

INSPECTION REPORT

HAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

LANGPORT

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123645

Locum Headteacher: Mrs L Poulter

Lead inspector: Bob Cross
15917

Dates of inspection: 26th to 28th January 2004

Inspection number: 262147

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	79
School address:	Hambridge Langport Somerset
Postcode:	TA10 0AZ
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body, Hambridge Community School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Clark
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hambridge Primary School is smaller than most other schools of the same type. There are four fewer pupils compared with when the school was last inspected. The school has eight pupils on its register of special educational needs, which is below the level of the national average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need and no pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Both of these factors are well below the national average. The school has nine more girls than boys on roll and some years have a significant imbalance in the numbers of boys and girls. Very few of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds which is below average. There are no pupils whose first language is not believed to be English which is lower than in most schools. During the last school year, three pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and seven left it at a time which was not the normal leaving or transfer time for most pupils. This rate of mobility is average. In the last two years, one part time teacher left the school and was replaced. This is a low rate of turnover. The school's long serving headteacher has recently left the school after a period of absence through ill health. Pupils enter the school at average levels of attainment. The socio economics of the area are above average. A Schools Achievement Award was received in 2000 and 2001.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides its pupils with a sound education. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory as the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Achievement is good in Year R but unsatisfactory in Year 2 because of variations in the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher leads the school well. There have been significant barriers to improvement, largely related to recent changes in staff. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good.
- Teaching, learning and achievement in Years R and 1 are good.
- Teaching, learning and achievement in Year 2 and for more able pupils are not good enough.
- The pupils' attitudes and their personal development are good.
- The headteacher is addressing shortcomings in aspects of management like self evaluation.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.
- There are weaknesses in the governance of the school.
- Communication with parents is not effective.
- Extracurricular provision is good.
- Curricular provision in Year R is not planned to meet requirements.

The school has made a satisfactory improvement since it was inspected in 1998 when the barriers to improvement it has faced are considered. The key issue for action relating to information and communication technology (ICT) has been addressed well and the statutory requirement for swimming is now met. All subjects have co-ordinators and roles are shared fairly. Progress in mathematics and science is still satisfactory although standards are lower in English in Year 6 and more generally in Year 2. The quality of teaching and relationships with parents are not as good as they were in 1998. Issues relating to governance identified in 1998 have not been addressed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - in top five per cent of schools; 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.

Caution must be exercised in interpreting these data because of the small number of pupils involved.

Achievement is satisfactory. In Year R, children are on course to reach or, in some aspects of their development, to exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of Reception. In Year 2, achievement is unsatisfactory and standards are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In Year 6, achievement is satisfactory and standards in English, mathematics and science are average. Standards in speaking and listening are above average in Years R to 6. Throughout the school, pupils with SEN achieve well. The pupils' achievement is directly related to the quality of teaching and learning they receive.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and punctuality are good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils are interested in their lessons and work hard. They know the school's rules and try to keep them. Behaviour is good, although there is sometimes a lack of self discipline amongst some older pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good in Year R. Strengths in the teaching include the way in which teachers encourage the pupils, the way resources are used and the deployment of teaching assistants. These factors promote good learning. Weaknesses in teaching, which are largely but not exclusively, in Year 2 where teaching and learning are unsatisfactory, include low expectations of the pupils and inadequate planning. Assessment is a weakness throughout the school except in Year R where it is satisfactory. The work set for pupils, particularly the more able, is often too easy. In addition, pupils do not know how to improve their work. These factors promote unsatisfactory learning. Good care is taken of the pupils. Curricular provision and relationships with parents are satisfactory. The school provides a good range of extracurricular activities. There are some weaknesses in the accommodation and resources for pupils in the Foundation Stage.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The good leadership of the headteacher has resulted in the identification of significant weaknesses. Some of these, such as health and safety procedures, have already been addressed in the short time the headteacher has been in post. Good plans exist to rectify the outstanding shortcomings. Other staff, many of whom are new to the roles they fulfil, make a satisfactory contribution to the leadership and management of the school. There is a strong team spirit in the school and an evident and successful commitment to including all pupils in all aspects of its life and work. However, equality of opportunity is unsatisfactory as more able pupils do not make as much progress as they could. The governing body does not influence the strategic direction of the school sufficiently as governors do not have a secure enough understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Statutory requirements are met except in the case of curricular planning for the Foundation Stage.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally satisfied with the school. Significant numbers commented adversely on the number of changes experienced recently. Some felt that they had not been informed about the changes.

About two thirds of the **pupils** said that they always/mostly liked being at the school. Older pupils particularly felt that lessons were often uninteresting and that teachers did not listen to their ideas.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and achievement particularly in Year 2 and for more able pupils.
- Address the shortcomings in management identified by the school and by this inspection.
- Improve procedures to assess how well the pupils are doing.
- Address the weaknesses in the governance of the school.
- Ensure that communication with parents is effective.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that planning for the Foundation Stage curriculum meets statutory requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, achievement is satisfactory. Achievement is good in Years R and 1 and standards are above average. Achievement in Year 2 is unsatisfactory and standards are below average. Pupils with SEN achieve well. Standards in English, mathematics and science are average in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in Years R and 1 is good due to the quality of teaching.
- The support that pupils with SEN receive means that they do well.
- Pupils in Year 2, particularly the more able, do not reach high enough standards.
- Standards in Year 6 are, currently, lower than they have been in the past.
- The pupils' competence in ICT and swimming has improved significantly.

Commentary

1. Achievement in Year R is good. Children enter the school at average levels of attainment. The teaching and learning they receive are good. Due to this, they are on course to reach above average standards in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development. Children are on track to reach average standards in their mathematical development. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make judgements in other areas of learning. The children's physical development is restricted by shortcomings in the school's accommodation and resources. These judgements are very similar to those made by the school's last inspection team. The Year 1 pupils in this class also benefit from the good quality of teaching and learning and achieve well.

2. Pupils who have SEN make good progress towards the targets set for them. This is because the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs) are specific to their needs, and they are achievable. The care and support offered by the adults who work with them further this good progress and raise self-esteem.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15 (17)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	13.2 (15)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	15 (17.4)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In the end of Year 2 national tests in 2003, standards were below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools based on the number of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals, standards were well below average in all three subjects. No pupils reached above average standards in any of these subjects and writing was particularly weak. This represents unsatisfactory achievement. There has been a downward trend in standards in these subjects. Over the last three year period, girls have done significantly better than boys in all three tests. This information must be treated with caution because the small number of pupils involved leads to wide fluctuations. No evidence of differences in the attainment of boys and girls was seen during the inspection. In the assessments made by teachers in science in 2003, standards were in the highest five per cent in the country. All the pupils reached the expected standard in science but few achieved above average standards.

4. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, standards are below average in English, mathematics and science and average in ICT, religious education (RE) and physical education (PE). Within English, standards in speaking and listening are above average but standards in reading and writing are below average. This represents unsatisfactory achievement. These were the only subjects where sufficient evidence was gathered to make valid judgements. Compared with the findings of the school's 1998 inspection, standards have fallen in English, mathematics and science. They have improved in ICT and remained the same in RE and PE. Standards in English and mathematics are higher than they were in the national end of Year 2 tests in 2003 although they are broadly similar in science. The improvement is due to differences in the potential of the current Year 2 group of pupils and the 2003 Year 2 group. In spite of this improvement, standards are lower than they were in 1998. Although the changes in staff and other barriers to improvement that the school has faced contribute to this, the fundamental reason is the teachers' failure to ensure that more able pupils reach their potential.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	* (29.2)	27 (27)
Mathematics	* (29.2)	27 (26.7)
science	* (30.8)	28.8 (28.3)

**There were nine pupils in the year grouping 2003 so figures are omitted. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. In the national tests in Year 6 in 2003, standards were well above average in English and mathematics compared with all schools and with similar schools. Compared with similar schools, standards in English and mathematics were in the top five per cent. Standards in science were above average compared with all schools and similar schools. In all three subjects, all pupils reached at least average standards and many reached above average standards. Standards in these tests have been consistently high over recent years. There has been an upward trend in standards similar to the national average. This represents good achievement. The only significant difference between boys and girls is that girls have outperformed boys in English markedly over the last three year period. No evidence of this was seen during the inspection.

6. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, standards in English, mathematics, science, ICT, RE and PE are average. Standards in speaking and listening are above average. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory. These were the only subjects where sufficient evidence was gathered to make valid judgements. Compared with the findings of the school's last inspection, standards have fallen in English, mathematics and science. They have improved in ICT and PE and remained the same in RE. Standards have also fallen compared with the school's results in recent years in the end of Year 6 national tests and assessments where standards have been consistently high. The basic reason for this decline is the recent unsettled period faced by the school but it is also due to the lack of consistent challenge for more able pupils. Standards have risen in PE as the statutory requirement to teach swimming is now met. They have improved in ICT as the school has provided a computer suite and ensured that the requirements of National Curriculum are met.

7. The pupils' literacy skills are well used to support their learning in other subjects. Teachers also develop the pupils' literacy skills further in subjects such as history. There was little evidence of the pupils making use of their skills in mathematics in other subjects. The evidence seen was inconsistent and superficial. There is good use of ICT in most areas of the curriculum. The pupils regard ICT as a natural and useful way work working and extending their understanding.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour overall are good. In the Foundation Stage, they are very good. Attendance is satisfactory. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' demonstrate a good interest in school life and in the range of activities provided.
- Pupils' willingness to be enterprising and take responsibility is good.
- Pupils' confidence and self esteem are good.
- Pupils with SEN have good attitudes to their work
- Attitudes and behaviour in the Foundation Stage are particularly good.
- The school promotes good relationships between pupils and adults with its 'family' atmosphere.
- Attendance is satisfactory but it was good during the inspection.
- School has good procedures to promote attendance and parents ensure the attendance of their children.

Commentary

8. Most pupils show good interest in their lessons and strive hard to achieve the expectations of their teachers. Pupils respond well when the teaching holds their attention; however, there is a small element that can become disruptive when the teaching has shortcomings. The family atmosphere promoted by the whole school staff has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils understand the school rules and do their best to keep them. The standard of behaviour has slipped slightly since the last inspection but it is still good. This is mainly due to minor lapses from some older pupils. The culture promoted by the school is one of a large and happy family where everyone is valued and respected. Both parents and pupils confirm how much they enjoy and benefit from this caring environment.

9. Pupils who have SEN behave well and work hard. They are keen to learn and are included well in all classes. They enjoy and value the support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants.

10. Reception children are very confident when making choices and when learning something new. They work well individually and know the school's routines fully. When working with others as part of a group, they share resources and co-operate very well.

11. Pupils have a sound range of opportunities for taking on additional responsibility and they respond well to them. Year 6 pupils are appointed mentors for children in the Reception class. A child from the Foundation Stage said his mentor was 'nice and helpful'. All pupils have the opportunity to carry out routine duties which they do quietly and responsibly without the need for supervision. Older pupils are quick to help their younger schoolmates should the need arise. Boy and girl pupils of differing ages interviewed during the inspection displayed mature, articulate, confident and responsible attitudes. The school encourages the personal and social development of pupils well.

12. The cultural development of pupils has been maintained since the last inspection. Advantage was taken of a project on the rivers of the world to emphasise the different living conditions of local people. The school has electronic mail links with some other schools which, for example, are used to exchange information relating to cultural activities. Visitors to the school promote interest in drama, music and environmental issues. Similarly, every opportunity is taken to develop the spiritual awareness of pupils, ensuring that pupils have a very good level of understanding. Pupils discuss what religion means to them in religious education lessons and there are good opportunities for reflection in both these lessons and assembly. Older pupils visited a Hindu Temple in order to widen their knowledge in other faiths.

13. Pupils understand the differences between right and wrong and demonstrate this by their attitudes and actions in school. They have a good level of respect for the feelings and values of others and this is continually fostered by the family atmosphere of the school. Pupils spoken to

during the inspection said there was no bullying in school and none was seen during the inspection. Overall, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.6	School data :	0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

14. Attendance is satisfactory. During the inspection, it was above the national average which was the finding of the school’s last inspection. The school ensures that parents and carers appreciate the importance of the prompt and regular attendance of their children at school. These efforts are very effective and, as a result, there is no unauthorised absence. An attendance check taken during the inspection showed good levels of attendance. During interviews and discussions with pupils, it was very evident that they enjoyed school and their lessons. There have been no exclusions during the past school year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	70	0	0
White – any other White background	1	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 quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The most significant strengths are the leadership of the headteacher, the provision for pupils with SEN and good teaching, learning, achievement in Year R, extracurricular provision and the pupils’ attitudes and personal development. The major weaknesses are teaching, learning and achievement in Year 2, assessment, provision of the statutory curriculum in Year R, governance, communication with parents and aspects of management.

Teaching and learning

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good in Years R and 1 but unsatisfactory in Year 2. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall although it is satisfactory in Year R.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is not as good as it was when the school was last inspected.
- Pupils, particularly the more able, and those in Year 2 are not always given hard enough work.
- The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with SEN is good.
- All pupils are included well in all aspects of class lessons
- The many strengths in teaching and learning in Year R are restricted by weaknesses in curricular planning, resources and accommodation.
- Arrangements for two teachers to teach classes have strengths and weaknesses.

- The school is developing its assessment procedures rapidly but assessment information is not used well enough to promote the pupils' progress except in Year R.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in seventeen lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	5	10	2	0	0

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

15. When the school was last inspected, teaching was judged to be good with the strongest teaching being in Years R to 2. Strengths have been maintained in Years R and 1 but not in Year 2. This is partly due to the recent difficulties faced by the school which, for example, have restricted the development and application of assessment procedures. However, it is also due to significant weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning, notably the failure to challenge more able pupils fully at all times. For example, in Year 2, a significant amount of the pupils' work involves completing worksheets which are often too easy for able pupils. This restricts the range of teaching strategies used and reduces the pupils' achievement. To a much lesser extent, this is reflected in their work in Year 6. This is a weakness which was found by the school's first inspection although the 1998 inspection felt that it had been addressed.

16. The pupils' work in Year 2 shows that pupils of all abilities often do the same work. This sometimes happens in other years but not so frequently. One reason why this occurs is that the school's assessment procedures are not well enough developed to support accurate curricular planning for individual pupils. Pupils in Year 2 expressed the view that much of their work was easy for them. Year 6 pupils said work was variable in that it was sometimes too difficult and sometimes too easy. They also said that they were, on occasion, asked to do work that they had previously covered. Apart from weaknesses in assessment procedures, these shortcomings also demonstrate low expectations of the pupils and inadequate lesson planning. As a result, the achievement of more able pupils in particular, especially in Year 2, is not good enough and they do not receive equality of opportunity.

17. The teachers ensure that pupils take a full part in all activities. The best lessons have pace and interest the pupils who respond well. A Year R and 1 French lesson taught by the headteacher exemplified these features. The teacher made sure that the children copied what she said in French accurately and also repeated it in English to ensure that they understood and extended their knowledge of French. The varied activities included speaking, singing and acting as the teacher. As a result, the pupils were higher motivated and learnt successfully. Weaker lessons show shortcomings including those evident in the analysis of work and conversations with pupils. In a Years 4, 5 and 6 lesson, the teacher's control of the pupils was unsatisfactory and the work set did not match their needs. The pupils misbehaved and made very little progress in this lesson. In a Year 2 and 3 lesson, the pupils were well controlled, relationships were good and the use of resources was well planned. However, the pace was leisurely, the challenge was not great enough particularly for more able pupils and some pupils had done the work before.

18. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with SEN is good. Their needs are well assessed and they are given work that is appropriate. They receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants who work well together as a team. As a result, pupils with SEN do well. These judgements are similar to those made by the school's last inspection. Teaching assistants also give good support in other areas of the curriculum, for example, in supporting the teaching of ICT and its use in other subjects.

19. Teaching and learning are good in Year R. The teachers ensure that the learning activities provided for children in the Reception meet their needs by providing a broad range of work in this mixed age class. However, the curriculum is not planned using the statutory guidance for the Foundation Stage. Teachers do, however, assess the children's progress towards the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception using the appropriate criteria. This assessment information is used soundly to plan the children's work. Outdoor provision also places limitations on the children's physical development. It is very small and the children do not have access to large play equipment or wheeled toys.

20. Each of the three classes in the school is taught by two teachers. This has significant strengths, for example, in the range of expertise available to the school and the continuity available for the pupils in the event of illness. However, there is scope to make additional use of the teachers' knowledge of particular subjects and to broaden the range of teaching and organisational strategies used in the school.

21. In 1998, the school was judged to have made a positive start on implementing a more coherent approach to assessment and to have appropriate procedures in place for English, mathematics and science. Due to the many recent changes in staff and management, the situation is now less positive. However, rapid progress in developing assessment procedures and the use of the information obtained is being made. Some of the procedures which the school had in place but which fell into disuse because of the changes are being revised and reinstated. In addition, new procedures and analyses of data are taking place. As yet, this work is too new to influence teachers' planning sufficiently and so the work set for pupils, other than those with SEN, is not always at the right level. Furthermore, assessment information is not used well enough to give the pupils specific targets for improvement. The school has started to provide pupils with targets but, in conversation, they showed little understanding of these targets and had very little idea of how well they were doing.

22. During almost all of the lessons seen in Years 1 to 6, teachers and teaching assistants made sure that the pupils fully understood the work that they were set and helped them appropriately when the pupils found the work hard. Pupils with SEN particularly benefited from this support. However, teachers did not always recognise that the work set was frequently too easy for some pupils, particularly the more able. Conversations with pupils also indicated that they felt that the work they were given was often not difficult enough. Teachers generally mark pupils' work by correcting, indicating that it is right or praising it. However, it is rare for the marking of pupils' work to tell them how to improve. These judgements are basically the same as those made by the school's 1998 inspection.

The curriculum

Overall, curricular provision is satisfactory but it is unsatisfactory in Year R. The enrichment of the curriculum is good. Overall the school's accommodation and resources are satisfactory but they are unsatisfactory in Year R.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curricular planning for children in the Foundation Stage does not meet statutory requirements.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs supports good achievement .
- Overall, equality of opportunity is unsatisfactory as the needs of the more able are not fully met.
- The pupils' learning is enriched successfully through the range of visitors and educational visits provided by the school.
- The school prepares pupils well for the smooth transfer to their next school.
- The school has improved provision for PE and ICT.
- There are weaknesses in the outdoor accommodation and resources for the Reception children, which restrict some aspects of their physical development.

Commentary

23. The school has worked hard to evaluate and change its curriculum planning to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes. Uncertainty over the last year has meant that the school has had to have a flexible approach to curriculum organisation and circumstances have made it difficult to plan for the future. However, the school is now moving forward and is reviewing and revising the whole school curriculum plans to encompass a more cross-curricular approach to learning. Termly plans have been thoughtfully devised around themes that cover all the National Curriculum requirements and also ensure that pupils in the mixed age classes do not miss out on any parts of learning. For example, the science curriculum has been re-organised and the units amalgamated for classes, to support teachers in their planning and teaching of mixed age year groups. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school communicates the contents of the termly plans to parents to encourage them to play a part in their children's education. There have been significant improvements in provision for PE and ICT since the school's last inspection and all statutory requirements are now met.

24. Although the curriculum for children in Reception is varied and interesting, the planning does meet the statutory requirements laid down in the *Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage*. The school has accepted this as an issue for immediate action. The outdoor area for children in Reception is very small and places some restrictions on aspects of the children's physical development, as they have no access to large play equipment or wheeled toys.

25. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. Individual education plans are of good quality and have clear, specific targets, which address pupils' needs well. In addition small groups of pupils or individuals are taught for short sessions to ensure understanding of class work and to take part in specialist work for speech and language and specific learning difficulties.

26. Opportunities for enrichment both during the school day and in after school clubs and activities are good. The curriculum provides many opportunities for visits to venues ranging from a Hindu temple in Bristol, Blaise Castle, a 'hands on' science visit to Bristol and a residential visit to Kilve for older pupils. Younger pupils in Class 1 have enjoyed a 'sleepover' in their classroom. Visiting staff have included an environmental science puppet show, Mr. Spellbinder, a storyteller, and Drum Crazy, a music group who provided workshops for all pupils. There is a good choice of out of school clubs, which includes football, netball, music, gardening and a fly fishing club. During the week of the inspection, pupils were seen to be making their own flies for fishing in a very professional manner. This judgement supports the parents' view that the school provides a good range of extracurricular activities. Conversations with pupils showed that they valued and enjoyed these activities.

27. The school has very close links with the Huish Episcopi Science College, the local secondary school. A good variety of liaison activities and consultations operate between the schools to ensure that the pupils are well prepared for the transfer.

28. The school's accommodation is satisfactory. Although there is no school hall, the school is allowed to use the adjacent village hall for physical education and as a venue to hold school productions. The grounds are spacious and used well to support the curriculum. The school has a satisfactory number of teachers and teaching assistants with an appropriate range of experience between them to teach and support pupils' learning adequately. As a result, most pupils receive good equality of opportunity. However, although the school has identified more able pupils, the analysis of their work shows that these pupils do not always receive work which is sufficiently demanding for their needs. The school has a satisfactory number of well-chosen resources to support pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring of pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are looked after and cared for well.
- Relationships with adults in school are good.
- Induction arrangements are very good.
- Adults know pupils with SEN very well and provide good levels of care for their well-being.
- The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are not sufficiently based on rigorous monitoring of their performance.
- There is no universal fire alarm system.

Commentary

29. The school has good health and safety procedures in place with regular risk assessments carried out. The school is very aware that the main school fire alarm cannot be heard immediately in the two classes separated from the main building. At present, the classroom in question has a hand operated system and no means of immediate communication with the main school office. The school has plans to install a full instant communication system to overcome this possible risk.

30. An accident report book is kept and most staff have the appropriate first aid qualifications. First aid shortcomings mentioned in the last report have been remedied by the school. There are full child protection procedures in place and all the school staff are aware of the appropriate procedures. The head teacher is the designated child protection officer and has received the required training. The family culture that permeates the school has been retained since the last inspection. This, coupled with the fact that the staff know their pupils very well ensures a caring environment which encourages learning. In addition, most pupils know and care for one another; regardless of age or gender.

31. All adults who work in the school form close and trusting relationships with the pupils. They know them well and provide good role models for behaviour. Discussions with pupils show that they feel very safe and secure and would be happy to turn to any adult in school should they need help, comfort or advice. The views of pupils about different aspects of school life are welcomed and valued on an informal basis but the school has no formal system to encourage pupils to become more involved in the work of their school.

32. Pupils with SEN receive very good levels of care, support and guidance. They are given focused, specialist help where necessary and their needs are reviewed regularly. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully as they move through the school.

33. The school's systems to monitor pupils' academic standards and progress are unsatisfactory overall although support and guidance on personal and social matters are very good. The school is developing its assessment procedures but these do not provide information which is sufficiently comprehensive or accurate. As a result, pupils do not have adequate information about the strengths and weaknesses in their work or how they can make their work better.

34. Induction arrangements for children starting school are very good. The playgroup next door to the school visits regularly and home visits to prospective pupils are arranged. The school makes every effort to ensure that children starting school feel confident and comfortable in their new surroundings. Pupils from Year 6 acting as mentors ensure that children new to the school settle in very quickly.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and the community are satisfactory. There are good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parental involvement with learning at school is good but at home it is only satisfactory.
- Very active Parent Teacher Association.
- Communication with parents of pupils with SEN is very good.
- Dealing with complaints and concerns is unsatisfactory.
- Very good links with the pre-school groups and good links with the secondary school.
- Genuine 'open door' policy.

Commentary

35. The school works well with parents and encourages them to support the school through the Friends of the School Association and to help their children with their learning. Parental help with their children's learning is good in school and they assist with practical support in lessons. They also help to supervise pupils on school trips. Help with learning at home is satisfactory but parents are not clear about what is required of them. The Friends of the School Association is very active and, apart from a very full programme of social activities, also raises considerable sums of money. The association works closely with the school to realise a variety of pre-agreed projects.

36. The school provides a satisfactory range of information for parents about the progress of their children by means of regular newsletters and annual reports. Procedures for dealing with complaints and ensuring satisfaction are unsatisfactory and not sufficiently structured. Parents have not been made sufficiently aware of why significant changes in school practice were necessary and the importance of their implementation. Communication with parents, although constant, lacks clarity. Parents do not have sufficiently simplified, structured information about the school. This is particularly important at a time of great change after a period of considerable stability for the school. Important and necessary changes have not been put across to the parents well enough. This has increased the uncertainty surrounding the changes. In addition, some parents complain about insufficient notice of forthcoming events which prevents them from making the necessary arrangements in good time. Some parents feel that more information on project work would enable them to give the correct help to their children with their learning at home. Parents' feelings about homework remain similar to their views at the last inspection. Homework is satisfactory. The school operates a genuine open door policy and parents take advantage of this to meet staff informally. Parents have no qualms about approaching any member of the school staff.

37. Parents of all pupils who have SEN have good links with the school and, along with teaching staff and teaching assistants, are encouraged to set targets in the IEPs. The level of liaison is good. The school also ensures good working links with secondary schools to encourage a smooth transition to the next school.

38. There are very good links with a local pre-school group and parents say that their children settle in school well. There is similar good liaison with the local secondary school. The school makes every effort to ensure a smooth transition to secondary education. Links with other schools and colleges are good. The very close liaison with their secondary school is exemplified by visits from a PE teacher who teaches PE every week in Hambridge. Older pupils visit the same secondary school for 'science workshops' and students from a college of further education spend time in school for work experience prior to teacher training. The school is very actively involved in the local Federation of Small Schools.

39. The school has satisfactory links with the local community. Pupils enjoy outside visits in conjunction with their project work which enhances their learning. The school has a close connection with the local church and a nursing home nearby. Pupils also make visits outside their local environment. These visits range from a residential stay at an activity centre, to a 'hands on' science day and a Victorian school day in Bristol.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is good. Other leadership roles are fulfilled satisfactorily. The management of the school is

satisfactory. Governance is unsatisfactory. Statutory requirements for the planning of the Foundation Stage curriculum are not met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has faced significant barriers to improvement recently.
- The headteacher has identified significant weaknesses in the school and has set good procedures in place to address them.
- The management roles of other members of staff have strengths and weaknesses.
- There is a good team spirit in the school.
- The views of parents are not sought regularly in a formal and structured manner.
- All pupils are fully included in the school's life and work.
- The school's leadership and management of its provision for pupils with SEN are good.
- The governing body does not have an in depth knowledge of the school.
- Financial procedures have some weaknesses.

Commentary

40. The recent barriers to improvement faced by the school have largely centred around changes of staff. The long serving headteacher was absent due to illness for a significant period before leaving the school permanently last November. In this period, the school had changes of acting headteacher and the current headteacher was on very short term contracts before being asked to stay at the school. These factors clearly adversely affected the ability of the school's leadership and management to take effective long term actions. In addition, the school had a number of supply teachers in this period which was also disruptive after a long period of stability.

41. The current headteacher has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. In spite of the initially very short term nature of her appointment, she has already, for example, ensured that shortcomings in health and safety procedures and the statutory requirement to teach swimming have been addressed. She has good plans to address other weaknesses. These include the lack of rigour in the school's self evaluation procedures, insufficient concentration on raising standards in the school improvement plan and improving the monitoring and use of performance data.

42. Other staff make a satisfactory contribution to the leadership and management of the school. A key issue for action from the school's 1998 inspection was to strengthen the school's management structure by ensuring that all subjects had a co-ordinator. The current headteacher has ensured that this has happened. She has made good use of the fact that all classes are taught by two teachers to share the roles fairly and to make use of teachers' expertise. However, many staff are relatively new to their roles and few have monitored teaching and learning in their subjects. Where this has taken place, except for observations carried out by the headteacher, the monitoring has not been sufficiently rigorous or developmental.

43. The headteacher has generated a strong team spirit amongst the staff of the school. In general, the staff are committed to, and understand the need for, the changes being brought in. However, changes in the school's organisation and procedures, and the reasons why these are necessary, have not been successfully communicated to significant numbers of parents. Efforts to do this have been made but the extent of parental concern at changes in the school after a long period of stability has not been sufficiently appreciated. Communication has, therefore, been inadequate in terms of gaining parental understanding of the needs and issues.

44. All staff are fully and successfully committed to including all pupils in all aspects of the school's life and work. Nevertheless, equality of opportunity for pupils is unsatisfactory as more able pupils do not make as much progress as they could.

45. The part-time SENCO works closely with the headteacher and teaching team to ensure the needs of pupils with SEN are met. Her leadership and management of the provision for pupils with SEN are good. She is efficient and clearly works well with the teaching staff and the school's team of

teaching assistants, who are well trained and provide clearly focused and appropriate work and assistance for all pupils who have SEN. She also organises and delivers training for teachers and teaching assistants which helps to improve their understanding and monitors their work through discussion and evaluations of work covered. She meets regularly with the governor for SEN to discuss provision and inclusion, which helps to make inclusion a live issue for the governing body. More recently she has also taken a lead in co-ordinating and developing provision for pupils who are more able and has helped the staff to identify the pupils and provided good ideas for teaching and enrichment activities. However, this aspect of the school is not fully developed.

46. The governors are committed to the school and have the best interests of the pupils as a central focus of their function. Under the guidance of the current headteacher, they are adopting strategies to improve the way in which they carry out their role. For example, they now have a committee structure, make formal visits to the school, analyse assessment data and the chairman meets with the headteacher regularly. However, a key issue for action from the school's 1998 inspection was to increase the role of the governing body in the strategic oversight of the school's development. The governors do not contribute to the school improvement plan at its earliest stages and do not have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This means that the governing body cannot influence the strategic direction of the school sufficiently and that the governors cannot act as effective critical friends to the headteacher. Additionally, they have not ensured that statutory requirements are met in curricular planning for the Foundation Stage.

47. Another key issue for action from the school's 1998 inspection was to construct and implement an appropriate financial policy. However, the governors' financial procedures still do not take sufficient account of the fundamental principles of obtaining good value for money. This is particularly important in the context of this school in terms of consultation about spending and development in view of parental concerns about the changes in the school. Budgeting and accounting procedures are prudent and rigorous. However, the figures originally provided by the school indicated that it had financial reserves which were well above recommended levels. The governors stated that they planned to use some of the reserves to fund the financial effects of the recent changes in staff. Allowing for this, revised figures submitted by the school show reserves marginally above recommended levels. Nevertheless, it is clear that the school has failed to spend money in order to ensure that resources for the Foundation Stage curriculum allowed its full implementation.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	253240	Balance from previous year	30,737
Total expenditure	219454	Balance carried forward to the next	33,786
Expenditure per pupil	2465		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning for children in the Foundation Stage does not meet the statutory requirements.
- Induction procedures for children starting school are very good.

- The Reception children achieve well in the areas of personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy because of good teaching and learning.
- Overall, the Reception children benefit from working alongside older Year 1 pupils.
- There are weaknesses in the outdoor accommodation for the Reception children, which restricts some aspects of their learning. Resources for promoting the children's physical development are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

48. Children are admitted to school full-time in the September of the year in which they become five. The Reception children are taught by two part-time teachers in a class with Year 1 pupils. The school works closely with parents and the local play group to ensure that the Reception children have a very smooth start to their education. A good number of parents regularly help out with class and group activities. Children's attainment when they start school spans the full range and is average overall. By the end of the Reception year, the children attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning, with the exception of personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy where their attainment is above the expected level. Overall, achievement, including that of pupils with SEN, is good. The children achieve well in communication, language and literacy, and in their personal, social and emotional development. Their achievement in other areas of learning is satisfactory.

49. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. A weakness however, is the curriculum planning, which does not have regard to the guidance for the Foundation Stage. This is a statutory requirement for schools. However, the opportunities provided for children in the Reception are meeting their needs through a suitable broad range of situations in this mixed age class. The outdoor provision does, however, place some restrictions on aspects of the children's physical development, as it is very small and the children have no access to large play equipment or wheeled toys. Physical education lessons are provided for the children in the nearby village hall.

50. The management of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The teacher responsible is employed part-time in Class 1, where the Reception children are based with Year 1 pupils. Consequently, she has a clear overview of the provision. She also has several key responsibilities that she carries out diligently. However, the planned curriculum does not meet the statutory requirements for the Foundation Stage, which relates to the leadership and makes this aspect unsatisfactory. The school has accepted this as an issue for immediate action. There is a strong sense of teamwork in Class 1, with both part-time teachers working together effectively to meet the needs of the children's welfare and learning. The overall provision is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection because the curriculum planning requirements are not being met.

51. In the area of **personal, social and emotional development**, the children achieve well, and teaching is good. The teacher ensures that the children benefit from working alongside the older Year 1 pupils who set a good example through their own good attitudes and behaviour, which the Reception children take notice of. As a result, the children show very good levels of confidence when they tackle new learning, and make choices and decisions about their work. The teacher also provides opportunities for the children to work together as a group. They do this very well and have a good understanding of the need to listen to the contributions of others, to take turns, and to share resources. Independent learning skills are well promoted, and the children know the routines of the school well. The Reception children are confident and happy learners.

52. The children achieve well in **communication, language and literacy**, and the teaching is good. There is a good combination of activities that are led and directed by an adult, such as the daily word-building sessions, and 'free-choice' activities, such as role play and writing activities. Speaking and listening skills are well developed, and staff are effective in the way in which they pick up incidental opportunities for extending the children's vocabulary. By the end of the Reception year, the children have a good appreciation of books, and understand that writing conveys meaning. They join in well with well-known stories, such as 'The Little Red Hen', and during the inspection, showed developing levels of confidence as they used a microphone to re-tell and tape the story for the group.

to listen to. Reception children have their own reading books, which they take home regularly. Frequent opportunities for them to practise in class, and good support from home, ensure that the children achieve well in this aspect of their learning. The promotion of early writing skills is good, and children are encouraged well to 'write' in a variety of contexts.

53. In terms of their **mathematical development**, the children achieve satisfactorily and the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. By the end of the Reception year, most children have a good understanding and knowledge of number and are able to count and recognise numbers up to ten with good levels of confidence and accuracy. The children's learning is enhanced by a suitable range of practical activities, which help them to understand the idea of 'adding' and 'taking away'. For example, when playing a domino game with the support of an adult, the children were able to count the number of dots, match the number of one penny coins to the dots and then take away the correct number of coins from their partner and add them onto their own pile of coins. Good ongoing development of the children's vocabulary by the class teachers and support staff helps the children to explain their mathematical ideas accurately and clearly. The children are provided with suitable opportunities to explore mathematical concepts through water and 'rice' play, and for them to learn through first-hand experience.

54. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of standards in the wide area of learning that relates to children's **knowledge and understanding of the world**, but the evidence of pupils' work in Year 1 indicates that their learning is satisfactory. Children are given a wide range of experiences to explore and learn through structured play activities and first-hand experience. For example, during the inspection, the children were investigating a wide range of objects with the teacher and sorting them according to their magnetic / non-magnetic properties. An attractive display further supported their knowledge and understanding of the properties of materials. The children are developing a satisfactory awareness of the past, through the opportunity to create their own 'Toy Museum'. Good use is made of walks around the village to introduce children to the different features and to provide them with simple map reading exercises. Children's awareness of religious and cultural traditions is suitably enhanced through stories and play activities. A strong sense of their own religious customs is well promoted. The children's ICT skills are good, and they clearly benefit from the effective mentor system, where Year 6 pupils work with them on the computers. The children are enthusiastic learners who show good levels of interest in all activities.

55. In terms of their **physical development**, the children achieve satisfactorily and teaching is satisfactory. However, the children's attainment and achievement are hampered by the limitations of the very small outdoor play area that has no large pieces of apparatus or suitable outdoor play equipment, such as wheeled toys. The arrangement for teaching PE in the village hall is satisfactory. During the inspection, for example, the children learnt how to control a ball sufficiently well by rolling it along the floor for their partner to receive it. The Reception children benefited well from this lesson as they also had the opportunity to work with the Year 1 pupils and learn from them. The children quickly learn how to use scissors and cutting tools. They show appropriate control of brushes and pencils, and most manipulate small objects, such as building bricks, well.

56. It was not possible to make an overall judgement of the quality of teaching in the **creative** area of learning. On the evidence of work on display, the children are provided with a good range of art and craft activities and they achieve well. Their card weavings with different materials and the 'Light and Dark' paintings are particularly effective. Although the children have regular access to painting activities, these activities are not always freely available throughout the day. Pupils learn and perform a good range of songs and because they have the opportunity to participate in lessons with the Year 1 pupils, they quickly learn to keep a steady beat when using percussion instruments. In terms of their creative role-play, the activities provided allow children to use their imagination well. It is particularly effective when adults are involved with the activities, such as using hand puppets to expand their imagination and extend their use of language.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- Overall, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average.
- In Year 2, standards in reading and writing are below average.
- The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory in Year 2 and pupils are not achieving as well as they could in reading and writing.
- Pupils with SEN achieve well.
- Opportunities for pupils to use and develop literacy in other subjects are good.
- The learning tasks set for pupils do not always sufficiently match the needs of the more able.

Commentary

57. Overall, standards in English are average by Year 6. Standards in the current Year 2 are below average, which is significantly lower than at the time of the last inspection. This is because the more able pupils in Year 2 are not achieving as well as they could in reading and writing. This was also evident in the 2003 national test results when no pupil achieved the higher Level 3 in reading or writing. This represents unsatisfactory achievement from Reception to Year 2. By Year 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with SEN receive well-planned targeted support in literacy and, as a result, are achieving well.

58. Standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school. The good progress made by children in the Reception year continues through to Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement overall is good. Many pupils are good listeners and readily participate in any discussion and show the ability to express their ideas clearly. Pupils are given many opportunities to discuss and ask questions and are encouraged to talk to each other about their work. In Class 3 for example, pupils have writing partners whom they discuss their story writing with and are expected to make comments about what they like. As a result, by Year 6, most pupils express their ideas confidently and are quick to respond to questions. However, there are missed opportunities for older pupils to become involved in extending their speaking skills in more formal situations.

59. In Year 2, standards in reading are below average. There is a structured reading programme, with pupils working through a suitable range of published schemes. All pupils are encouraged to read at home and, where this happens, this helps them to move forward. The more able pupils and average pupils read independently and retell a story, capturing the main points of the plot. However, the lower attaining pupils lack confidence in talking about the books they read, and show little understanding of the story and characters. Although their knowledge of individual letter sounds is generally secure, they are not always able to apply this knowledge to help them blend the sounds to read unfamiliar words. In most cases, they use the pictures and content of the story to help them recognise new words. By Year 6, standards overall in reading are average. Most pupils read suitable books for their age and ability with a good understanding of the text. They talk readily about the books they have read recently, and are able to explain their preferences in terms of styles and authors. Although a few more able pupils are developing the ability to discover deeper meaning in the text, the majority cannot do so without supportive questioning. Research and referencing skills are suitably developed and a good number of pupils have developed the necessary skills for finding books and retrieving information.

60. Standards in writing are below the national average in Year 2. In Year 6, standards are average and, because of the sound teaching in Class 3, most pupils are achieving satisfactorily. In Year 2, the range and forms of pupils' writing are limited and few pupils develop their ideas in sufficient detail. There was limited evidence of pupils writing at length. Much of their work is presented on worksheets and, as a result, only a few more able pupils produce work that shows evidence of imaginative

writing. Overall, there are variable levels of accuracy in the work of many pupils, particularly in the consistent use of basic punctuation.

61. In the best writing in Year 6, there is a good range of vocabulary and an imaginative use of language to develop atmosphere. These pupils produced some particularly thoughtful pieces of writing that showed good links with their work in history based on the Second World War. The more able and average pupils are beginning to use paragraphs in their writing and show a suitable understanding of organising their story writing into chapters. However, the lower attaining pupils write few complex sentences and find it difficult to organise their writing with sufficient clarity. Overall, the presentation of pupils' work and spelling are weaker elements of the pupils' writing. Good use is made of ICT to present their work.

62. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory in Year 2. Whilst satisfactory teaching was observed in a literacy lesson, when the full range of evidence is considered, notably the analysis of pupils' work, the quality of teaching is clearly unsatisfactory in the effect it has on the standards attained by the pupils. As a result, the work presented showed many pupils to be underachieving as the work they were given was often too easy for them. In Class 3, where pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 are taught, the quality of teaching and learning is overall satisfactory. Although lessons are well planned to incorporate all aspects of the subject and the National Literacy Strategy, the work set is not always sufficiently demanding, particularly for the more able pupils. This was confirmed by a number of these pupils who considered that the work they received was not hard enough.

63. The subject co-ordinator has carried out a great deal of work to set suitable systems in place to analyse pupils' progress. However, the monitoring of classroom teaching has little impact on the standards achieved by pupils in Year 2. The analysis has, however, led to a clearer focus on raising pupils' attainment in reading, particularly in boys' achievement. The strategies introduced are to be extended to providing focused guided reading sessions throughout the school. The school has introduced a suitable system for tracking pupils' progress in reading and writing, but the process of setting targets for individual pupils to achieve is not rigorous enough. The marking of pupils' work is variable in quality and overall, provides few comments that show pupils how to improve their work. As the overall standards and quality of teaching have declined from good to satisfactory, this signifies unsatisfactory improvement since the school's last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

64. The development of literacy across the curriculum is good. Speaking and listening skills are well developed through all subjects. By Year 6, pupils use reference and resource books confidently. Teachers also develop and consolidate aspects of literacy taught in English lessons through lessons such as ICT, history and RE. Opportunities to write in these subjects are beginning to have an increasingly positive impact on improving pupils' writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are not as high as they have been in the recent past.
- The pupils' knowledge of number is a comparative strength.
- Their use and application of mathematics are weak.
- Achievement in Year 2 is not good enough.
- More able pupils do not always reach their potential.
- Pupils with SEN do well.
- Control and management of the pupils are not consistent.

Commentary

65. Standards in Year 6 are average. This represents satisfactory achievement which is promoted by satisfactory teaching and learning. The judgement is broadly the same as that made by the school's last inspection when standards in mathematics were described as "slightly above average". However, standards are not as high as those achieved by the school in the end of Year 6 national tests since at least 2000. Standards in these tests have been consistently well above average.

66. Standards in Year 2 are below average. Achievement is unsatisfactory as are teaching and learning. Standards are lower than they were when the school was inspected in 1998 but they are higher than they were in the school's end of Year 2 national tests in 2003.

67. In Years 2 and 6, the greatest strength in the pupils' knowledge of mathematics is evident in their number work. For example, many pupils in Year 2 can mentally add and subtract two digit numbers and recall the two, five and ten times tables. In Year 6, some pupils are able to reduce a fraction to its simplest form and more can multiply and divide three digit numbers by two digit numbers. There was also evidence of the use of ICT to help the pupils' development of their work in this aspect of mathematics. In both Years 2 and 6, work on space, shape and measures is at broadly average levels but there is little evidence of work at above average levels. There was limited evidence of the pupils handling data in Years 3 to 6. However, the work which was seen was of a good standard. Using and applying mathematics is the weakest aspect of the subject in Years 1 to 6. The pupils' work showed little evidence of this aspect of the subject. Much of this type of work that was seen was undemanding and, in addition, it was frequently unfinished.

68. The analysis of the pupils' work in Year 2 showed that much of it was set at the same level for pupils of all abilities. This is because the school's assessment procedures in the subject are not sufficiently developed to provide useful information. There are elements of this in Year 6, but it is not so consistent or so marked. However, in conversation, pupils in Year 2 firmly expressed the view that their work was often too easy for them. Pupils in Year 6 felt that the degree of difficulty of the work they were given varied from difficult to easy. They also expressed the view that they had done significant amounts of the work they were given before. It was quite clear that none of the pupils had a clear idea of how well they were doing in the subject and that they lacked clear guidance on how to improve their work. In Year 2, a very high proportion of the pupils' work in mathematics consists of worksheets, many of which are undemanding, at the expense of varied approaches to the teaching of the subject. This is, to a much lesser extent, reflected in their work in Year 6. The result of this low expectation and inadequate planning is that more able pupils in particular, especially in Year 2, do not reach their full potential in this subject. As a result, standards have fallen in Year 2 and they are not currently as high in Year 6 as the standards the school has regularly obtained in the end of year national tests.

69. However, pupils with SEN do well in this subject. This is because work is often set at challenging but achievable levels for them. They also benefit from the good support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Additionally, the use of learning resources to support the development of their understanding is frequently good.

70. In general, pupils show good attitudes to this subject and work well both individually and in co-operation with each other. However, an example of unsatisfactory behaviour and attitudes was observed in a Year 4, 5 and 6 lesson. This was related to weak control by the teacher and to the fact that the pupils' work varied from being too easy to too hard. As a result, pupils did not concentrate, engaged in activities not related to the work they had been set and produced limited amounts of poor quality work.

71. Improvement in the subject since the school was last inspected has been unsatisfactory. Standards have fallen and the quality of teaching which was good is now satisfactory. Nevertheless, the management of the subject is judged to be satisfactory. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on the role during a period of significant disruption for the school. She has already identified weaknesses in teaching, assessment, standards and the monitoring of the subject. A sound action plan to address these shortcomings has been produced.

Mathematics across the curriculum

72. The use of mathematics in other subjects is unsatisfactory. There was limited evidence of its use in some subjects, for example, geography and ICT. However, this was not consistent or developed systematically or in depth. This reflects the pupils' limited abilities to apply their knowledge of the subject.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards reached by the pupils in Year 2 are too low.
- There is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' investigative skills in Year 2.
- Insufficient use is made of the pupils' writing skills in Year 2.
- The use of assessment is not rigorous enough in Year 2 to match the needs of all pupils.
- The pupils' understanding of life processes and living things is good.
- There is a strong emphasis on learning through investigation in Year 6.
- There is good emphasis on the correct use of specific scientific vocabulary.

Commentary

73. Overall, standards in science are average by Year 6. This judgement is lower than the findings of the school's last inspection, which found that standards were above average. However, it is similar to the results of national tests in 2003. Standards in the current Year 2 are below average. At the end of Year 2 in 2003, the national assessments made by teachers judged standards at Level 2 to be very high, but indicated that standards at the higher Level 3 were very low. The fall in standards is partly due to the difficulties faced by the school in the period between the two inspections. The number of pupils identified with special educational needs in both Year 2 and Year 6 has also risen. However, the overall satisfactory nature of teaching and learning is judged to be promoting satisfactory achievement by Year 6. In Year 2, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory and achievement is unsatisfactory.

74. The analysis of work completed by pupils in Year 2 and discussion with pupils indicated that although their use and understanding of scientific vocabulary are well developed, they had insufficient opportunities to learn through practical activities. This has a negative effect on the standards pupils achieve in relation to their prior attainment at the end of Reception and, as a result, their achievement by Year 2 is unsatisfactory. The analysis of pupils' work also showed that their writing skills are not being used well enough in this subject. The format of most of the written work was such that it limited the amount and quality of the work that pupils could produce. They understand how babies grow and change and have observed this at first hand as parents have brought babies and toddlers into school and answered the pupils' questions. They know that animals, including humans, need different types of food and are beginning to develop an awareness of how nutrition contributes to good health. However, much of the work set is the same for all pupils and does not challenge the more able. This indicates that assessment information is not always used well to match work to the pupils' needs. This judgement is supported by the quality of the marking of pupils' work. This very rarely helped them to progress. There was no evidence that the pupils were helped to assess their own work or that they had been set targets for improvement.

75. A satisfactory lesson in Year 2 addressed some of the weaknesses identified above. In this lesson, pupils investigated the properties of materials. They worked in groups, which undertook different tasks. The teacher and a volunteer helper helped pupils to consider ways of sorting the materials into groups based on features such as magnetic/not magnetic, float/sink, hard/smooth and

flexible/not flexible. As they tested the objects, adults working with the pupils introduced them to the idea of a fair test.

76. By Year 6, the evidence shows that the pupils are taught all elements of the subject, including investigative work. Their knowledge of life processes and living things is secure and includes the harmful effect of substances such as tobacco, alcohol and drugs. In this work, they also investigated the effects of exercise on their pulse rate. In Class 3, pupils are provided with a suitable range of opportunities to carry out investigations. In the lesson observed, for example, the pupils were investigating water resistance. After the initial introduction, pupils were set the challenge of using the resources to explore weight in water. They used force meters competently to carry out measurements and put forward reasonable explanations for the differences between the readings taken in air and water. There is good emphasis in all lessons seen on the correct use of specific vocabulary, which ensures that all pupils fully understand scientific terms. Pupils are provided with a useful investigation sheet that helps them evaluate their own work. However, the marking of their work is inconsistent and contains few comments on ways of improving their work.

77. The subject co-ordinator is relatively new to the post, but has already revised curricular planning for the subject to accommodate the mixed-age classes and to ensure that all elements of the subject are taught. A well organised science week brought pupils into contact with pupils from the local secondary school who worked alongside them. A 'have a go' day was organised for parents to experience 'hands on' science activities and pupils visited scientific places of interest such as Bristol. For these reasons, improvement since the last inspection is judged to be satisfactory. Nevertheless, there remain some areas for development, notably monitoring the quality of teaching in science, especially in Year 2.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a significant and continuing improvement in the subject since the school was last inspected.
- There are strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' knowledge of ICT.
- ICT is well used to support the pupils' learning in other subjects.
- Pupils show confidence and enthusiasm when working with ICT.
- Assessment procedures in the subject are not good enough.

Commentary

78. Standards in Year 2 and in Year 6 are average. This represents satisfactory achievement which is promoted by a similar quality of teaching and learning. When the school was last inspected, standards were below average and the requirements of the National Curriculum were not fully met. Standards have, therefore, risen and National Curriculum requirements are fully met. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection and indicates good management of the subject.

79. The strongest aspect of the pupils' skills is word processing. They use this skill to record work such as poems and stories in English and to record information in other subjects. Other strengths include the pupils' use of the internet, their keyboard skills and their knowledge and control of the functions of computers. Comparative weaknesses are their understanding of the use of sensors, control technology and the use of e-mail.

80. Pupils of all ages enjoy working with ICT. In the school's computer suite, they confidently operate the programs they have been asked to use and are not afraid to make mistakes and to learn from them. In conversation, they are self assured when they explain how they have, for example, found information about a number of religions or written a poem about the Blitz. They ask for help from teachers and teaching assistants when they need it and receive good support. The pupils

benefit fully from the use made of resources such as a projector that the teachers and teaching assistants use so that all pupils can follow instructions easily. The pupils are fully aware that ICT includes more than computers. They confidently discuss their use of a digital camera, how videos have enhanced their learning and how audio players support their work in subjects such as music and PE.

81. The school has some good assessment procedures. However, these have not been used recently and are now being reintroduced. As a result, pupils' work is not always accurately matched to their individual needs, they do not know how to improve their work and the school is not sure of the progress being made. In conversation, many pupils felt that the work they did was sometimes too easy and they did more difficult work at home.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

82. The evidence shows that ICT is used well to help the pupils extend their understanding in most areas of the curriculum. This is most pronounced in English where pupils regularly word process their work. However, it is also evident in subjects such as history and geography, where pupils, for example, have used the Internet to find information about topics such as rivers and the water cycle. In science, pupils have used ICT to support their work about the human body. There were also examples of pupils using ICT in art and design, design and technology and RE. ICT is well established in the pupils' minds as a good method of helping their learning.

HUMANITIES

No history lessons were seen during the inspection and inspectors did not obtain enough evidence to make comments on this subject. One geography lesson was observed and the work and displays in the class where the lesson took place were analysed. No other evidence was gathered.

83. In the **geography** lesson observed in Year 1, the pupils showed good recall of earlier work when they had done a traffic survey of the road in front of the school. This was developed into a discussion of whether the road was a quiet or a busy road. The teacher used the pupils' knowledge of the local area well to make this point and they contributed sensibly and effectively to the lesson. The class then considered the difference in amount and type of traffic in the country and in a town. The pupils made constructive points such as although there was more traffic in a town there were fewer tractors. Further types of roads such as motorways were discussed and the need to act safely on the roads was strongly emphasised. The pupils completed a worksheet at the end of the lesson which showed they had grasped the points made during it and that they had reached average standards. Displays and work in the class confirmed the judgement on standards and that teaching, learning and achievement were satisfactory. There was also evidence of good use of local studies and fieldwork. For example, the pupils had visited and discussed various features of Hambridge including the local canal. Good use had been made of ICT to support this visit as the pupils had taken photographs using a digital camera and these had been presented in a book recording their work.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6, pupils are developing good subject knowledge and understanding of Christianity.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about RE.
- The subject leader has created an effective team and is committed to raising achievement.
- Pupils with SEN receive good provision.

Commentary

84. Pupils reach standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Year 2 and Year 6 and achieve satisfactorily. Only one lesson was seen and further evidence has been gleaned from the analysis of work and displays and from discussion with pupils and the subject co-ordinator. This evidence indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with SEN, get a range of opportunities to explore the customs and beliefs of a number of different faiths.

85. During the discussion, it was clear that pupils across the age range are enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy the varied approach and links made with other subjects such as art and geography. They were able to speak with enthusiasm about their visits to the places of worship such as local churches and the Hindu temple. Pupils in Year 2 understand that there are many different religions in the world and that there are similarities. They can understand and explain religious stories and their meaning. Older pupils can understand and talk confidently about the ways in which the beliefs of one religion can be expressed in different practices, for example baptism in the Anglican and Baptist tradition. Their knowledge and understanding of Christianity are good and of other religions, such as Judaism, it is satisfactory. Older pupils were also able to talk with confidence about what is right and wrong and can link this with the Ten Commandments and also teachings from the New Testament. They are also beginning to ask questions about creation and to consider moral and religious issues. Their learning from religion was satisfactory and, overall, their achievements were satisfactory. Analysis of the work, discussion with pupils and the lesson observed also indicate that pupils with SEN have differentiated tasks to enable them to play an active part in the lessons.

86. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator works with another member of staff and, between them, the subject is taught across the school. The scheme of work has recently been reviewed and re-written to follow the agreed syllabus. Resources have also been re-organised and there is a sense of teamwork and commitment to increasing the subject knowledge of other religions studied through training and working closely with the county adviser. Teacher assessments are now taking place and there are plans to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, but this has not happened.

87. Since the previous inspection improvement has been satisfactory. The curriculum has improved and the subject is better resourced but teachers lack sufficient knowledge of other religions and their practices, and monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning is not sufficiently formal.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons in art and design or design and technology were seen during the inspection and inspectors did not obtain enough evidence to make comments on design and technology. The commentary on art and design is based on the analysis of work on display. One music lesson was observed. Inspectors also heard children singing in collective worship, spoke to groups of pupils, scrutinised teachers' planning documents and held a discussion with the subject leader.

88. No lessons were seen in **art and design**, but pupils' artwork around the school indicated that standards are average by Year 2 and Year 6. In the school's previous inspection it was said to be a strength, although no overall judgements were made on standards. Pupils study and learn from the work of famous artists, such as Kandinsky, Picasso, Monet and Andy Warhol. Pupils in Class 1 created some particularly effective pieces of work in the style of Picasso, by the very good use of pastels and paper shapes. Overall, pupils acquire the necessary skills in painting, collage, textiles and three-dimensional work and their achievement is satisfactory. Good links are made with other subjects, such as history, religious education and ICT that enhance the presentation of their work. In Class 3 the art curriculum has made a suitable contribution to literacy and pupils' cultural development as they painted pictures to illustrate the story of 'Handa's Surprise'.

89. In **music**, pupils were only observed in Class 1, although the whole school was heard singing during collective worship. Pupils sang tunefully and rhythmically and were able to take account of the mood of the hymn. As a result of the good teaching in Class 1, pupils achieved well. Good explanation and demonstration from the teacher helped the pupils to develop their understanding of the need to maintain a steady pulse when clapping as they sang. The teacher made learning fun and involved pupils fully in their learning. When playing the percussion instruments, pupils changed the sounds they made successfully from being quiet to loud. The opportunity for the youngest children in this class to use a suitable range of percussion instruments to accompany their singing, motivated them all. In this lesson, the pupils were skilfully introduced to creating and composing their own simple tunes. The high expectations of concentration set the scene for good learning throughout the lesson. Pupils are taught all elements of the curriculum through a scheme of work that is linked to the nationally recommended guidelines. The subject expertise of the co-ordinator is used well to help pupils move forward. Pupils have the opportunity to join a choir, take recorder lessons and receive musical tuition from a suitable range of visiting specialist teachers. The annual performance at Christmas also contributes to pupils' overall musical experience. The school is proud of its participation in combined concerts with other schools, which has culminated in some very impressive Compact Discs being produced. The choir has also had the opportunity to perform at Butlins. This positive picture has been maintained since the last inspection.

Physical education (PE)

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in dance in Year 6 are good.
- Pupils make good progress in swimming.
- The pupils' evaluative skills and their understanding of the effects of exercise on the body are underdeveloped.
- Lack of resources causes some weaknesses in provision for gymnastics.
- Assessment procedures are not sufficiently well developed.

Commentary

90. One PE lesson was seen in each class. These observations indicated average standards in games in Year 2 and above average standards in dance in Year 6. This represents satisfactory achievement in games and good achievement in dance. These judgements are broadly the same as those made by the school's last inspection. Swimming did not take place when the school was last inspected. It was introduced into the curriculum in the autumn term last year. Examination of the school's records shows that just over half of the Year 6 pupils can now swim at least 25 metres safely and unaided using a recognised stroke. Although this means that standards are below average it represents good achievement in the limited time the pupils have had swimming lessons. For this reason, improvement in the subject has been good since the school was last inspected.

91. Teaching and learning in the Years 2 and 3 lesson seen were satisfactory. The pupils showed average skills in throwing a ball underarm and using a chest pass. They caught a ball adequately and showed sound skills in dodging and marking. The pupils did not use space well and frequently bunched together which impeded their work. Strengths in the teaching were the explanations given to the pupils and the demonstrations of the activities they were to undertake. Weaknesses were a slowing down in the pace of work, for example, when equipment was distributed and the lack of a cooling down session at the end of the lesson.

92. In the Year 4, 5 and 6 lesson observed, teaching and learning were good. The pupils were quiet and well-disciplined and listened very carefully to their teacher. They tried very hard and mastered even the more difficult dance steps of the meringue and the salsa. The teacher worked

hard to overcome the self consciousness of some pupils. To a large extent, this was successful and most danced with confidence by the time that the lesson ended. However, few showed real poise and presence in their dance.

93. All pupils were fully included in all activities in the lessons seen. They generally worked well both individually and with others. However, the pupils' evaluative skills were not developed fully in any of the lessons seen. They were asked to say what they liked about the performance of other pupils, in some cases, but were not asked to suggest how improvements could be made. No evidence of the pupils being made aware of the purpose of warming up and down was seen. No consideration of how exercise affected the body was observed. There was limited evidence of assessment by teachers of pupils' individual performance and, therefore, little advice to specific pupils on how to improve.

94. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on the responsibility of managing the subject and has made a satisfactory start. She has produced an action plan for PE which includes, appropriately, the review of resources and the teaching of the subject. However, the action plan does not focus specifically on raising the standards reached by the pupils or weaknesses in assessment procedures in the subject. The school uses the village hall for PE. This is nearby and of a good size although there are problems with the storage of resources. The most significant problems are the lack of wall bars and large apparatus which place some limitations on the development of the pupils' gymnastics skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

95. No lessons in **PSHE** were seen. The school's documentation and the pupils' work were analysed and discussions were held with staff and pupils. The school has an appropriate policy and a suitable scheme of work for the subject. This shows that it is dealt with in its own right and linked with other subjects of the curriculum. For example, work in geography extends to care of the environment and this work is linked with being a good citizen in this respect. PSHE is also promoted effectively through the life of the school. Pupils support charities such as Comic Relief, celebrate the success of others and benefit from a residential visit. The good ethos of the school underpins provision in this subject. Pupils are taught to value and respect each other as individuals. For example, pupils say that there is no bullying. In addition, pupils with SEN take a full part in the life of the school and are well supported and regarded. Pupils' PSHE benefits from visits by the police and nurses on themes such as 'Choices' which covers a wide range of topics including drug awareness. The pupils' development is also promoted by visits such as that to a local old people's home. Sex education and awareness of drugs are suitably taught. Pupils have a suitable range of opportunities to accept responsibility. However, there is no school council, although one is planned, to allow pupils to present their views of the school formally. Pupils' views have been sought about some aspects of the school in the recent past. Pupils expressed the view that the opportunities that they had to discuss issues which were important to them with their peers were limited.

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	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
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	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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