in writing across the school and in mathematics in Year 2 and 3.
- Improve leadership and management, and monitoring and evaluation procedures, so that they have a clear impact on improving the quality of educational provision and the standards that pupils achieve.
- Develop the role of co-ordinators so they understand their subject responsibilities and have time to discharge them.

- Improve the quality of teachers' marking and their use of assessment to plan for different groups of pupils.
- Improve the quality of presentation in pupils' written work.
- Improve the use of ICT for learning in other subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are average in reading and mathematics in the current Year 2. Standards in writing are below the national average. There are a significant number of pupils in Year 2 who are underachieving in mathematics and writing. Overall, pupils in Year 4 exceed the level expected for their age in mathematics. In English they reach the expected level. Overall, the achievement of pupils is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage (Reception class) make very good progress and are on course to exceed the expected level in all areas of learning.
- Standards in mathematics in Year 4 exceed the expectation for their age.
- Standards in writing are too low, especially in Year 2.
- Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are not challenged enough in mathematics.

Commentary

1 Children in the Foundation Stage join the school with attainment that is above what is expected for their age. They make rapid progress in all areas of learning because of the good quality provision and the very good teaching they receive. They achieve well in all areas of learning because of the well-structured support they receive and because of their own confidence and enthusiasm for learning. The majority have already attained the expected level in personal, social and emotional development. By the end of the Reception year the majority of children are likely to exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (16.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.9 (14.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.6 (16.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2 Results in the national tests in reading for Year 2 pupils in 2003 were in line with the national average. In writing, results showed an improvement on the previous year. They were above the national average. The school attributes this to the greater emphasis it placed on writing in the previous year. Results in mathematics were below the national average. In the teacher assessed science tests in 2003, results were well above the national average. Teachers' assessments in reading, were in line with test performance, and in writing and mathematics they were above the results in the tests. The school's rate of improvement has fallen behind the national trend in improvement since the last inspection. Boys' performance overall has been better than girls' in the last three years. The school attributes the decline in test performance overall, to changes in cohort. In the group who sat the tests in 2003 only six pupils had joined Year 1 from the Reception class. Mobility data shows that the remaining 17 pupils joined at some point between the start of Year 1 and the spring term of 2003.

3 Pupils who are now in Year 2, reach the expected standard in reading, because the school has placed appropriate emphasis on teaching letter sounds and has a good partnership with parents to support their children's reading at home. In writing, standards are below what is expected

because pupils are not sufficiently well taught to write in different styles, nor are they given enough opportunity to refine their writing skills through regular practice and challenging activities. The achievement of most pupils, in the writing seen, is unsatisfactory. As at the last inspection, there is too much reliance on printed worksheets for pupils to record their learning. In mathematics, standards are at about the expected level for many pupils, but again an over-reliance on worksheets is hampering the development of pupils' thinking because they are not required to set out their work to show how they have calculated answers. Higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough in the work set and for these and some average attaining pupils there is also under-achievement. It was not possible to make a judgment on standards in science because of the nature and limitations of recorded work from the last half-term.

4 In the Year 3/4 class, pupils reach the expected standard in reading and a significant number reach higher than expected levels. Those who are keen readers, are able to state who their preferred authors are and show a wide vocabulary when answering questions in class. Standards in the writing seen are about the expected level, with fewer than expected pupils demonstrating higher levels in their work. In mathematics, pupils in Year 4 exceed the expected level for their age and their achievement is satisfactory. This is because mathematics lessons are well planned to challenge pupils of all abilities, and the tasks provided match what pupils need to learn next. No judgement was made about standards in science because of limited evidence, though pupils in Year 4 showed good understanding of how insulation works to keep in heat or cold.

5 During the inspection, it was only possible to see lessons and make firm judgements about standards in part of the foundation curriculum. Religious education, art and design and history were all inspected fully. In each of these subjects pupils' attainment in Year 2 and in Year 4 is at the expected level for their age. Pupils' achievement in these subjects is satisfactory. In Year 4, standards in art and design have fallen from being above expectations to in line with it. In religious education, standards have fallen since the last inspection in both age groups. A weakness which has an impact on standards for pupils, is the amount of time spent on religious education in the infants, which is less than that allocated in the rest of the school. Another factor impacting on standards in the foundation curriculum subjects, is the excessive amount of time given to physical education which squeezes out time for other subjects, because pupils receive swimming lessons every week.

6 It was not possible to see lessons or samples of pupils' work from this term in geography, music, or physical education, so it was not possible to give a firm judgement about standards in these subjects. Singing in assembly was good and in the one lesson seen in ICT pupils in Year 2 showed expected levels of skill and knowledge when using a paint program. There was not enough evidence available from the work of pupils currently in the school, to give a firm judgement about standards in ICT overall.

7 Pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs are given good support in their learning. The teacher and the support assistants plan well for their needs and ensure that their responses to pupils are flexible and positive. The result is that pupils feel secure; they know that they will be supported to learn alongside their classmates and their achievement is good. Pupils who have special educational needs in literacy or numeracy are supported to learn at the same rate as others in the class, through teachers' planning of tasks. Sometimes this is not sharply enough focused on what they need to learn next and their achievement is satisfactory overall.

8 Pupils' standards and achievement are not as high as those seen at the last inspection. This is reflected not only in lessons but in the quality of work produced this term, the presentation of which is poor. The main reason for this is a lack of rigorous monitoring of teaching, learning and the curriculum. The school does not have a clear enough picture of its strengths and weaknesses to decide on the most urgent priorities to eradicate underachievement and help raise standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are good. Provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' behave well towards each other, to staff and other adults around the school; occasionally some unsatisfactory behaviour was seen to effect pupils' concentration and learning.
- There is a positive attitude to learning by pupils in lessons, with good relationships.

Commentary

9 Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning experiences and have a positive attitude to school. They generally behave well in lessons, recognising classroom procedures and settle to work quickly. However, some lessons were too noisy and pupils' concentration wandered. This was mainly due to activities, which were not appropriate for pupils' abilities. Behaviour is good around the school. Movement about the school is orderly and pupils play very well together in the playground during breaks and lunchtimes. Pupils chat in a very friendly way with each other and adults, with no sign of any bullying or aggressive behaviour at all.

10 When given opportunities to help, pupils take their responsibilities seriously. They volunteer to support other pupils at playtimes through a buddy system, and take part in rotas for the main gate and door duties. Pupils respond well to encouragement and are pleased when they receive awards for positive attitudes, achievement or constructive effort.

11 Pupils who have special educational needs are developing confidence and positive self-esteem. They relate well to the teachers and learning support assistants, developing an increasing ability to concentrate. The pupils with difficulties appreciate what is done for them and they are provided, where appropriate, with resources which enable them to make progress and have full access to the curriculum. Other pupils benefit from the positive attitude towards learning that these pupils demonstrate.

12 The school provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, through a combination of learning in lessons, visitors and links with the church. Pupils visit the local church for a variety of religious festivals throughout the year. These visits enhance pupils' spiritual awareness and they express their feelings in written responses such as " I heard calm music " and " I felt happy". Their learning in subjects such as art and design and history is also enhanced through visits to the church in lessons. Effective opportunities are provided in a planned programme of lessons to discuss moral issues. Pupils learn the values of honesty and fair play. These lessons also help to develop an understanding and concern for people in other parts of the world. Good provision is made for cultural development. Pupils are given opportunities to learn about the local culture through participating in dance activities and listening to local folk music. Pupils develop an awareness of other cultures in the wider world through lessons and visiting speakers on religions such as Judaism and visits to a synagogue.

Attendance

13 Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. While the school generally takes effective action to promote good attendance, one occasion was noted of a register not completed by an appropriate time in the morning. Pupils enjoy coming to school. The attendance rate for the academic year 2002-3 was similar to other schools. There was no unauthorised absence. Pupils are punctual in arriving at school each morning.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (94.5%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background

No of pupils on roll
133
1
2

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Assessment is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is unsatisfactory teaching in English and mathematics in Year 2 and some Year 3 lessons.
- Teaching in the Reception class is very good.
- Teaching in history makes use of a range of methods to interest pupils.
- Teachers' marking is unsatisfactory.
- Teachers' use of assessment to plan the next stage of learning is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

14 The quality of teaching seen during inspection was satisfactory overall. This marks a decline since the time of the last inspection when teaching was judged to be good overall. Teaching is of variable quality in different classes and subjects and there is now a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching in English and mathematics because the level of challenge is too low. While there is still about the same proportion of very good teaching as seen at the last inspection this is now mostly seen in the Reception class where teaching is judged to be very good overall. The main reason for the decline in teaching standards is the lack of rigour in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. Observations of teaching are too infrequent and do not follow through with action which would help teachers improve their performance.

15 Evidence of pupils' recorded work this term shows only satisfactory progress overall and for some pupils there has not been enough progress, because the level of challenge has not been high enough to extend pupils. In English and mathematics there is evidence of a lack of challenge with consequent underachievement for a significant proportion of pupils in the Year 1/2 class and in the Year 2/3 class.

16 Teaching in English ranges from good to unsatisfactory. Two of the four lessons seen were unsatisfactory, because the level of challenge and the pace of learning were not high enough to allow pupils to make enough progress. In each of these lessons the teacher's planning for groups was not

based on sharp assessment of their previous learning with the result that tasks for some pupils were too difficult while for others they were too easy. Where teaching was good, planning for the lesson was detailed, followed the National Literacy format and took account of the needs of different groups of pupils. Learning was well-staged so that pupils could review their progress towards the writing goals that had been set. At the end of the lesson pupils rightly expressed great pleasure at the quality of the work they had produced.

17 Teaching in mathematics seen during the inspection was firmly based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers engaged pupils well in the opening mental agility session and pupils' learning was best at this point. In most lessons seen the rate of learning slowed when pupils worked on independent tasks because these were not well matched to their needs and in some cases were not challenging enough. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, pupils did not make enough progress because the activities were not well planned to support their learning. Good questioning and high expectations ensured that pupils in the Year 3/4 class were extended in their thinking and made good progress in the lesson.

18 Teachers have secure subject knowledge for teaching in history and this helps them plan interesting and lively lessons. Their enthusiasm for the subject is infectious and pupils in all classes from Year 1 to Year 4 show similar enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers make good use of different learning methods in the subject and this too stimulates pupils' interest in their learning. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 enjoy learning about the Great Fire of London through either role play or shared investigations. Their learning is made memorable by teachers' good summing up at the end of the lesson. In Year 4, the teachers' skilful use of adults to support pupils in their research ensured that all pupils learned at a good rate in order to teach each other new knowledge throughout the lesson. In art and design lessons, teachers plan good links with other subjects so that pupils can consolidate their learning.

19 Teachers do not generally have high enough expectations of the quality of pupils' presentation of work. In the work seen in lessons, as well as the samples of work from earlier this term, pupils' handwriting is judged to be unsatisfactory overall. Besides this weakness, the overall presentation of work is scrappy and untidy reflecting a careless attitude among many pupils to how their work looks.

20 Learning support assistants make a satisfactory contribution to learning overall. In some classes, where the teacher plans effectively they have a good impact, offering support to a number of pupils while giving good support to pupils with special educational needs. Those pupils who have statements of their special educational needs achieve well because of the good quality of support they receive. Pupils who have special educational needs in literacy and numeracy learn at the same rate as the majority of their peers and their achievement is satisfactory. Tracking the progress of pupils who have special educational needs is good for pupils who have statements of their special educational need and is satisfactory for other pupils, because the support assistants records of learning are used to plan the next stage of learning for these pupils.

21 Teachers' use of assessment is insufficiently rigorous to inform their planning for subsequent lessons. The school currently uses a range of assessment packages including standardised tests and online systems such as *Goal*, to record and track pupils' progress and to set group and individual targets. As yet these systems are insufficiently well embedded and teachers' abilities and confidence in interpreting the data is weak. Very few examples of teaching and learning evaluations were seen on teachers' weekly planning. The lack of sharp assessment in planning was evident in some lessons and many samples of work, where the level of challenge was inappropriate for the ability levels of the pupils concerned.

22 There is little evidence in the scrutiny of work or from lesson observations of a whole school approach to the marking of pupils' work. Teachers' written comments rarely indicate to the pupils whether they are working at the appropriate level, or what they can do to further improve their work. This weakness was noted at the last inspection and has not been addressed.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	9	10	3	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities for its pupils. However, the balance of time allocated to subjects is uneven, with too much time spent on physical education. The curriculum in the Reception class is good. The provision for the enrichment of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school's accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage (Reception class) is well structured and effectively prepares children for transfer to Year 1.
- The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are not fully implemented across the school.
- Support for pupils with statements of special educational needs is good.
- Too much time is allocated to physical education to the detriment of other subjects.
- The quality of planning is inconsistent.
- The use of ICT is underdeveloped in promoting learning across the curriculum.
- Curriculum planning does not take enough account of the pupils who move in and out of the school during the year.

Commentary

23 The curriculum provided for the children in the Foundation Stage is good. It is broad, balanced and appropriate to their needs and meets the requirements of the early learning goals. Carefully structured activities provide a wide range of opportunities through which their personal, social and emotional development is nurtured. As a result children make good progress in the development of knowledge and skills in language, literacy and mathematics. Standards of attainment are above that expected for their age.

24 The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including those for teaching religious education and sex and drugs education. However, the balance of time spent on subjects is unsatisfactory. Too much time is spent on teaching physical education to the detriment of other subjects. At the last inspection the time spent on teaching swimming to all classes throughout the year was criticised, for creating an imbalance in the time allocated to other subjects. This situation still exists and the school's declared intention of reviewing this arrangement has not led to any change. The result is that too little time is allocated to different subjects, with no whole school criteria to guide how much time should be spent on each one. For example in Year 1/2, the time given to religious education is only half of that in other classes. Additionally, planning in the curriculum does not take enough account of children from RAF families who move in and out of the school at intervals throughout the year. For instance, many subjects are taught in half-termly blocks, which makes it possible for children moving in or out of the school to miss considerable parts of the curriculum during their time in the school. The school has adopted a two year programme rolling programme of topics so that pupils in mixed age classes do not repeat work, nevertheless, with the high mobility factor in this school, current curriculum provision could result in some pupils failing to gain the appropriate knowledge and skills for their age.

25 Teachers' planning for the curriculum is inconsistent. As yet the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies are not fully implemented. Planning to cover all the attainment targets of the National Curriculum programmes of study is not clearly documented, to ensure continuity and progression. Shared planning by teachers for pupils in mixed age classes, to ensure equal access to the English and mathematics curriculum, was not seen in the inspection.

26 Since the last inspection, the provision for ICT has improved through the establishment of a suite of computers. The subject is taught to all classes by the headteacher. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is unsatisfactory and no planning for this was seen during the inspection. The school has also purchased a number of interactive whiteboards. As yet these resources are not used effectively to enhance pupils' learning in all classes. In classrooms where

the teacher is confident is using this resource, the impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding is significant, as in a Year 3/4 lesson where pupils were reading temperatures on a thermometer.

27 Support for pupils with statements of special educational needs is good. The special support assistants work alongside their pupils within the classroom and the careful process of explanation, simplification, repetition and skilful questioning increases the pupils' access to a wide range of curriculum objectives. Support for pupils who are on the school's register of special educational needs is satisfactory. These pupils have individual education plans, which guide teachers' planning and give additional support in some lessons. The school's commitment to providing equal opportunities is satisfactory.

28 The curriculum is enhanced by visitors who provide pupils with first hand experiences of the world around them. For example, pupils benefit from dance teaching by a visiting specialist for one term each year. In addition, pupils visit places of interest associated with the topics being studied within the taught curriculum, including the local church; a synagogue; the Roman site at Segedunum; the Angel of the North and the Centre for Life. The School Council provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop citizenship skills and be involved in improving their school.

29 The school's provision of extra curricular activities is limited to a weekly lunchtime football club, which is open to both boys and girls and a gardening club which is held once every two weeks. Both of these are run by the headteacher. Teachers do not participate in or run extra curricular activities. In the summer term the school engages an outside provider to deliver sessions of Kwik Cricket. Parents have the option of paying a peripatetic teacher to give violin lessons for their children.

30 The number and expertise of teachers and classroom support assistants is satisfactory. The school has adequate curriculum resources to deliver the National Curriculum in all subjects. However accommodation is cramped and the exterior décor of the building is in urgent need of attention. The grounds surrounding the school building are pleasantly landscaped and provide safe places for pupils to play. Internally, the school is well maintained by the caretaker. The play area in the Foundation Stage cannot be used when the weather is windy, wet or cold because of the ineffectiveness of the insulation and of the heating system.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements made for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. Overall, support for pupils based on the monitoring of their personal and academic achievement is unsatisfactory because assessment of learning is not rigorous enough, nor is it used effectively to plan the next stage of learning for all pupils. Action to involve pupils in the work and development of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are thorough risk assessment procedures.
- The induction of children to the Reception class is good.
- Internet security is in place.
- Child protection procedures are in place and are secure.
- Arrangements for assessment and for academic guidance are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

31 Pupils are well supervised during breaks and at lunchtime, accidents are rare and when they occur they are reported and suitable treatment is given. Staff are careful to administer any medicines that pupils take correctly. All activities in and out of school are assessed for risks and sensible precautions are taken.

32 The school's procedures for receiving children into the Reception class are good, because there are very good links with the Nursery. Most children visit the school from the Nursery so they are familiar with the new surroundings and with the teacher before they join the Reception class. The staff supporting pupils with special educational needs encourage them to grow in maturity, independence and self-awareness. The lessons always have a strong component of social training, such as working together. This contributes well to their social development.

33 Pupils' academic and personal development are not regularly monitored and recorded. While the school tracks pupils' progress three times a year through standardised tests each term, this is not enough to support good guidance for learning. Teachers' daily assessments of pupils' learning are not systematically recorded nor do they have a noticeable impact on the planning that teachers do for different groups of pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and most pupils agree that they have an adult whom they trust and would go to if they had a problem.

34 The school promotes the health of its pupils through a healthy eating programme, which encourages them to take fresh fruit for snacks at break-time. Pupils are involved in making suggestions for improvement in the school through the School Council, which is made up of representatives from every class.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school forms good links with parents for their children's learning. It has good links with the community. Educational links with other schools and colleges are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Information for parents is good.
- The school regularly seeks the views of parents.
- The community makes good use of the school.

Commentary

35 Parents value the information they receive about the work their children will do each term. They find newsletters helpful in keeping them informed on main events in the school or asking for help with certain activities. They value the opportunity provided on their child's annual report to comment on their achievements and the targets that are set for them. They also welcome the opportunity to comment on the work of the school in the questionnaires that the school distributes each year.

36 The parents of pupils who have special educational needs value the commitment of staff who care for their children. Parents are invited to review meetings and the school has links with specialist support agencies. These work to the benefit of pupils by giving staff good guidance to support these pupils, whatever their special educational needs.

37 Workshops to share learning and to help raise parent's awareness of how their children learn are run in the school by a local agency. Parents attending these during the inspection were pleased to have the opportunity to learn how they could best support their children's learning at home. Links with the community also include the use of the school site to provide before and after school care for pupils who attend the school.

38 Links with local schools are close and supportive. There are links with other First schools to share training for staff and with Middle schools to prepare pupils for transfer at the end of Year 4. The school is part of a locally based teacher-training scheme and welcomes trainee teachers each term. This provides the school with the opportunity to develop its own staff professionally through the mentoring programme, as well as giving the school insights into new methodologies introduced by students.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory overall.
The leadership by key staff is unsatisfactory.
Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Unsatisfactory leadership and management by the headteacher.
- Good leadership in The Foundation Stage.
- Unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection.
- Unsatisfactory systems for self-evaluation and improvement.

Commentary

39 Governors are aware of the increased challenges that the school faces through the high mobility of its pupils. Over 70 per cent of pupils in the school are from RAF families and their average stay in the school is about two years, though others may leave at shorter intervals. This mobility factor impacts on the composition of the governing body as parent governors drawn from RAF families are likely to serve for only a short term. Despite this, overall, members of the governing body have a satisfactory knowledge of the school's strengths but are less well informed of the school's weaknesses. This knowledge is based on the headteacher's reports to them, as well as on their own links to the school through partnership with subject co-ordinators. Governors have a schedule of visits to learn about the work of the school through discussion with subject co-ordinators and lesson observations. Their written reports on these visits show that governors are aware of relationships and the effort that pupils make in lessons. They know why co-ordinators have identified certain aspects for improvement. However, there is little evidence of guidance given to governors about standards in the subjects. Governors' knowledge of the school's performance in national tests has made them aware of the decline in standards over the last two years and they have visited mathematics lessons to observe the quality of teaching. However, their lack of expertise in this area has prevented them from discovering any underlying causes for the decline in standards. Governors are involved in the formulation of the school improvement plan through their discussions with subject leaders, and they are involved in setting priorities for this plan with the headteacher. They ensure that policies are in place to support the school's aims and that all statutory requirements are met.

40 The headteacher shares a clear vision for the pastoral provision in the school. She has ensured that systems are in place to provide good care for pupils and that they are assisted to settle into a new class whenever they join the school. All staff who work in the school follow the lead given by the headteacher in this area of the school's work. The headteacher's leadership and management of the curriculum and teaching are unsatisfactory because there is not a clear lead to improve standards or improve teaching where it is weak. While the school has developed the use of many systems for assessing pupils' progress since the last inspection, these are over-reliant on external processes and do not place enough responsibility on teachers to know how well their pupils are learning. Because of this the systems have little impact on raising standards.

41 At the previous inspection, a number of improvements were needed to the overall leadership and management of the school. These included improvements to: the school's long term planning; the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and that of the curriculum. In addition it also pointed to the need for development in the roles of subject co-ordinators. The school has addressed these issues to some extent, for instance, by producing a four year development plan, and monitoring teaching as part of the performance management cycle and by giving subject co-ordinators responsibility for producing an action plan for improvements in their subject. However, none of these measures has had enough impact, and improvement since the last inspection is judged to be unsatisfactory. The current priorities in the school development plan are not sufficiently based in a secure knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. For example, among the priorities in the current year none exists for discovering why standards in mathematics are falling. The priority 'to introduce systems of more focused group targets', misses

completely the need to assess strengths and weaknesses in teaching in the subject. Neither does the priority address how secure teachers' assessment in mathematics is, nor set out to analyse the weaknesses in pupils' learning through thorough analysis of their work in class and their performance in standardised tests.

42 The monitoring of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough and the outcomes of monitoring have not led to improvements in the quality of teaching, which has declined significantly since the last inspection. The role of subject co-ordinators remains underdeveloped and is unsatisfactory in English and mathematics because of the lack of effective monitoring and evaluation. Generally, co-ordinators do not have a clear responsibility for standards in their subjects and they have no timetable for specific monitoring activities. There was no evidence seen of the evaluation of standards through collecting samples of pupils' work and moderating teachers' judgements so that there is shared understanding of standards in the core subjects. The whole purpose of monitoring and evaluating the school's work is currently being missed because of a failure to share these findings with staff and then decide upon priorities and actions to bring about improvement. Core subject co-ordinators rely too heavily on the results of annual standardised tests as a means of tracking pupils' progress, which leaves those pupils who join or leave at short intervals with little basis for having appropriate targets set. As there are mixed age classes throughout the school and some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, regular monitoring by the subject co-ordinators of teaching and learning is essential to ensure that all pupils' are making appropriate progress. As yet the management has not enabled a robust monitoring system to be implemented.

43 The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is good and is having a positive impact on standards and the quality of teamwork between the Reception and Year 1 classes. The management of provision for special educational needs has declined since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be good. It is now satisfactory, because the assessment for pupils when they join the school is not routine, and the records show that review timescales are too long, especially for those pupils who are on the lower stages of the register.

44 The school is part of a local consortium of schools, which provide trainee teacher facilities and takes students in each of the three school terms. The students seen during inspection were at the start of their placement and it was not possible to make a judgement about the quality of provision made for them. The newly qualified teacher in the Reception class has been well supported this term by sharing planning with the on-site Nursery teacher and the teacher in the Reception/Year 1 class. She has also received regular support from her mentor to review her professional development.

45 Financial planning is satisfactory. The headteacher and governors use some best value principles effectively; for example, they seek competitive quotations for resources and maintenance. They seek to make the best use of what they buy and of the teaching and support staff. The headteacher and governors have earmarked funding which has accrued to increase support staff, and they are cautious in allocating large sums to developments because of the unpredictability of pupil numbers. Taking into account the standards seen in school together with the quality of teaching and overall provision, the school is judged to give satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	262,413
Total expenditure	254,262
Expenditure per pupil	2050

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	15,389
Balance carried forward to the next	8,151

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

46 Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good**. The majority of children are taught in one Reception class, but a few children are taught alongside Year 1 pupils. There are times when these children work alongside their peers in the 'activity' area in the Reception class. The Year 1 teacher has taught in the Foundation Stage for several years and her knowledge of the learning needs of these children is good. The strong links between the Nursery (which is run by the local R.A.F. station) and the school, contribute well to the high standards and good achievement of the children in the Foundation Stage, and ensure a smooth transition for children into full time education. Accommodation in the Reception class is cramped, but the best use is made of the space available. The attached 'activity' area has no heating and the roof needs repairing. Consequently its use is dependent on the weather. The school's sensory garden is used to support children's learning. There is a safe outside play area with climbing apparatus, which is used at playtimes.

47 Children achieve well and the majority are on course to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception in all the areas of learning. Standards have improved since the last inspection in the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Teaching and learning are very good. This is also an improvement since the last inspection. Children are consistently challenged to achieve well because all the adults working in the Foundation Stage know what children need to do next to build progressively on their previous learning. This is because of the improved assessment procedures and use of assessment since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are very confident and have excellent relationships with adults.
- Personal development is carefully tracked and recorded. All the children have targets for this area of learning.
- Children work co-operatively and are sometimes responsible for their own learning.
- Expectations of good behaviour and work are high. The children respond well to these.

Commentary

48 The majority of children are already attaining the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception. They are eager to learn and confidently try new activities. Their very good speaking skills promote their confidence and self-esteem. They form excellent relationships with adults and are eager to talk about the work they are doing. They work as part of a small group, class, or even independently without adult support. They dress and undress quickly and independently for physical development activities, and are confident when selecting and using activities and resources. When working independently children take responsibility for drawing dots against their name to show they have completed the task. Targets are shared with them, and children proudly place a sticker against any target the teacher tells them they have achieved. Teaching and learning are very good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills are very good.
- Children make very good progress in writing skills. The majority form letters correctly and write their own names independently starting with a capital letter.
- Children enjoy stories and they concentrate well when looking at picture books. All the children know how to handle books correctly and that words have meaning.
- Children are encouraged to use writing or drawings to record their learning in other areas of learning, particularly knowledge and understanding of the world.

Commentary

49 The curriculum is very well planned and assessment results are used very well to make sure that children build successfully on their previous skills in this area of learning. Children's speaking skills are particularly good; the majority are now attaining the goals children are expected to reach at the end of reception. Teaching is very good. Children are asked challenging questions which are often directed at specific children. The special educational needs support assistant, and the classroom assistant, also use very good questioning skills when working with small groups of children. This very effective deployment of support staff supports children's learning very well. Very good teaching demonstrates the correct way to write letters. As a result, the majority of children form recognisable letters and they write their own names independently. More able children are starting to write a few words, beginning with a capital letter. The children enjoy books, they handle them correctly and recognise the front cover. They enjoy listening to stories and their paintings of the character "Gruffalo" are very imaginative. Children often choose to sit quietly looking at books. They imitate their teacher, and talk about the pictures as though they were reading to someone.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children count confidently to 20 and more able children identify missing numbers in the sequence.
- Children recognise the properties of common shapes.
- Children understand mathematical vocabulary of larger, smaller, and positional vocabulary such as 'first'.
- Children are highly motivated, enthusiastic and enjoy learning.
- Teaching and learning are very good and impact on the high standards and good achievement of the children.

Commentary

50 Very good teaching ensures lots of opportunities for children to practice basic skills of counting in different and challenging ways. Children are learning to recognise the value of coins up to 10p. The teacher challenges children very well by using thoughtful questions. For example, all the children were given a coin of varying values from 1p to 10p. Two children were asked the value of the coins they held. When they answered correctly, the teacher asked the child with the higher value coin "Would you rather have your coin or the other one?" When the child answered correctly, the teacher then asked the child "Why would you rather keep your coin?" This skilful questioning not only tells the teacher how well the children understand but also promotes very good learning. Adults working in the classroom are deployed very effectively to support small groups of children. A student

worked very well with children 'shopping'. The 'shopkeeper' used a calculator to total the price of goods in shopping baskets, and 'shoppers' waiting in the queue were encouraged to count up how much their shopping would cost, and have the right money ready.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in this area of learning is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a very good knowledge of regular events, such as days of the week.
- Children use computers confidently in the computer suite using the mouse to move pictures but they do not use the computer in the classroom well enough to support their learning.
- Children bring their good background knowledge about the world about them from home, and share this very well through their good speaking skills.

Commentary

51 The children regularly change the date on the calendar and note the weather. They not only recognise the days of the week, but more able children recognise what day it will be tomorrow. A few children were able to say, on Monday, that the month had changed from November to December. Displays of children's work shows they have learnt to use the correct vocabulary to describe the texture of a variety of fruits. There are good links between this area of learning and mathematical development; the children have made a pictogram of their favourite fruits.

52 Very good teaching demonstrated to children the clothing they might have worn as babies using a dressed doll. Again, questions were very specific to the learning objective of the lesson. Children were asked to identify the differences between clothes they wore then, and now. They explained why they do not wear bibs now, and why babies' clothes have 'poppers' rather than buttons. Although the children are taught regularly to use computers in the computer suite, there are some missed opportunities for them to practise these skills in the classroom.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of opportunities to work with a range of materials.
- Role-play opportunities sometimes lack sufficient focus.

Commentary

53 Children choose from a range of materials to make three-dimensional models and their own musical instruments. Teaching is good and there are plenty of opportunities for the children to paint pictures and make patterns using different colours. When painting faces, they are beginning to identify features such as eyes, nose and mouth. Role-play opportunities are linked well to the area of the learning. There is little spare space in the classroom, and the 'home corner' has become a 'baby clinic' linked to the class topic. However, this change over is not sufficiently different from the home corner for the children to successfully undertake the roles intended in a baby clinic.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in this area of learning is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the school hall for two timetabled lessons.
- Children have access to the climbing apparatus in the outdoor play area during playtimes.

Commentary

54 Teaching and learning in the physical development lessons using the school hall are very good. Children use space confidently, and they have a good awareness of the space of others. Teaching reinforces children's understanding of the impact of exercise on their bodies. Children are being taught how to put away simple apparatus such as mats with due regard to safety. Children respond very well to instructions. They run, jump and skip and recognise some of the ways they can use different parts of their bodies. Children do not have daily access to a range of physical skills such as climbing and using wheeled vehicles.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.
- Unsatisfactory teaching in two classes leading to underachievement for a significant number of pupils.
- Good opportunities for speaking and listening in junior classes.

Commentary

55 Nearly all pupils in Year 2 reach the expected standards in speaking and listening and a significant minority reach higher than expected standards. They speak confidently, ask questions of the teacher and each other and use a wide vocabulary. They follow closely when listening to the teachers' explanations and to each other. The majority of pupils in Year 2 reach the minimum expected standard in reading, because they have been taught the letter sounds and a range of strategies to help them recognise new words. Reading records show that they are well supported by their parents to consolidate their reading skills at home. Fewer than expected pupils reach the higher level in reading because they are not offered enough challenge, and opportunities to read for other subjects are limited. In writing, their skills are below what is expected mainly because they are not taught a range of different skills for writing nor do they have enough opportunity to practise writing. Analysis of their written work this term shows that most of their writing is done on work sheets and often does not require them to write in sentences. Standards in the infants have declined since the previous inspection. The decline in standards is a result of unsatisfactory monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject. Because of this, the weak teaching has not been identified or addressed. The result is that pupils in classes where teaching is unsatisfactory make inadequate progress and underachieve in the subject because the work set is not matched to their needs.

56 By Year 4, pupils reach the expected standard in reading, with a significant minority reaching higher than expected levels. Nearly all pupils reach the expected levels in speaking and listening and a significant proportion reach higher levels. They have a good vocabulary that they use well when explaining or discussing ideas and make good use of correct terminology, for example, in science lessons. They listen very well, often for extended periods and show good recall of what they

have learned because of their good listening. In writing, some do not achieve as well as they might because the tasks set do not challenge them and they are not systematically taught how to write in different styles for different purposes. Some higher attaining pupils reach above the expected level in writing, mainly as a result of their wide reading, good vocabulary and well developed speaking skills. Analysis of pupils' written work shows fewer than expected examples of writing for different purposes, so that while it is possible that pupils could write fluently and at length they are not given enough opportunities to do so to hone their writing skills. In nearly all books, the quality of handwriting is unsatisfactory, few pupils join their letters when writing and the overall quality of presentation is poor.

57 The quality of teaching seen during inspection was variable, ranging from good to unsatisfactory. Analysis of pupils' written work shows that in most lessons they are not challenged enough, or are not given enough time to record their learning. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough in Year 2 and in some lessons in Year 3. This is reflected in the quality of teaching and learning seen during the inspection as well as in the analysis of work. Where teaching is unsatisfactory some of the weaknesses include:

- Lack of clarity in planning for learning outcomes – more focus on activities than learning objectives.
- Lack of pace and too long spent listening to the teacher so that pupils became restless.
- Inappropriate challenge in the work set for pupils of all abilities.
- Little match between the teaching and the activities set for pupils.

58 Where teaching was good, in a Year 2/3 class, the teacher had planned in good detail to prepare pupils for writing tasks. The learning was well-staged, with pupils given good opportunities to work together to prepare their ideas about the journeys of people who visited Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus. By taking part in role play, pupils were well prepared to write as one of the characters and were confident about writing independently. Pupils' work in this lesson was of a higher quality than that seen in their books for the rest of the term, and was only matched by one piece of writing about their visit to the local church earlier in the term. Sometimes, where teaching is satisfactory, pupils spend too much time on the carpet listening to the teacher, allowing some to lose interest and leaving insufficient time for them to develop their writing. The use of worksheets for recording their learning restricts pupils' opportunities for writing, as well as lowering their expectations of what they can do. In nearly all of the work seen, marking was unsatisfactory. Teachers marking consists mainly of ticks with very few comments, and none which give clear advice on how to improve. There is no evidence in the lesson planning seen, that teachers' evaluations of pupils' learning have any impact on planning for different groups of pupils.

59 The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The procedures for rigorous monitoring of teaching, learning and standards in pupils work are not in place. There is little apparent action to follow up perceived weaknesses and not enough monitoring of lesson planning to ensure that pupils in mixed age classes are appropriately taught. The co-ordinator has little knowledge of the standards of pupils' written work and has taken no action to improve the presentation of work this term, which is poor in every class. This was an issue at the last inspection and there is no evidence of improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60 Teachers make good use of talk for learning and encourage pupils to explain their thinking and share their views. Pupils are expected to listen closely and this helps their learning by helping them recall what they have been told. Pupils' use of writing is not well developed. Overall there is insufficient planning for writing in other subjects. In the infants an over-reliance on work sheets for pupils to record their learning hinders the development of their writing skills. In the juniors there are missed opportunities for able pupils to write independently and at length about their work in science, history and religious education.

MATHEMATICS

The provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 4 pupils attain standards that are above average for their age.
- Appropriate differentiation in oral and mental work ensures that all pupils have opportunities to achieve.
- Standards have fallen by the end of Year 2 and there is underachievement for some pupils.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory and inconsistencies in teaching have not been addressed.
- The quality of assessment and marking to inform planning is unsatisfactory.
- The excessive use of worksheets limits opportunities for pupils to record their own strategies for calculating and solving problems and is a weakness.
- There is not enough use of ICT in the subject.

Commentary

61 Pupils' performance in the national tests in 2003 was below the national average and well below that of similar schools. Since the last inspection there has been a decline in standards by the end of Year 2. The results in national tests in 2003 indicate that boys do better than girls.

62 Pupils who are currently in Year 2 reach the expected level overall, though there are distinct differences in the levels of challenge set in the two Year 2 classes. Analysis of pupils' work in one class shows a very heavy reliance on photocopied worksheets, which prevent pupils from exploring their own strategies for calculation and makes it difficult for a teacher to spot any differences in the performance of boys and girls as noted above. In the current term, the majority of pupils in this class have not made the expected progress. In the other Year 2 class, there is still a reliance on worksheets, but these are sometimes adapted to suit the pupils' needs more appropriately than in the other class. Teachers' planning for the two classes shows that there is not a common approach and that pupils in each class do not receive the same curriculum, which is another factor contributing to significant underachievement in one of the classes. For example, pupils have fewer than expected strategies for addition and subtraction calculations. There is no evidence in one class of pupils beginning work on early multiplication or division strategies and this impedes their progress to the higher levels of achievement.

63 Inspection evidence from lesson observations and from a scrutiny of the Year 3/4 pupils' work, indicates that attainment overall for these pupils is above that expected for their age. Higher attaining pupils' work shows they are competent in re-ordering negative numbers, can calculate measurement and convert numbers to fractions and decimals. While there is still an over-reliance on worksheets to record learning, these are often adapted to match the needs of pupils and allow different groups to progress at an appropriate rate.

64 The quality of teaching in the subject varies from class to class, and there is significant difference in the quality of teaching in one class where there is a job-share. The Year 2 pupils in this class are subject to very different expectations from the different teachers. The quality of teaching for these pupils ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Where teaching was very good, pupils learned at a rapid pace and were kept motivated by the teacher's skilful questioning and very good behaviour management. The same pupils displayed unsatisfactory attitudes to the subject and failed to make enough progress where the teaching was unsatisfactory. The under-achievement in this class stems from the wide variation in expectations between the two teachers. In the other Year 2 class, teaching seen during the inspection was judged to be good, but evidence in pupils' work indicates that they are not consistently taught at this level and that they are usually not challenged enough in their tasks. This is also reflected in some unsatisfactory planning for learning which does not take enough account of prior learning, in both Year 2 classes. The overall quality of teaching of

the pupils in the Year 3/4 class is good. Teachers here plan together and they provide work which is challenging for different groups of pupils.

65 In the majority of lessons observed the oral and mental starter was used effectively. These short sessions were well paced and where teaching was good, pupils' interest and enthusiasm was sustained. Good opportunities for speaking and listening are fostered in these oral and mental sessions. Planning for the main independent activity is far more variable, because some teachers do not mark and assess pupils' work rigorously enough. The result is that many pupils do not receive the correct level of challenge and do not progress at the rate there are capable of. Pupils have too few opportunities to use ICT to support their learning in mathematics.

66 While the subject co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and expertise this is not used effectively to lead and manage improvement in the subject. Opportunities to monitor teaching and learning are too infrequent for her to have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work has not been rigorous enough to spot weaknesses and bring about improvement. As yet the National Numeracy Strategy is not fully implemented. There is an imbalance in the time allocated to the different National Curriculum Attainment Targets, as the pupils move through the school. Investigative work and problem solving were under-represented in the teachers' planning and in the children's work seen. The only investigative challenge noted was on a worksheet set for homework in the Year 3/4 class. Joint planning for the same age pupils in different classes is not in place. In this academic year the school does not have the funding or any suitably trained support staff to deliver the *Springboard* catch-up programmes for Year 3 and 4 pupils, whose attainment is below average for age. The potential impact of this lack of support has not yet been evaluated. A Basic Skills programme has recently been introduced but was not seen in the course of the inspection. Overall leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

67 The use of mathematical skills and knowledge in other subjects is underdeveloped. Teachers do not plan to use pupils' skills and knowledge in other lessons, though one example of this was seen during the inspection. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson the teacher focused on the pupils' understanding of positive and negative numbers in the context of a thermometer, in preparation for a science lesson in which that knowledge and understanding would add to pupils' understanding of the scientific concepts learned.

SCIENCE

68 In **science**, work was sampled and only one lesson was seen. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision in the subject. It is not possible to make a judgment about standards in the subject in the infants because there was not enough recorded evidence on which to base a judgement and the Year 1/2 pupils do not study science this half term.

69 In the Year 3/4 lesson seen, the majority of pupils showed an expected level of understanding about how insulating materials worked. A significant minority showed better than expected understanding and were able to explain that good insulating materials protected against heat and cold. Teaching in this lesson was good, because the teacher systematically prompted pupils to think about their investigation and what it was showing by taking note of their results and looking for patterns in temperature change. Her good questioning allowed pupils to develop their ideas and make links with their previous learning as well as apply their understanding of what a fair test is.

70 Discussions with older pupils showed that they have good scientific vocabulary and understand the principles of investigation in science. The school has continued its good practice of basing learning in science on practical activities for pupils. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in the subject. Consequently they do not demonstrate their knowledge on paper, which means that teachers have few records from which to measure pupils' progress in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

71 During the inspection work was sampled in **information and communication technology** and one lesson was seen. It was therefore not possible to form a firm judgement about provision in the subject.

72 Pupils in the Year 2 lesson seen were able to use a program to create repeating patterns and showed about average manipulative and keyboard skills. Teachers do not currently save and organise pupils' completed work methodically so only a few examples of work were seen from this school year. Saved work on disk and printed copies of pupils' work are not organised so that they can be properly monitored and assessed. In discussion, a group of Year 3 pupils showed a good knowledge of computer terminology, but could give very few instances of having used ICT in their learning in other subjects this term.

73 The weaknesses highlighted at the last inspection are still present in the organisation and impact of the subject. There is still not enough use of ICT for learning in other subjects and pupils still regard it as a 'stand alone' subject. The position regarding teachers' expertise in the subject has not changed significantly because currently, the headteacher teaches the subject to all classes, so staff are still not involved in the direct teaching of ICT, thus curtailing the development of their expertise. The school has extended the range of software that it uses, as seen in some examples of work from last year's Year 4 pupils, who used slides to present their work on the environment and composed music on a computer. Despite this improvement, progress overall in the subject since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74 Very little evidence was seen of work done on computers during the current term. A few displays of pupils' work showed that they use word processing to present work, for example, about their visit to the local church. Some pupils were seen using computers to consolidate mathematical skills. However, the use of computers outside of the direct teaching session is not a regular and consistent feature across different subjects.

HUMANITIES

75 There has been no **geography** teaching in the current term so it was not possible to reach a judgement about provision in the subject.

76 The work scrutiny from the previous term was insufficiently comprehensive to enable a secure judgement on standards to be made. The geographical knowledge and skills demonstrated by a group of Year 3 pupils in a discussion about the community surrounding the local village compared with other places, was about in line with that expected for their age. As yet the use of ICT is under-developed although it featured strongly in a topic in the previous summer term where pupils used computers to track the progress of *Barnaby Bear* as he travelled around America with a pupil.

77 The subject co-ordinator has compiled a comprehensive file of teaching ideas and lesson plans to help teachers to plan for the skills as well as for knowledge in this subject. The evaluation of the long and medium term planning from the co-ordinator's file confirms that the subject is appropriately planned following a scheme of work based on the national guidelines for this subject. This is complemented by a planned programme of visitors and educational visits which enhance the taught curriculum through first hand experience. The current arrangement of alternating geography teaching with history does not provide good access for pupils who move in and out of the school each year.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links are made with other subjects.
- There are good opportunities for speaking and listening.
- There is too little use of writing to record learning.

Commentary

78 Standards in history are at the expected level in Year 2 and in Year 4. Pupils have a sound knowledge of events and famous people. During inspection, when three lessons were seen, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were learning about the Great Fire of London, how this had occurred and how people dealt with it. In Year 4, pupils did their own research, from prepared sheets, into various aspects of life in Ancient Greece.

79 Pupils enjoy the subject and their achievement is satisfactory. They learn best when they are given opportunities for understanding the past through drama and role-play. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils' learning about the Fire of London was made memorable by taking part in enacting the events of the fire. They were able to make good use of their previous learning about the fire and knew that there was a river from which they could draw water to put out the flames or jump into to escape the fire. Their learning was well consolidated next day when they created collages of the fire in an art and design lesson. In Year 4, the teacher made very good use of additional adult support to help pupils do their own research and share their learning about the Ancient Greeks. At the end of the lesson all pupils enjoyed the opportunity to feedback to the class and ask questions about points of interest.

80 Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some very good aspects seen in all lessons. Teachers make good links with other subjects such as art and design and give pupils opportunities to develop their speaking skills through reporting back to the class. They do not make much use of writing or the reading of challenging texts and this is a missed opportunity for pupils to improve these basic skills.

81 The subject co-ordinator ensures that there are enough resources to teach the subject. There is no monitoring of teaching and little recorded work from which she can gain a good understanding of standards in the school. She checks teachers' planning to ensure that pupils in mixed age classes do not repeat work on topics. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped because it does not include a clear responsibility for ensuring the quality of provision and the standards in the subject. At present these aspects are unsatisfactory.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits to places of worship contribute well to pupils' learning.
- Supportive guidance for teachers provided by the subject co-ordinator.
- Improved assessment strategies and monitoring of the curriculum since the last inspection.
- Limited opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills to consolidate their learning.
- Insufficient time for some lessons, particularly in Year 2.
- Marking of pupils' work seldom indicates how pupils might improve.
- Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough.

Commentary

82 Standards are in line with the expectations of Northumberland's Agreed Syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 4. Standards are not as good as reported in the previous inspection, although systems for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring of curriculum provision have improved. Standards appear to have declined because pupils do not use their writing skills well enough to record their knowledge and understanding. Some teachers rely too heavily on pupils' good speaking skills in lessons to promote their learning with too few opportunities for pupils to consolidate what they have learnt. This was evident in discussions with some pupils. Their knowledge about Christianity was secure and they knew the importance of some Christian beliefs and values to everyday living. However, their understanding of some of the important beliefs in Judaism and Islam was fragmentary and confused.

83 Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In one lesson, pupils learnt well through their involvement in a range of activities, including simple role play. Teachers use questioning effectively to promote pupils' learning, but not enough time is given to consolidating what pupils have learnt. When pupils are given tasks, too often there is insufficient challenge for the majority of pupils because they all do the same work. Marking of pupils' work seldom indicates what pupils need to do to improve further. Homework is sometimes used effectively. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 thought carefully when making their own Baptismal cards at home.

84 Visits to the local church and a synagogue promote learning well. For example, pupils' recorded their impressions on their church visit well. They used their senses and reflected on their feelings. One pupil wrote, "I heard calm music. I felt happy". In discussions with older pupils they talked enthusiastically about important aspects of the synagogue.

85 The subject co-ordinator supports teachers well with effective guidance for planning lessons. Action planning for the subject shows the co-ordinator's good subject knowledge by the clear focus on what will need to be done when the new Northumberland Agreed Syllabus comes into schools shortly. This indicates regular attendance at courses, and a recent innovation is the introduction of clear assessment strategies resulting from the co-ordinator's attendance on a course. Although there is some monitoring of the curriculum, this is not yet rigorous enough to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

86 In **music**, singing in assembly was good. Pupils sing tunefully and enjoy practising singing carols in preparation for Christmas. Pupils have benefited from the expertise of a music specialist who has previously taught throughout the school. However, this arrangement no longer exists for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The co-ordinator is aware of the impact of this and although there are plans to check on the quality of teaching and learning there is no clear timescale for this monitoring. A few pupils benefit from instrumental tuition, but there are no extra-curricular music clubs running either during, or at the end of the school day. There are some good cross-curricular links with music. Pupils hear music and learn songs from other cultures. For example, they experience Caribbean music in their geography topic and listen to music from India. Music chosen for the week in assemblies also promotes pupils' cultural development. The title and composer are displayed. For example, pupils listen to the music of the well-known Northumbrian folk musician, Kathryn Tickell.

87 In discussions, pupils they say they enjoy **design and technology** lessons because they "like making things". A variety of finished products are displayed around the school, but these are seldom accompanied by pupils' own explanations of how they designed and made the product, or how they evaluated the success of their product. Pupils have designed and made some sculptures for the school's sensory garden. In discussion, pupils remember completing worksheets evaluating their work. However, pupils' work shows that these are of variable quality and sometimes pupils do not complete all the questions. There is little challenge for older pupils to use their writing skills to write their own evaluations and suggestions for improvements. Teachers plan carefully to make

good cross-curricular links. For example, some pupils designed and made Greek theatre masks linked to their history topic.

88 In the one **physical education** lesson seen during the inspection the Year 2/3 pupils were confident in identifying the points and patches on apparatus on which they could balance or travel. Performance for the majority of this class was broadly in line with expectation for their age. Pupils said that they enjoyed physical education. The comments from the parents at the pre-inspection meeting indicate that pupils particularly enjoy dance lessons which they have for one half term each year when they are taught by a visiting specialist. Currently, the school allocates too much time to physical education because all classes have a swimming lesson each week as well as two physical education lessons. This increased teaching time allocated to physical education limits the time available for other non-core subjects.

89 The school's extra curricular provision in this subject is limited to Kwik cricket and football. There are no planned opportunities for pupils to play in teams competitively within the county. Transport costs to participate in Northumberland leagues are considered by the school to be prohibitive. There is no monitoring of teaching or learning in the subject.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wealth of supporting lesson plans and ideas to support planning.
- Quality of displays is variable and labelling is unsatisfactory.
- Not enough emphasis on the development of observational skills.

Commentary

90 Pupils' work in the lessons and on display indicate that standards are in line with those expected for their age groups. This marks a decline in standards since the previous inspection for pupils in Year 4. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 completed pictures of the Great Fire of London using paint and junk materials. They show a good recall of detail about where the fire started and include parts of the river as well as the houses which were burning. They made good use of colour to create the correct affect and worked with very good concentration. Pupils in Year 3/4 made printing blocks and designed patterns using their own designs. Most worked with precision and showed a good sense of pattern. The lack of space in the classroom hampered the work of some and reduced the quality of their work

91 While teaching is satisfactory overall there is little evidence of a planned programme to develop the progressive skills of observational drawing. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate and where appropriate improve their designs in terms of suitability for purpose. This was a learning objective in the lessons where pupils were designing printing blocks. Pupils respond well to the activities offered, especially those that are linked to other subjects they have been studying.

92 The majority of the work on display demonstrates the craft aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study, with a broad range of different techniques and materials exemplified in colourful wall displays in classrooms and corridors. The quality of these displays is variable. Not all state the name and class of the 'artists' or give information about the work, which is a weakness and detracts from the impact of the displayed work.

93 The curriculum co-ordinator has provided the teachers with long and medium term plans for the teaching of the subject, which provide satisfactory guidance. As yet there is no portfolio of assessed work to support teachers in marking and levelling the pupils' work. The curriculum co-ordinator has not had time allocated to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

94 No lessons in PSHCE were seen during the inspection. The school is developing the use of PSHCE through a planned programme to gain accreditation for Healthy School status. It has introduced healthy snacks at break-times to encourage pupils to think about their diet and gives pupils a responsibility for organising and managing this provision. The school is promoting citizenship through the recently established School Council, which draws on suggestions from all classes for how to improve 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	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	5
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	5
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	5

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