

INSPECTION REPORT

HENBURY VIEW FIRST SCHOOL

Corfe Mullen

LEA area: Dorset

Unique reference number: 113745

Headteacher: Mrs R. Powner

Lead inspector: Mrs J. Willcock-Bates

Dates of inspection: 19 - 22 January 2004

Inspection number: 260612

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	152
School address:	Hillside Road Corfe Mullen Wimborne Dorset
Postcode:	BH21 3TR
Telephone number:	01202 659179
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Neill Evans
Date of previous inspection:	24 April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Henbury View First School is a small school situated in the village of Corfe Mullen in Dorset. It caters for 152 pupils of 4-9 years old. Most pupils come from the village, although some travel from the neighbouring towns of Wimborne and Poole. The majority of pupils come from backgrounds that are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged. The area is expensive to live in and this prohibits some young families and is leading to a reduction in numbers of children of school age. There is limited unemployment in the area, although most people have to travel to Bournemouth or Poole for work. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is generally average, although there are wide variations each year. An increasing number of children are entering school with problems with speech and communication, while others are beginning to read and write. All pupils come from white British heritage and none speaks English as an additional language. An above-average proportion is receiving support for special educational needs with seven receiving support in addition to what the school provides. One pupil has a statement of need. The school received an achievement award for rising standards in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1967	Jennie Willcock-Bates	Lead inspector	English, Geography, History and Religious education
9644	Michael Whitaker	Lay inspector	
27219	Gwyneth Evans	Team inspector	Foundation stage curriculum, Mathematics, Art and design and Music
1939	Michael Benson	Team inspector	Science, Information and communication technology, Personal, social and health education, Design and technology, Physical education and Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Henbury View First School is **an effective school, which continues to improve**. Teaching is good, and pupils achieve well. Assessment of pupils' achievement is not always systematic in each subject. Leadership is good and management is effective. Governors ensure that the school gets very best value out of the resources provided and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Skilful management drives school improvement and the very effective headteacher, with the talented management team, has created strong teamwork.
- Pupils' achievement is good, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics and history.
- Children in the Reception class get a very good start to their schooling because teaching is very good.
- Pupils feel secure and confident because they are very well supported and their views and ideas are valued.
- Assessment and recording in subjects other than English and mathematics is not as systematic as it should be.
- Learning support assistants work very effectively with teachers and pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.
- The school's very strong and positive ethos means that all staff ensure that all pupils are included and able to fully benefit from all its work.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is still not systematically used as a tool for learning across the curriculum.

Improvement is **good**. Standards have risen and results have improved. However, ICT is not yet fully established as a tool for learning across the curriculum. The new headteacher has put in place a very effective system for the monitoring and support of teaching, and the provision for special educational needs is now well managed. Resources for the Reception class are now very good.

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	D	C	D
Writing	E	B	B	C
Mathematics	E	C	A	B

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Achievement is **good** overall in the school. Children in the Reception year achieve very well and are on course to exceed the goals for their personal, social and emotional development, their communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development. They will reach the goals in other areas of learning.

The results of national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2003 were average in reading, above average in writing and well above average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, results in reading were below average, average in writing and above average in mathematics. Results have risen considerably since 2002. Current standards in all subjects are at least as expected, and are above average in writing, mathematics and history by the time pupils leave the school in Year 4. Standards are higher in Year 2 because of the level of attainment of the pupils. A significant number of pupils have special educational needs in Year 4, who have achieved well to reach expected standards. It was not possible to judge standards in art and design, music or physical education as

not enough lessons were observed. Pupils achieve well in their lessons because teaching is good. Achievement in each year group is good in English, mathematics and history. Pupils achieve well in science in Years 1 and 2 but achievement slows to satisfactory in Year 4 when some of the worksheets they undertake do not let pupils record their findings and ideas independently. Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory in ICT and religious education throughout the school.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are developed well. Attitudes, behaviour and attendance are good. The few boys who have special needs for behaviour are well managed and try to be good, but sometimes disrupt lessons.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good, and teaching is good. Lessons are very well planned. Learning support assistants are closely involved, contributing very well to the pupils' learning. Teachers ask questions that capture the pupils' interest and extend their learning. What pupils can do is assessed very well in English and mathematics but assessment in other subjects is not yet systematic. Children in the Reception class get a very good start to school because of very effective teaching. The pupils enjoy the exciting activities planned for them, and benefit from the links with other schools. Links with the local church are well established and contribute well to the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership, which inspires loyalty from staff and pupils. She has developed a good team of people who are working well together. The management team has a strong influence on teaching and learning through the very good systems for monitoring and evaluating of what is happening in classrooms. The work of the governing body is very good and governors play a significant role in strategic development. Almost all statutory requirements are met, although a few minor omissions to the governors' annual report will be rectified this current year. Inclusion is very good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school. They feel that their children are making good progress and are encouraged to work hard. They think teaching is good and the school is well led and managed. A small number did not feel well informed about their children's progress. Inspectors found that a good range of information is provided through reports and formal and informal discussion.

Pupils are very happy with their school. They feel safe and secure and that they are helped by teachers. A few were concerned about behaviour but felt that naughty children were dealt with appropriately. Pupils feel they are listened to and they thoroughly enjoy their lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Devise a systematic approach to assessment and recording in all subjects.
- Ensure that information and communication technology is used as a tool for learning and that opportunities are included in planning.

Almost all statutory requirements have been met, although there are minor omissions from the governors' annual report to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is **good** overall, though standards vary from average to above average from year to year. Achievement is **very good** for pupils in Reception and **good** in all other year groups, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's achievement in the Reception year is rapid because they get a very good start to their schooling.
- Standards in mathematics and history are higher than those expected nationally, and pupils' achievement is good in English, mathematics, history and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of effectively focused tasks and successful support from learning support assistants and teachers.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to apply and use what they have learnt in mathematics, which slows their achievement in this aspect.
- The rate of achievement in science in Years 3 and 4 is not as rapid as in Years 1 and 2.

Commentary

1. There are wide variations of attainment on entry to the school each year, and over the last few years several children have entered school with problems with speech and language. School assessment shows that the attainment on entry of children in the current Reception year was average. The provision is very good and they have had a very successful start to their schooling, achieving very well because of high quality teaching. As a result, they are on course to exceed the nationally expected Early Learning Goals for children at the end of the year in their personal, social and emotional development, their communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development. They will reach the goals in their physical development.

The table shown in this commentary gives the points scores for pupils in the last national tests. Each level in the national curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term, so if a school's scores are one point above the national scores, their pupils are, typically a term ahead.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.1 (15.2)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.7 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.8 (16.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The results of the national tests in 2003 were average in reading, above average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science were well above average. When compared to results in similar schools, these results and teacher assessments were below average in reading, in line with the average in writing, although, again, results in mathematics were above average.

3. Standards in all the subjects inspected are at least average and meet the expected levels. It was not possible to make a secure judgement about standards in art and design, music and physical education. In the work seen at the end of Year 2, pupils achieve well in reading, writing, speaking and listening and standards are above average. There is a perceptible rise in standards as a result of good teaching, careful analysis, and the use of targets set to help pupils systematically improve their literacy skills and knowledge. For example, in response to low results in reading, the school analysed results and worked hard to help pupils learn strategies to help them read and to develop a clear joined script to help their writing. Pupils' achievement is carefully tracked throughout the school. The range of levels of attainment and proportion of special educational needs widens in Years 3 and 4. This means that pupils achieve well to attain expected standards overall. The school has rightly invested time in improving pupils' literacy skills to help them become confident readers and writers.
4. Achievement is good in mathematics, and standards of numeracy are currently above average at the end of Year 2. Pupils have a good understanding of shapes and measures. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 achieve well and, as with English, standards are broadly average but pupils are continuing to gain an enthusiasm and confidence in number because of good teaching. There are wide variations in the levels of attainment and several pupils require support for their learning in mathematics. Programmes of work have targeted numeracy skills, which helps pupils successfully learn a range of strategies for calculating numbers. This means that high-attaining pupils are confidently reaching higher than average levels, and low-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are making clear gains in their mathematical skills and knowledge. However, they do not have enough opportunity to develop their confidence further by applying their skills and knowledge to investigations and problem solving.
5. It is a similar picture in science and pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in all aspects of science. One of the reasons for this is that they are encouraged to extend their thinking by deciding upon the best ways to record their findings in investigations. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in scientific investigation and enquiry, which has been a recent focus of development. This reflects the results of the teachers' assessment. In Year 4, however, standards are as expected and pupils' achievement slows to satisfactory. One of the reasons for this is that, although they demonstrate a good practical knowledge and understanding, their achievement is limited when worksheets do not enable them to record their own results and findings.
6. Standards are as expected and achievement is satisfactory in ICT at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils are making appropriate gains in their knowledge and skills. In history, standards are above average because of good, and at times outstanding, teaching. Throughout the school pupils are developing a good understanding of chronology and the historical periods and people they are studying. Because teachers make history come alive, pupils not only have good recall of events but have also discovered how different sources of information can be used to provide clues about the past.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Good teaching and work that is specially targeted to help them achieve throughout the school is paying off and motivates their interest in learning. Individual education plans are effective and target the specific needs. Teachers and learning support assistants know the pupils well and this enables them to be fully included in the work of the school and achieve well in the vast majority of lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good** overall. Their spiritual development is **good**, moral and social development is **very good** and cultural development is **satisfactory**, making these aspects of their personal development **good** overall. Their attendance and punctuality are both **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour around the school is good and pupils understand and respect class and whole-school rules.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, are keen to learn and respect their teachers.
- Some disruptive behaviour from a few boys with specific behavioural needs affects a minority of lessons.
- The pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- Attendance is good and pupils are punctual.

Commentary

8. Pupils' attendance is good and is in line with the national median, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. There is no unauthorised absence, which is below the national median. Pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	94.9
National data	94.1

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.

9. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and their learning. They enjoy their lessons and are very interested in what they are learning. They listen carefully and involve themselves fully. Very nearly all, including those with special educational needs, are keen to learn and to succeed. Pupils with special educational needs related to learning and behaviour are confident because teachers and learning support assistants work hard to build their self-esteem. Good partnerships with adults at all levels place responsibility on pupils to be tolerant and achieve well through high expectations, praise and discussion. Pupils with special educational needs are very well and sensitively included by all pupils and staff throughout the school. This marks a good improvement in the provision for special educational needs since the previous inspection.
10. The pupils' behaviour is good and they have a very clear idea of what is and what is not acceptable behaviour. Parents praise the behaviour in school and on visits. There have been no exclusions in the last year. Pupils get on well with each other and with the adults they work with. The main reasons for this are that pupils know and understand the school and class rules because they are agreed by the whole school each year. Bullying and other forms of harassment are rare because the school has high expectations of behaviour and sets clear limits. This particularly helps the very few boys who have special educational needs related to behaviour, who try hard to behave well. However, there are times when their lack of self-control disrupts lessons and distracts the teacher and other pupils. These pupils are managed effectively and calmly by teachers, learning support assistants and other pupils. Behaviour outside lessons, around the school and in the playground is also good. Pupils are energetic and lively in the playground. Staff manage this well, which enables pupils to be very active without harming or distressing others.
11. The personal, social and emotional development of the children in the Reception class is very good. They are confident enthusiastic learners who happily play together in groups and share equipment. In more formal lessons, in all areas of learning, they listen very attentively and participate fully. Children tidy up quickly and carefully after activities and help each other when their job is finished. These attitudes enable them to make very good use of their time in school and are reasons why they are achieving well.
12. In the rest of the school, pupils respond well to the school's provision for personal, social and moral development. Parents feel that the school helps their children to become more mature as

they move through the school. Pupils respond well to the very strong and positive ethos values, tolerance, co-operation, collaboration and responsibility. There are many examples where older pupils look after younger ones, for instance helping with snacks or by playing together in the playground. Pupils work effectively in pairs and larger groups and listen to what each other are saying in discussions. Pupils have a very good sense of what is right and wrong because the staff offer very good role models. Because teachers and learning support assistants value the contributions the pupils make, they are respected and listened to.

13. Spiritual development is good. One of the strong features of school assemblies is the way individuals are valued, highlighting their academic and personal achievement. Time is given during assemblies to reflect on what they have heard and most pupils use this time well. However, not enough opportunities for reflection are planned into lessons. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' own local culture is well developed through out-of-school visits and visitors. The celebration of Christian and other festivals and the religious education programme help pupils to have a satisfactory understanding of a range of faiths and beliefs. Work in geography and links with other cultures such as Albania, China and Namibia help pupils to understand how people live in other countries. The pupils' awareness of a multicultural society in England is satisfactory but is not supported well in lessons and displays of work. Pupils are tolerant and welcoming in their attitudes but are much less clear of the positive features of living in a multicultural society. The school is already aware of this and improving cultural development is part of the current development plan with other small schools in the area.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good** because effective teaching enables pupils to learn effectively through **very good** quality activities that enhance the curriculum. **Very good** attention is paid to the care and welfare of pupils, although some aspects of assessment need improving. The school works hard to maintain effective links with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **good** and pupils learn effectively but while day-to-day assessment is **good**, assessment systems in other subjects do not always provide sufficiently accurate information about achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and very good in the Reception class.
- Teachers and learning support assistant work as very effective teams managing pupils very well, ensuring that everyone is fully included in all lessons.
- Planning provides a very good framework for lessons and this helps teachers to ensure that the pupils know what is expected of them.
- Teachers ask skilful and rigorous questions that help pupils formulate ideas and talk about what they have learned.
- Assessment is good in English and very good in the Reception class, but in other subjects there is no systematic way of recording what pupils have already achieved.
- While there are good examples of marking, quality is uneven across the school.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	4	13	4	1	0	0

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

14. The good teaching identified by the previous inspection has been maintained, although a higher proportion of very good or better teaching was observed during this inspection. Parents and pupils feel that teaching is good. There are particular strengths in teaching in the Reception year, which has clear strengths in very high expectations and work planned that is just right for the age and attainment of the pupils. As a result, pupils' achievement is rapid and they have had a very good start to their schooling. Good teaching is a feature of each class. Teaching is very good in history where two of the lessons seen were outstanding. In English and mathematics teaching is good and it is at least satisfactory in science, ICT and religious education. There was not enough evidence to judge overall teaching in art and design, design and technology, geography and physical education but the limited evidence available indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory.
15. One of the strengths of the teaching is very effective planning. Teachers have worked hard to improve planning to ensure that lessons meet the needs of the wide range of attainment in each class. This means that lessons are carefully prepared and well organised. Because the objectives of lessons are made explicit, pupils know exactly what is expected of them. However, in a small number of lessons, too much was planned for pupils to do and they could not complete the work in sufficient depth to extend their learning in the time provided. Teachers and learning support assistants plan and work together. Learning support assistants are very skilful in support of pupils with special educational needs. They are especially supportive of a few pupils whose challenging behaviour can be disruptive. The calm and effective management skills of teachers and learning support assistants enable pupils to stay within the class or return quickly to resume their tasks. With other ability groups they ensure that all pupils are fully included in all lessons. Such inclusion is one of the school's considerable strengths.
16. Another key strength of teaching is the way teachers ask pupils questions. Questioning during the introduction to lessons sets the scene and helps the teacher to confirm what pupils do and do not know. Introductions are innovative and capture the pupils' interest and imagination. There were examples during activities when teachers and learning support assistants made pupils think hard and try out new ideas by using rigorous questioning that took the pupils to a deeper level of learning. This extended their knowledge and understanding by helping pupils apply their skills to a new situation. Effective use of technical language related to subjects means that pupils are extending their knowledge and use of words, which is an improvement since the previous inspection.
17. Pupils' work is assessed thoroughly in English and mathematics. In English, results are used to track the pupils' academic performance and analysis of this information is used to decide where the focus of teaching should lie. Similar arrangements exist in mathematics, although the analysis is not so regular or rigorous. As a result, the school has an accurate overall picture of the pupils' performance and understands the strengths and weaknesses of the subjects well. This is one of the reasons why the pupils' attainment is improving and they are achieving well. This system has been particularly effective in helping to improve provision for pupils with special educational needs and has been used carefully in the development of individual education plans.
18. In most other subjects day-to-day assessment is at least satisfactory. Teachers listen carefully to pupils' responses, and adjust their teaching programme accordingly. This works well in practice and ensures that nearly all lessons are well matched to the pupils' needs. Assessment systems, particularly recording, are still being developed and teachers do not always have accurate information at the start of a unit of work to plan different work for different groups within the class.
19. All the pupils' work is marked by staff but the effectiveness of marking is uneven in quality. Very little of it evaluates the pupils' work in the light of learning objectives, or makes it explicit what has to be done to improve. As a result, it is not clear to the pupils how they can personally improve.

The curriculum

The school's curriculum is **good** with **very good** opportunities for enrichment. The range and quantity of resources and accommodation is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and very effectively enhanced by visiting teachers and other experts and visits to places of interest.
- Support for learning outside the school day is very good, and pupils are involved in a broad range of exciting activities.
- Access and opportunity for all pupils is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, especially for literacy and numeracy.
- While the accommodation is good overall, pupils have to walk through some lessons to get around the school, and noise can be heard from classes.

Commentary

20. The broad curriculum, including religious education, meets statutory requirements. All subjects are taught and activities are interesting and motivating, which helps pupils to learn effectively and achieve well. Parents and pupils feel that the curriculum is interesting and fun. As a result, pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. The curriculum in the Reception class - the Foundation Stage – is well organised to ensure that children have a very good range of interesting learning opportunities. Planning is very effective and ensures that all the areas of learning receive the right emphasis. This strong emphasis on practical activities is particularly successful in English, science and history further up the school, where good attention is given to scientific investigation and practical tasks, which help pupils to understand and thoroughly enjoy their learning.
21. The curriculum is significantly enriched by visits to places of interest and by visiting specialists who share their knowledge and skills with the pupils. These have included a willow sculptor, a cartoonist and, during the inspection, a teacher helping pupils to learn about life in Ancient Egypt through drama. Learning opportunities are further enhanced by the teaching of French as an additional subject and the provision of a wide range of sporting activities. Visitors include groups such as the police, postal workers and nurses. The school has benefited from inclusion in a local sports programme led by specialist teachers funded by the New Opportunity Fund. In addition, the programme is further extended by the physical education co-ordinator from the middle school who provides coaching in football and gymnastics at lunchtimes. There are also further opportunities for learning provided through lunchtime clubs for keyboard skills and gymnastics. Teachers seek ways to use the creative arts to enrich the curriculum through a range of activities including music, art, and design and technology. Staff are encouraged to use their specialist strengths to lead small groups in a range of different activities.
22. The school ensures that all pupils, whatever their social or ethnic background, gender or ability, have equal access to all the learning opportunities available. The school is fully inclusive. One of the strengths within this is the good provision for pupils with special educational needs, which has improved greatly since the previous inspection. It is effectively planned and meets the needs of the pupils well. Pupils with special educational needs are largely taught within the classroom and are supported very efficiently by learning support assistants. All staff know and understand the targets identified in each pupil's individual education plan. Work is carefully targeted at pupils' needs and makes sure that they are fully included in all the activities that the class undertakes. Individual education plans are regularly reviewed and strongly influence the teachers' planning. Liaison with outside agencies is very efficient, and the school receives and makes the most of the good support from the local education authority psychological services and other agencies.

23. There is a good match of teaching and non-teaching staff to the curriculum, with particular strengths in the Reception class. Although there have been changes of staff and some classes are shared between two teachers, the school has an effective team that uses its strengths to the full. Resources are good, and a very good range is provided for the Reception class, which is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The accommodation is good, although some classrooms have a corridor space, which can be distracting when pupils move around the school. The teaching areas have been cleverly partitioned into classrooms, but noise still travels from room to room through the open shared areas. The governors, headteacher and teachers have invested greatly in making the external environment of the school an exciting learning and playing space. Further developments for a large adventure-play area have been planned in conjunction with the school council, which will be financially supported by the parents' and teachers' association.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a high standard of care and support, based on its caring ethos and **very good** knowledge of its pupils. Arrangements for seeking and acting upon pupils' views are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring ethos of the school ensures that all staff are keenly aware of pupils' welfare.
- The school provides a very high quality of personal support and guidance for its pupils.
- Induction arrangements for all pupils, and especially children new to the Reception class, are very good.
- Pupils are very involved in the school's work because they are consulted and their ideas and views are valued.

Commentary

24. The school provides a high standard of care for all its pupils, which is valued by the parents. All the necessary health and safety procedures are in place. A number of staff are trained in giving first aid and records of incidents are kept. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection and all staff, including lunchtime supervisors, are aware of the action to be taken in cases of concern, which are carefully recorded. Appropriate procedures are in place for caring for children with particular medical conditions or allergies. Teaching and non-teaching staff throughout the school go out of their way to ensure children's welfare. Pupils in Years 2 and 4 visited a 'Streetwise' centre, where they were given guidance on personal safety. The school nurse is especially appreciated for the advice she gives parents and staff about child health. The school is successfully involved in the Healthy Schools Project, and enjoyed a 'walk to school' week.

25. The school provides effective support, advice and guidance based on careful monitoring of academic achievement and personal development. Pupils' personal development is very well monitored, both formally and informally. Test results are carefully analysed and information used to set targets. This practice is well established in English and mathematics, providing helpful information to track pupils' achievement. Class teachers keep records of pupils' progress in various areas of learning and these records, together with the very good adult-pupil relationships in school, ensure that pupils are well supported in their day-to-day life in school. The small size of the school, its family ethos and the fact that, through enrichment and extra-curricular activities, children are known to most adults in school provide further security and support. In the pre-inspection meeting, parents said that their children felt able to go to any adult in school if they needed help; pupils' responses to the questionnaire echoed this view.

26. Procedures for pupils who enter school for the first time are very good. The school has very close links with the local pre-school group, who rent accommodation in the school building. There is, therefore, constant contact between pre-school and Reception class staff and nursery children are entirely familiar with the school layout and routines. In addition, the headteacher

and Reception teacher visit all new children at home before they begin formal attendance. Once children have started in the Reception class, staff make every effort to settle them in and make them feel secure. Parents feel that their children gain confidence quickly. Pupils who enter school at other times feel welcomed and settle quickly into the new routines.

27. The procedures for involving pupils in the life of the school are very good. A school council has recently been created, with representatives from all classes including the Reception class. Its members take membership very seriously, consulting with their classmates before meetings and reporting back to them afterwards. Some of their ideas - such as improved playground equipment - are already in course of implementation and others, such as the introduction of 'Playground Buddies' for children at risk of being left out, are being actively worked upon. Both members of the school council and other pupils are confident that their ideas are valued and that their voices are being heard.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school values the **good** links with parents and the community and works hard to build on them; relations with partner institutions are constructive and contribute well to enriching pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has very good links with parents.
- Links with partner institutions are effective and contribute significantly to pupils' learning.
- Community involvement in the school varies and enriches pupils' experiences.
- The school provides information of a good quality for parents.

Commentary

28. Parents feel that the school listens to them. In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire nearly all said that they would be happy about approaching the school with a problem. Parents are welcome to attend school events, such as the weekly assembly to celebrate pupils' good work. Some volunteer to help in classes and feel valued and are treated as part of the school team. Parents make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning at home by supporting the home reading system and their children's homework. The school seeks parents' views annually using a questionnaire. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting said that they felt that the school listened to them. The governors' annual meeting is well attended, and there is a waiting list of potential parent governors.
29. The school provides parents with information of a good quality. A minority who responded to the questionnaire felt that they were not well informed about their children's progress. However, inspectors found that annual reports, with formal and informal consultation, provide parents with good opportunities to find out how well their children are progressing. Regular newsletters and a good range of formal and informal meetings keep parents well informed about the school and their children's progress. Parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting said that they find the informal meetings with teachers at the end of the day particularly helpful. Parents are given advance information regarding the topics their children will be studying.
30. The school has a number of effective links with other schools. Pupils transfer to one of several middle schools in the area and there are good links with these schools. Staff from the middle schools visit to take an extra-curricular gym club, for example, or an assembly. The Year 4 teacher co-operates with teachers in Year 5 and the special educational needs specialists in the middle schools. There is a high degree of co-operation with seven other small schools in the Wimborne area. They have a budget, a joint school improvement plan and work together on joint arts and multicultural events. Pupils benefit greatly from mixing with children from other schools, many of whom they will meet again at their middle schools. Teaching staff benefit from professional development opportunities.

31. Links with the community are good and help to broaden pupils' experiences. Visitors such as writers and artists from the locality come in to school to share their skills. Staff from a local environmental centre help pupils with activities around the school pond, and a Christian Aid worker talked to children about Albania. The local area is used as a learning resource for study. Links with local churches, which pupils visit for all the major Christian festivals, are good. Parents with particular talents are welcomed into school - for example to teach pupils about brass and stringed instruments. The community is strongly supportive of its school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is **good** overall and management is effective. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership and sets the pace for systematic and continued improvement. Overall governance is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has clarity of vision and she monitors provision very effectively with a determined sense of purpose to establish systematic improvement.
- The school has a very successful commitment to ensuring that all groups of pupils are fully included in all its work and a strong concern for individual needs.
- Management of the headteacher and senior staff is very good and promotes very effective teamwork and a commitment to improve.
- The governing body is fully involved in the school and knows the strengths and weaknesses very well.

Commentary

32. The headteacher provides very strong leadership for the school and has a crystal-clear vision of its educational direction. The last two years have been difficult for the school because of changes of staff. Despite this, the new headteacher has been instrumental in reinforcing the ethos of the school as one in which pupils are well behaved and enthusiastic about their work and where teachers find pleasure and satisfaction in their own hard work. The headteacher is fully committed to the school and inspires loyalty from staff and pupils. She has developed a good team of people who are working very well together. The headteacher very skilfully shares her vision with members of the governing body and the teaching and non-teaching team, empowering them to bring about the changes needed. This reflects a determined commitment to improvement by all concerned.
33. Since the appointment of the headteacher two years ago, the main focus of development has been English and mathematics because standards were below average. She has enhanced the roles of the subject leaders for literacy and numeracy that provide very effective role models for other subjects. This is a small team and teachers have to take on several responsibilities. In addition, recent changes of key staff have led to a reorganisation of the management positions in the school. As a result, subject leadership in other subjects has not yet been fully developed, although all have appropriate job descriptions and provide satisfactory management for their subjects. This marks an improvement since the previous inspection. The senior management team has redefined the role of subject leaders to include significant contributions to the school development plan through subject action plans.
34. This senior management team, which works well together, is having a strong influence on the quality of education provided. This team provides a very good role model for other staff and has supported the cohesive team ethos of the school. The management of the Foundation Stage in the Reception class, special educational needs, English and mathematics is very good. The headteacher recognises these strengths, and plans to use this positive model to share good practice in other subject areas. The close working relationship between the headteacher and members of the senior management team demonstrates the importance they attach to the needs of individual children. Subject leaders are beginning to audit their subjects and identify

needs. Results and achievements are carefully monitored by the headteacher and she uses this skilfully to set targets for teachers. The headteacher has put in place very good systems for the very effective monitoring of teaching and learning. Data is used very well to identify areas for development and strategies are put in place to improve areas of weakness. Performance management is very good and is an important strength that promotes improvements to teaching and learning.

35. The governing body is very effective and plays a significant part in the strategic development of the school. Through full governing body meetings, committees, visits, discussions with staff and individual responsibility governors have gained a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have developed a good improvement plan to guide their work. Governors have clear a vision of what they want to achieve and know how to set about doing this. They are willing to hold the headteacher and other staff to account and to challenge and make difficult decisions. Whilst doing this, they have secured commitment to improvement and maintained a good spirit of teamwork that is leading to benefits for the pupils. Almost all statutory requirements have been met, although there are minor omissions from the governors' annual report to parents that will be rectified in the next year.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	388,291
Total expenditure	373,954
Expenditure per pupil	2,493

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	40,133
Balance carried forward to the next	14,337

36. The school meets the challenge of limited funds effectively and with careful budgeting maintains a good expenditure for education. Savings on the salary of senior managers has enabled the governors to continue to have a good supply of learning support assistants, maintain single year classes and have a non-teaching headteacher. Financial control and forecasting are very good, and meet the challenges of the budget, which is below the national mean. The governors' finance committee is well organised and uses relevant information effectively to support the school development plan.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

37. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good** and is one of the strengths of the school. The provision is managed very well and as a result children's achievement is very good. While there are wide variations of attainment on entry each year, school assessment shows that attainment of the current Reception class was average. They are on course to exceed the national Early Learning Goals for children at the end of the Reception year in all areas of learning except physical development where they are on course to meet the goals. Very good teaching, together with a strong cohesive team of adults, challenges children and sets high targets for their achievement. The team take every opportunity to extend children's personal, social and communication skills. The curriculum provided is broad and imaginative, covering all areas of learning. Very good leadership and knowledge and understanding of the needs of children of this age group have a significant impact on high quality planning and continuous assessment. As a consequence, standards have risen, and the provision has improved greatly since the previous inspection. The very good induction procedures ensure close contact with parents and pre-school providers. The accommodation is very good, and high quality resources provide an exciting learning environment for children. This is an improvement since the last inspection when resources for children under five were unsatisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are imaginative and enjoyable, and teachers and learning support assistants provide a very secure learning environment.
- Children with special educational needs are very well included in all activities.
- Teachers and support assistants are skilful at helping children to be independent and confident.

Commentary

38. Before the children enter school the teacher creates a secure relationship with them as part of the focus for home visits. Classroom routines are well established, and the teacher and other staff provide a secure environment for the children. The consistent approach to managing the children means that they know what is expected of them. Good relationships with children and parents enable the staff to know the children well. They are aware of children's individual needs through a good balance of directed and self-chosen activities.

39. Children with special educational needs are included very well in all activities and other children show a caring awareness of their needs. For example, one child who was 'Child of the Week' recognised the need to enlarge her photograph for display to help her classmate with impaired vision.

40. From the outset, staff teach pupils rules and routines and there is a great emphasis on helping children to become independent in addition to working co-operatively well with each other in group activities. Children take responsibility for a range of roles in the classroom such as dispensing the appropriate colours for painting and organising their own clothes before a physical education lesson. Very good achievement means that the children are on course to exceed the goals by the end of the Reception year and are very well prepared for work in Year 1.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching helps children to achieve well in their writing skills.
- Good opportunities are provided for children to talk about their thoughts and feelings, which improves their range of vocabulary.

Commentary

41. One of the strengths of the very good teaching is the wide range of opportunities provided for children to extend their writing skills. A good example of this was how the teacher enthralled the children by organising the arrival of a parcel from China. There was a real sense of wonder when the parcel was opened to reveal Chinese artefacts. The teacher then skilfully captured the children's enthusiasm about the artefacts to motivate them to write letters about their personal experiences. Children enjoy using the post office role-play area linked to the theme of the "Jolly Postman" to write cards and letters. Their writing already shows a developing awareness of punctuation and almost all children will exceed the Early Learning Goals for literacy.
42. Several children have underdeveloped speaking and listening skills when they enter school. Very effective teaching helps children to learn and practise a wide range of vocabulary. Children are learning to listen to each other and the adults who work with them. Activities such as 'Talk-time' and question and answer sessions linked to recognition of words and sounds and independent play activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's mathematical skills are extended very well in most areas of learning.
- Practical activities are used very creatively to reinforce mathematical knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

43. The teachers and other adults use every opportunity to develop mathematical thinking in most areas of learning. Successful emphasis is placed on developing pupils' mathematical language through number rhymes and counting songs. Children improve their knowledge and understanding by activities such as recognising numbers on a dice linked to a picture- matching game and being encouraged to recognise two-dimensional shapes on the computer. This means that they are on course to exceed the goals for children at the end of the Reception year.
44. The teacher skilfully reinforces children's learning and skills using a range of resources such as play-dough when exploring shapes. A display of boxes and food containers has been used innovatively to help children to have a growing awareness of three-dimensional shapes such as cylinders and cuboids. Children enjoy discussing the properties of different containers used in the water tray, which reinforces their knowledge and understanding of shapes and measures. When lining up ready for a physical education lesson they are able to arrange themselves to show a pattern.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The wealth of opportunities provided to help children learn about the world around them encourages observation and language skills.
- Very good teaching creatively directs children's interest and curiosity about their world.

Commentary

45. Many opportunities are provided to enable children to learn about their world. The very good accommodation and high quality resources support this area of learning well and help children to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. Children had clearly been motivated by visits from local postal workers. Their play showed good recall of the experience they had had, such as opening a real post box, sorting the letters, using a postman's bag and sitting in the post office van.
46. Children develop their knowledge and understanding from visitors such as the visit of a newborn baby. Links with other countries, such as Namibia, promote the pupils' understanding of the wider world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good cross-curricular links are made.
- Very positive teaching strategies extend pupils' learning.
- At times, the range of outdoor equipment is too limited.

Commentary

47. The children thoroughly enjoy physical activities. They run and jump with great enthusiasm. Well-planned activities help children to develop an awareness of space for themselves and others. The teacher is skilled at making links between areas of learning. For example, co-operative work, which helps children to make shadow dances with a partner, was used to support their investigations of shadows in science. Planning indicates that children use outdoor play equipment. However, during the inspection there was too limited a range of equipment to stimulate children's learning and help them make reasoned choices about what they would use in their play.
48. Good opportunities are used for children to use construction and a range of equipment such as scissors, cutters for play-dough, paintbrushes and pencils. Children are on course to meet the goals at the end of the Reception year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for role-play is good and exciting areas are created to support children's learning.
- Activities are used well to encourage children to learn by using all their senses.

Commentary

49. Children thoroughly enjoy using the role-play areas such as the Toy Factory and post office carefully created to promote learning and stimulate interest. Following an exciting visit from

local postal workers, a role-play area was set up as a post office equipped with paper, envelopes, postcards and writing materials. Children happily play out the roles of customers and post office workers. They extend their imagination when playing in the toy factory, enjoying making toys from a variety of materials and using joining equipment such as tapes, split pins and paper clips.

50. Children created shapes diligently from coloured play-dough. When baking gingerbread men they chatted excitedly with the learning support assistant about whether he would get up and run away as in the story they had read. One child delighted the teacher by comparing the water to lava when playing with coloured water in three-dimensional containers. The teacher skilfully encouraged children to explain imaginatively what they saw and used these experiences effectively to promote the children's language skills.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are above average at the end of Year 2 and for a significant proportion of pupils at the end of Year 4.
- Teaching is consistently good, which helps pupils to learn to read and write effectively in a good range of subjects.
- Subject leadership is very good and provides very good role models for other staff and pupils.
- High quality assessment means that work and support are very carefully planned to all groups of pupils, particularly low-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, to be confident and achieve well, both in their speaking and listening, and also in their reading and writing skills.
- Pupils successfully write by joining their letters and are developing neat handwriting.

Commentary

51. Results of national tests have steadily improved since the previous inspection. In 2003, results in writing were above the national average and the same as results in similar schools. Results in reading remained stubbornly below results in writing, although they have risen to expected levels when compared to the national average. One of the reasons for the improved results is that the school very carefully analyses test papers to see what pupils are getting incorrect. In addition, pupils' achievement is carefully tracked and monitored. Targets are set for individual pupils, teachers and year groups to raise standards. Achievement is good throughout the school. Although standards are broadly as expected at the end of Year 4, pupils have achieved well in two years since their test results, which were below average. A significant proportion of pupils receive extra support for their learning, or have special educational needs, which affects the overall standards of the year group. Several pupils, including high-attaining pupils, are already reaching standards that are higher than expected for the age.
52. Teachers have worked hard to improve and refine their teaching of literacy skills. Planning is often very good and lessons are fun, which motivates pupils to want to read and write. Special attention has been given to improving how reading is taught and this is beginning to have an impact on pupils' confidence, motivation and skills. Imaginative tasks are planned at just the right level of difficulty. A good range of new books are available for use in school and at home. Pupils learn effectively and are enthusiastic about reading and writing. As a result, they are improving the range of strategies they can use to help them read. One of the reasons for the improvement in writing is they way pupils are taught to join their letters when they write in the Reception class. Almost all are developing a neat style of writing, although the presentation of writing in Year 4 is more uneven in quality than in other year groups, and it is not always as neat as it should be. Teachers ask skilful questions that make pupils think hard about how to answer

and this helps them to improve their speaking and listening skills and the range of words they use when they speak.

53. Learning support assistants, who work very effectively with teachers, have a significant impact on pupils' learning in English because they provide well-focused support for pupils, especially those with special educational needs. This makes the provision for special educational needs very good.
54. Pupils' achievement is carefully assessed. Assessment and recording are very thorough and provide very helpful information that is used to plan the next stages of learning towards the targets set. Pupils know what they have to do to improve. While there are examples of very effective marking that shows what pupils should do to improve their work, this is not a consistent feature of marking in English.
55. The subject leader is a very knowledgeable and talented teacher. She tenaciously monitors and analyses results and pupils' work to make sure that teachers provide good quality activities to promote learning. Leadership inspires confidence in both pupils and staff and provides a very good role model for them. Subject leadership has had a major impact on improved achievement and the raising of standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Pupils are provided with a very good range of opportunities in other subjects that helps them practise their language and literacy skills. Their speaking skills are enhanced when teachers skilfully use technical language in subjects such as history, providing good role models for pupils. Teachers correct pupils' vocabulary and introduce new words to them. Pupils listen carefully to the views of others in science, religious education and history, making helpful suggestions about how their work could be improved. Good examples of writing in history and geography demonstrate how well pupils have assimilated knowledge from different sources of information. Pupils are successfully learning how to take notes. Every opportunity is taken for pupils to practise reading during the introductions to lessons and to read what they have found out in evaluation sessions at the end of lessons. The use of ICT is satisfactory. Pupils use computer programs successfully to practise their spelling, research information for history and word-process stories and poems.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Subject leadership is good and both planning and pupils' work are carefully monitored.
- The quality of teaching is good and this helps pupils to achieve well.
- Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their knowledge and skills in mathematics in problem solving and investigations and ICT is not used sufficiently.
- The quality of marking is uneven in quality from class to class.

Commentary

57. Overall, pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average because teaching is good. The results of the national tests in 2003 were well above the national average and above the average of similar schools. Results have risen significantly in the last year and standards have improved since the previous inspection.
58. In the work seen, standards attained in the current Year 2 are above average and pupils are on course to perform well in national tests by the end of the year. By the end of Year 4, standards are broadly average and not as high as in Year 2 because of the wide variation in the attainment

of the pupils, many of whom have special educational needs and receive support for their learning in mathematics. Effective support from knowledgeable teachers and skilful learning support assistants enables them to achieve very well and several are already reaching expected levels for this age group. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good grasp of the four rules of number and the properties of shapes and measures. In the Year 4 class, pupils have a good understanding of calculation of two-digit numbers by grouping numbers and rounding up to 10. As a result of the enthusiasm of the teacher, they are gaining confidence to express their strategies for calculating money and recognising patterns in the complex numbers they are adding together.

59. Teaching is good because teachers' knowledge and understanding enable them to ask rigorous questions to extend pupils' learning effectively. Teachers manage pupils well and this means that even those with challenging behaviour keep their concentration and motivation in lessons. One of the strengths in teaching is the way that pupils are used to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and share their mental methods with the rest of the class. This promotes confidence and respect in each class. Lessons are well prepared and there are examples of teachers changing their planning as a result of successful learning made during a previous lesson. Activities are well chosen to promote pupils' achievement and are at just the right level of difficulty to provide appropriate challenge and thought. Most evaluation sessions at the end of lessons are well focused on helping pupils to check their learning. However, sometimes teachers rush this part of the lesson and do not give pupils the opportunity to measure their success against the learning objective. There is very little evidence of information and communication technology being used to support learning in mathematics. Learning support assistants are used well to provide support for pupils with lower attainment. Pupils co-operate well, sharing ideas and encouraging each other to learn.
60. Subject leadership is good. The subject leader is experienced and fully aware of the standards of work throughout the school through regular monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work. Some observation of teaching enables her to provide feedback to teachers about their teaching. Resources have been increased and a new commercial scheme has been introduced to support teachers. The school has already identified problem solving as a focus for improvement.
61. Assessment is satisfactory and the subject leader is fully aware of the need to develop systems to ensure that individuals' achievement is tracked to inform future targets and lesson plans. Marking of pupils' work is of variable quality. Most teachers use marking to provide encouragement and praise but there is little evidence of evaluative comments that identify areas for improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. There was limited evidence of the use of mathematics across the curriculum. Scrutiny of display showed some examples of pupils applying their mathematical knowledge in science. For example, in Year 3 pupils constructed a graph showing preferences for different flavoured crisps. In Year 2 pupils used Roman numerals in history. Pupils use measuring skills in design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 2 and pupils' achievement is good.
- Too much use of commercial worksheets in Year 4 does not enable pupils to demonstrate the full extent of their knowledge and understanding.
- The strong attention to scientific enquiry, investigation and practical activities motivates pupils, and provides good support to their understanding.

- Assessment in science is limited, and so pupils' achievement is not yet recorded accurately.

Commentary

62. Standards are broadly average overall and achievement is satisfactory. The results of the teachers' assessment for pupils in Year 2 in 2003 were very high when compared to all schools. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and demonstrate the improvements that have been made. However, there are variations, and standards at the end of Year 4 are only average. While this does not indicate a fall in standards, it reflects the wide range of ability in the class. Several pupils have special educational needs and are not able to reach the higher levels of other pupils. Their achievement is good, however, because they receive very effective support. Teaching is beginning to have an impact on standards and pupils are systematically building on their knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in their practical work. However, in Years 3 and 4, the overemphasis on commercially produced worksheets does not enable pupils to write their own results and ideas independently.
63. The recent focus on improving opportunities for scientific investigation and enquiry has had good effect on pupils' interest in what they are studying. In discussion pupils were enthusiastic about describing the tests they undertake and are gaining a good understanding about how to make a test fair. Co-operative tasks make a good contribution to the pupils' social development as they work effectively together on their investigations. In Years 1 and 2, pupils record their work carefully, and they are starting to make decisions about the best way to record their results. However, in Year 4, pupils are sometimes untidy and careless in their recording, which is too often filling in a worksheet rather than extending their learning by taking their own decisions about how results should be recorded. Consequently, the work in science folders is not a fair reflection of the pupils' achievement.
64. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although good teaching was observed in Year 2. Teachers generally plan interesting activities that enable pupils to gain a deeper understanding of the aspects they are investigating. For example, pupils investigated the waterproof qualities of fabric in one lesson and then later used an electronic microscope with the computer to examine how the fabric was constructed. Their observations became more accurate, and they were fascinated when comparing their original ideas with what the microscope revealed. A good feature of the teaching is the structure of the lessons, and clear explanations, followed by practical activities which enable pupils to try out and test ideas for themselves. An evaluation session at the end of lessons helps pupils to discuss their findings and evaluate the success of their learning in comparison with others in the class. Too much work was planned in some lessons which meant that pupils were rushed, and adults directed the pupils' too much to reach conclusions quickly. This did not allow the pupils to reflect on what they were seeing and test evidence in the light of their predictions. It also made it difficult for teachers to evaluate pupils achievement and use the information to plan future work avoiding unnecessary duplication. Pupils with special educational needs are very carefully included in all aspects of lessons.
65. Day-to-day assessment is generally good. Recording of pupils' achievement during and at the end of each unit of work is less effective. This means that the quality of information for teachers to use to plan work in subsequent years is uneven. This is leading to some unnecessary duplication of work in the school in Year 2 and Year 4.
66. A new subject leader for science is now in place and is beginning to effectively establish appropriate and clear priorities for the coming focus on the school development plan. However, there is much to be done; monitoring of teaching has not yet taken place, systematic assessment and recording have not yet been defined, and the schemes of work are due for revision. Nevertheless, the subject leader has a very good understanding of what has to be done, and much has been achieved in the very short time that she has been in post. Good improvement has been made in a more cohesive approach to scientific investigation and enquiry throughout the school since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skilful learning support assistants are used very effectively to support the pupils' learning.
- Good use is being made of the school's ICT suite to extend pupils' skills.
- Computers are still not used enough on a day-to-day basis in classroom to support learning in all subjects.

Commentary

67. Throughout the school pupils have a reasonable range of skills and knowledge. At the end of Year 2, pupils can use art programs to create simple pictures. They know how to select tools to fill or erase what they have just done. They can use simple word processing to record their work. Pupils use computer programs to help learn to spell or to practise simple number bonds or counting. By the end of Year 4, pupils' achievement is satisfactory as they systematically build on what they have learned in Year 3. Almost all pupils are able to save and retrieve their work, and change fonts to alter its appearance. They know how to use the Internet for research but do not have much opportunity to use this tool in their learning.
68. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most of the teaching observed was led by knowledgeable learning support assistants. They followed plans prepared and agreed with the class teacher and involved small groups, mostly in the ICT suite. Lessons were well organised and provided pupils with good opportunities to practise their skills as they worked in pairs. Teaching was most effective when a clear subject focus was supported by the use of computers. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils who were practising number sequences were given helpful feedback. They were appropriately challenged to extend their learning supported by the program they were operating. At times, some of the more able pupils would have benefited from more challenging work and less repetition of what they had already mastered.
69. Much good work has been completed by the subject leader to ensure that provision is more even and consistent. Site licences for software have been properly organised and brought up to date. Improvements have been made since the previous inspection. However, there remains some way to go to establish effective systems in assessment and in developing the use of ICT to systematically support other subjects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. Computers situated in classrooms, as opposed to those located in the suite, are not used often enough during ordinary lessons. In literacy and numeracy, a successful start has been made to systematically use computers to support learning. In other subjects, however, whilst there are examples of very effective use of ICT, its use is not systematic or planned on a day-to-day basis into the curriculum. This is not impeding the development of skills as the pupils now use the computer suite regularly but it does mean that the pupils have too few opportunities to use and apply their skills and so deepen their understanding of what they have learned.

HUMANITIES

History and religious education were inspected separately and are reported in full below. Inspectors sampled work in **geography** because no lessons were planned to take place during the period of the inspection. It was, therefore, not possible to make a firm judgement about provision. However, pupils' work was sampled and teachers' planning was examined.

71. Pupils' work in **geography** indicates that standards are as expected at the end of Years 2 and 4. It is clear that a range of visits and visitors play an important part in making work interesting and

relevant. For example, a great deal of work on mapping covers visits to shops and businesses around the local area. As part of a study about environmental issues, pupils visited the recycling centre. The sorting and analysis of rubbish in school captured their interest in their writing.

History

Provision in history is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and outstanding teaching was observed in Year 3.
- Excellent use is made of high quality visits and visiting teachers, who make history come alive to the pupils.
- Standards are above average and achievement is good.
- Pupils are highly motivated by history lessons and are developing a good understanding of chronology as well as factual knowledge about events and people studied.

Commentary

72. Standards are above the levels expected for this age group. Pupils achieve well in their understanding of how to use different sources of information that provide clues about the past. One of the reasons for this is very good teaching that motivates pupils throughout the school. Activities are very carefully planned to help pupils to understand chronology by studying different periods of history. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of events and are beginning to be able to explain differences in photographs that explain the lives of the people they study such as Florence Nightingale, for example. By the end of Year 4, pupils are excited about their studies of the past. They are beginning to understand that different sources sometimes provide conflicting information. Pupils are developing good factual knowledge about life in ancient Egyptian times and how some aspects of people's lives have changed little over time.
73. Pupils are highly motivated and enthusiastic learners because teaching is very effective. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and this was noted on many occasions in the pupils' questionnaire and discussions with them before the inspection took place. High quality activities help pupils to develop skills of enquiry and strengthen their knowledge and understanding of the periods of history they are studying. Teachers use the skills and experience of their learning support assistants very well. This means that pupils are very well supported, particularly those with special educational needs who need help with their learning. Imaginative teaching captures pupils' interest and skilful questioning helps them to extend their knowledge and understanding about the different sources of information that they are using to research the past. The current study about life in ancient Egyptian times has enthralled pupils in Years 3 and 4. Good teamwork between teachers means that pupils can get the most out of the activities planned for them. Effective links with other subjects reinforce their learning effectively.
74. The curriculum is broad and well balanced to cover the aspects of study required. The strong emphasis on the impact of the passage of time means that pupils develop a good understanding of chronology as they progress through the school. Very good subject leadership means that resources are used very effectively and one key resource is the use of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum.

Examples of outstanding practice

An outstanding lesson with a mixed ability group with a wide range of ability levels. This was a preparatory lesson for subsequent work later in the day with a visiting teacher.

This was the start of an exciting day about history, when pupils in the Year 3 class would be spending the afternoon working on their study of ancient Egypt with a visiting teacher. To help them be prepared, the class teacher carefully showed pupils how they could discover even more about life in ancient Egypt. Pupils were entranced by the well-chosen paintings from tomb walls and the very straightforward and exciting commentary that she gave. Her questions encouraged them to observe very carefully and to think for themselves. Questions like, "What do you think they are doing? Why are they doing that? Tell me why you say that?" promoted a great deal of comment and discussion. Also the class teacher encouraged all pupils to use whiteboards to jot notes about things that struck them as interesting. The class, with a wide range of ability and several pupils with special needs related to challenging and extreme behaviour, rose to their teacher's challenges, excited about their successes. The skilful learning support assistant sat with pupils with special educational needs, providing them with just the right amount of support to help them participate in full. This meant that all pupils began to understand how much evidence could be gleaned from first-hand sources through careful observation and deduction. The high levels of concentration and participation by all pupils were remarkable. This originated from the calm, measured manner of the teacher and the precise, clear-cut and taxing quality of her rigorous questioning.

An outstanding lesson by a visiting teacher about ancient Egypt covering the whole morning for a mixed ability class of pupils in Year 4.

Suitably regal music was playing as the pupils, dressed in simple costume of ancient Egypt, moved around the hall looking at the cross of sticks in the centre and a magnificent pavilion with two regal chairs at the side. They were captivated as this very skilful teacher cleverly helped them to forget their classroom and become immersed in the activities. He led them as a chief slave-driver. Slaves ordered to work by a range of drivers raised the cross of sticks in the air. Children were awestruck as the teacher bound the sticks together, showing them how a true pyramid could be created with accurate measurements, making a very good link with mathematics. With exceptional skill, he took them through the characters in each layer of the 'Pyramid of Power', modelling how different characters, with Pharaoh and the Queen at the top, would move, speak and relate to others, giving insight into the social and political structure of ancient Egypt. The pupils were involved and completely oblivious of others. The balance of taught information, acting out events, examining sources and artefacts, challenging misconceptions and discussing their views and ideas was excellent. Together they worked towards a grand procession to the Pharaoh by the end of the session. Pupils with wide-ranging ability worked constructively together, concentrating and involved. The class teacher and the learning support assistant were fully involved working alongside pupils in role.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

The main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of activities help to promote pupils' understanding of Christianity.
- Links between religious education, personal, social and health education and worship are effective.
- At times lessons are too complex.

Commentary

75. The school meets the requirements for religious education, and pupils' work demonstrates that standards are in line with the expected levels of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' work indicates that they can recount Bible stories by the end of Year 2. In discussion, pupils are not always clear about what they have learned but clearly remembered work undertaken about the Christingle and the Christmas story. By the end of Year 4, pupils know that prayer is important to religions and that Christians worship in a church. In the work seen pupils show sensitivity when dealing with issues such as orphans in other countries such as Albania.

76. Teaching was satisfactory in the lessons observed. A good range of activities capture the interest of the pupils such as looking at books of photographs that track important events in a baby's life from birth as an introduction to work about the importance of the Bible and the Koran. In Year 2, puppets were used to help the pupils play out the role of Grace Darling and examine extreme bravery. However, the introduction to the lessons was too long and complex. Consequently, pupils did not have sufficient time to explore their ideas through role-play. At times in Year 3, the extreme behaviour of three boys who have special educational needs disrupted the lesson; other pupils were very patient and tolerant, waiting quietly for the lesson to continue. Despite every strategy applied by the teacher, one of the boys was extremely disruptive and had to leave. After a short time he returned to be successfully included in the lesson once more.
77. Pupils' work in their books indicates that across the school there is a satisfactory balance of study about Christianity and comparative world religions. Activities foster the pupils' interest and inquiry. Good use is made of visits to the local church and visitors such as grandparents to extend pupils' learning. Links between religious education, worship and personal and social education are effective in helping pupils to understand the importance of co-operation and bravery, for example.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was not enough evidence to report on any of these subjects individually, because not enough teaching was seen or there was not enough evidence to judge achievement. However, work was sampled in design and technology and physical education. A small amount of work was examined in art and design and music.

78. No lessons were observed in **art and design** during the inspection. Sampling of limited evidence, evaluation of work on display and discussion with pupils was undertaken. From this evidence, standards are at least satisfactory and pupils are given an appropriate range of techniques including collage, printing and three-dimensional work using papier mâché, weaving and clay. Photographic evidence shows a good range of experiences planned for pupils such as work with artists in willow sculpture and with a cartoonist.
79. No lessons in **design and technology** could be inspected, although work with a small group as part of the school's 'carousel' of mixed activities was noted. Discussions with pupils and staff, examination of past work and photographs indicate that standards are at least as expected and achievement is satisfactory throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils can make simple sketches showing what they want to make. Some of these are annotated and contain simple instructions. Pupils make simple evaluations, mostly limited to whether they like what they have done or not. By the end of Year 4, achievement is appropriate and pupils' sketches are more sophisticated. However, they do not yet produce alternatives to meet the brief in the lesson objectives, more often settling on their first idea to develop. Evaluations do not yet reflect the effectiveness of what they have made but only how they feel about the process so that they remain without evidence of reflection about what could have been improved in the design. Whilst design and technology is being taught throughout the school, the focus on literacy and numeracy has meant that the subject has not been the focus of development for some time.
80. **Music** was not inspected in detail. However, from the evidence of one lesson with a small group and from listening to singing in assembly it would appear that standards are at least as expected. Music is taught systematically in each year group. In one mixed group activity pupils in Years 3 and 4 were confidently using the pentatonic scale and accompanying a song with tuned percussion. They worked well together, following the beat and responding to the conductor.
81. Only two lessons of **physical education** were seen, one in Year 2 and one in Year 4. Documentation was also studied. One lesson was judged to be good and one unsatisfactory. In the good lesson, pupils achieved well and used their enthusiasm to create imaginative gymnastic sequences because the teacher rigorously challenged and encouraged them. Sensitive evaluations in the class helped pupils to modify their sequences to improve the quality

of their work. Teaching was less successful in another lesson when pupils did not have enough time to warm up appropriately and feedback lacked rigour and did not improve the quality of pupils' work because pupils' evaluations were insufficiently precise. However, improvement has been made since the previous inspection, and the physical education curriculum is enhanced by extra sporting activities taught by visiting specialist teachers and coaches.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

82. There was not enough evidence to report on this area individually, because only two short sessions of circle time were sampled. Teaching was satisfactory, as were learning and achievement. Games used to help pupils learn about the importance of co-operation clearly excited the class who gradually began to work out a strategy to support each other to get the task completed. Assemblies seen during the inspection were satisfactory overall. The celebration assembly was good and involved parents. Pupils were proud to receive their certificates for good behaviour, work, effort and kindness. Parents of one child nominated him for a special award, which was further evidence of the very good links with parents.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
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	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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