

INSPECTION REPORT

**EMBLETON VINCENT EDWARDS CHURCH OF ENGLAND
(VOLUNTARY AIDED) FIRST SCHOOL**

Embleton, Alnwick

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122290

Headteacher: Mrs J Thompson

Lead inspector: Mrs P Allison

Dates of inspection: 24th - 26th March 2004

Inspection number: 262427

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	44
School address:	Embleton Alnwick Northumberland
Postcode:	NE66 3XR
Telephone number:	01665 576612
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G Coxon
Date of previous inspection:	May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very small rural first school with 44 boys and girls aged 4 to 9 on roll. They are taught in two mixed-age classes. The school is situated in the village of Embleton, on the Northumberland coast. It serves several local villages and communities. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are very mixed but are broadly average overall. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (6.8 per cent) is below the national average. All pupils are of white British ethnic origin and all pupils have English as their first language. Twenty-seven per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is above average. In the main, these pupils have learning difficulties.

Children start the school in the reception year, although there is an independent pre-school group that meets in the school every morning. The few reception age children are taught in a mixed-age class, alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. This class is taught by the headteacher in the morning and by a part-time teacher in the afternoon. Year 3 and 4 pupils are taught in another class by a full-time teacher. There is a broad spectrum of attainment on entry to the school and this varies considerably from year-to-year. However, assessments made as children enter the school indicate that attainment on entry is broadly in line with what is expected for children of this age. In 2002 the school achieved 'Healthy Schools' status and was awarded 'Investors in People'.

For almost the whole of the autumn term last year the school was relocated to two mobile classrooms behind the village hall, whilst a petro-chemical smell in the school was investigated.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21420	Paula Allison	Lead inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Music English as an additional language
11084	Jane Hughes	Lay inspector	
15551	Patricia Mitchell	Team inspector	English Science Geography History Special educational needs

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REPORT CONTENTS

Page

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

The curriculum

Care, guidance and support

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Although this school provides an adequate standard of education for its pupils, it has serious weaknesses. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good, but teaching and learning for children in the reception year and pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not effective enough. By the time pupils leave the school they are reaching average standards and have achieved satisfactorily, but currently children in the reception year and pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve as well as they could do. Crucial aspects of the management of the school are also seriously weak. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In the family atmosphere of this small school, pupils are well cared for; their attitudes and behaviour are very good;
- The very good quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 ensures that these pupils work hard and make good progress in lessons;
- Because of weaknesses in the teaching in the reception year and Years 1 and 2, particularly in literacy and numeracy, pupils do not learn as well as they could do;
- The full-time teacher makes a valuable contribution in introducing and supporting new ideas, but no one has an overview of curriculum provision in the whole school;
- The school has very strong and beneficial links with the local community and with other schools;
- There is very good provision for the creative arts, such as art, dance and music, and standards in these subjects are high.

The school has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. There have been some areas of improvement. In particular, the governing body is now much more aware of its responsibilities and is better organised. However, although there is now some classroom monitoring taking place and the headteacher has more time for the management of the school, this has not resulted in an improved quality of teaching and learning. In fact, provision for the reception year and achievement in Years 1 and 2 are not as good now as they were previously.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:

all schools

similar schools

2001

2002

2003

2003

reading

A*

A

C

E

writing

A*

A

E

E*

mathematics

A*

A*

E

E

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

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

Care is needed when interpreting data, as the numbers in each year group are very small.

Achievement is satisfactory. Most children enter the school with the skills and knowledge that might be expected for children of this age and by the time they leave the school at the age of 9, they are reaching average standards. However, this picture masks an inconsistency in progress through the school. Until recently, children have made satisfactory or good progress in the reception year, with most reaching the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. Currently the provision for these children is not as good as it has been and they are not making the progress that they could do.

For the past few years, standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 have been higher than average, but last year they were not as high and currently achievement in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory. There are particular weaknesses in writing and in mathematics. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 and 4 and by Year 4 pupils reach average standards. By the time they leave the school, pupils have made good progress and they usually do well in the middle school to which they transfer. Standards in reading and mathematics are better than those in writing.

Pupils throughout the school achieve well in the creative arts of art and design, dance and music.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils enjoy school and behave very well. Older pupils willingly take on responsibilities and they learn to respect the views of others. Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but are much better in the Year 3 and 4 class than they are in the reception, Year 1 and 2 class. The teacher in the older age class encourages, engages and challenges pupils, who work hard and learn effectively. In the younger age class, work is not always matched to pupils' attainment levels and so they do not learn as well as they could.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with a particular strength in the provision for the creative arts. There is a weakness in provision for the Foundation Stage, as the curriculum does not always meet their needs.

Pupils are very well cared for. The partnership with parents is good and the school has very strong and beneficial links with the community and other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The headteacher effectively promotes the very strong provision for the personal development of pupils and the full time teacher plays a major role in curriculum development. However, no one takes responsibility for managing subjects throughout the school and so the serious inconsistencies have not been addressed. The governing body is much improved and governance is now satisfactory. Governors are committed to the school and are taking on a more strategic role in its work.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have generally positive views of the school. They particularly like its family ethos and the care that is taken of their children. A few parents have concerns about the way in which the younger class is organised and the quality of the provision for the reception children in particular. Pupils like their school, know they have to work hard, but feel they are well supported.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning for reception, Year 1 and Year 2, so that all pupils achieve well;
- Develop more effective ways of checking on the planning, quality of provision and standards in subjects throughout the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement overall is satisfactory. However, in reception and Years 1 and 2 achievement is unsatisfactory, whilst in Years 3 and 4 it is good. Standards overall in core subjects are average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 3 and 4. They make good progress in lessons and reach standards that are broadly average;
- Standards have usually been good in Years 1 and 2, but currently pupils are not achieving as well as they could and standards are below average;
- Provision for children in the reception year is unsatisfactory and they are not achieving as well as they could;
- Standards in the creative arts are good.

Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to the school varies considerably from year-to-year, but overall is broadly in line with what might be expected for children of this age. Data shows that over the last few years children have done very well in the reception year, making satisfactory and often good progress. Usually most children reach the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of reception. However, currently these children are being taught in a mixed-age class and the provision does not always meet their needs. They are not achieving as well as they could do.
2. It is difficult and often quite misleading to use test data to provide information about performance when the cohorts are so small. For example, last year there were only nine pupils in Year 2. In these circumstances, the impact of one pupils' performance on the overall percentages can be quite significant. Also standards can appear to fluctuate dramatically from year-to-year. However, some information regarding trends can be gleaned. For the last few years, test results in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 have been good. Most, if not all, pupils reached the levels expected and a few achieved above this. This has made standards well above average and better than those achieved in similar schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.9 (18.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.3 (16.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.2 (20.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 9 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Last year results were not as good. Reading was average; writing and mathematics were well below average. And standards were well below similar schools. Even taking into account the small numbers involved and the impact of a few pupils with special educational needs, there was then an indication that pupils were perhaps not achieving as well as they could. The overall trend could be seen to be downward from a high in 1999.

4. Currently, the achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is not satisfactory, particularly in literacy and numeracy. They are not making sufficient progress in lessons, as the work they are given to do often does not build on what they have learnt previously. Assessment systems and planning are both weak in this class and do not support good learning. Higher attaining pupils are often not sufficiently challenged or taken onto the next step in their learning. They often spend too much time consolidating what they have already learnt. Pupils with special educational needs are not well enough supported and the work they are given to do often does not match their needs. Parents, whilst all feeling that their children make progress in school, are not as certain that progress is as good in the younger class as it is in the older class.
5. Test results in Year 4 last year showed that pupils had made good progress from Year 2 to Year 4. This was better progress than pupils in other schools in the area made. In Years 3 and 4, pupils achieve well. They are skilfully taught and are encouraged and challenged. Assessment systems are more effectively used and the teacher knows exactly what pupils have achieved and what they need to do next. This makes for good learning, and ultimately good achievement. Standards in reading and mathematics are currently above average; standards in writing are average. Writing is weaker than reading and mathematics, but measures taken to address this have had much more impact on pupils' progress here, than they have in the younger class.
6. Achievement in the creative arts of art and design, dance and music is good throughout the school. These subjects are well taught by the class teachers and by the visiting specialist teacher. Pupils really enjoy the lessons and reach good standards in these subjects. It is a strength of the school and one that parents and the local community recognise.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn; they behave well and try hard in lessons;
- Pupils look after each other and older ones willingly take on responsibilities;
- Parents are very happy with the family atmosphere of the school and the values promoted by staff;
- Attendance at the school is much better than average.

Commentary

7. The personal development of pupils is a major strength of the school and is recognised as such by parents. Parents like the family atmosphere of this small school and the way their children are known by everyone and treated as individuals. The headteacher has effectively promoted this ethos for a long time and it is a very successful aspect of what the school offers.
8. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They talk happily about what they are doing and things they have done in school. Some pupils can get a bit restless if lessons are too slow and they are not fully involved, but generally pupils are very attentive and work hard. They respond well to challenges. They gain in confidence, particularly in Years 3 and 4, where they are able to succeed and have a good idea of how well they have done. All pupils form very good relationships with others. Behaviour is very good. Pupils are polite and friendly and get on well with each other. Lunchtime is a real social occasion and behaviour here is impeccable.
9. Attendance is very good. Pupils are keen to come to school and parents try all they can to get their children to school regularly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

No of pupils on roll
44

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0

10. The school provides very well for pupils’ personal development. The ethos of the school, based on Christian values, has a positive impact on pupils’ spiritual development. They learn to respect others and their views and feelings. This is being particularly well promoted by the thinking skills and philosophy work, which is a regular part of the Year 3 and 4 curriculum. Pupils learn to listen to each other and really think about how someone else might feel about important issues. The gains in self-awareness during these sessions are very impressive.

11. Pupils’ moral development is very well promoted by the strong code of conduct that permeates everyone’s dealings with each other. Pupils live up to the consistently high expectations that are held by all members of staff. In the family environment, pupils learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to respect others. In a similar way, pupils learn to live in a social context. There are very good relationships and older pupils learn to take responsibility for others. Pupils really get on well with each other. For example, at one point during a whole school singing session, pupils and staff had to keep getting into pairs or groups of three. They all did this very positively, regardless of whether the nearest people were girls or boys, younger or older. It was noticeable how many of the older pupils went out of their way to make sure that no younger ones were left out.

12. The very strong links with the community contribute well to pupils’ cultural development. They learn to appreciate their own cultural traditions and to take part in the community. The emphasis on the creative arts is also very valuable. Pupils gain an understanding of art, music and dance. They have the opportunity to take part in performances with other pupils. Teachers go out of their way to introduce pupils to other cultures, for example, during art lessons.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory, although this is variable and very different in the two classes. The assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory, but again is variable and very different in the two classes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good in the Year 3 and 4 class. Work is interesting and motivating, pupils try hard and achieve well;
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in the reception, Year 1 and 2 class, particularly in literacy and numeracy, because of weaknesses in the planning and pace of lessons. Pupils do not achieve as well as they could;
- Weaknesses in assessment in the reception, Year 1 and 2 class mean that work is not always matched to pupils' attainment;
- Very good specialist teaching in music and dance makes a valuable contribution to pupils' creative development.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 15 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	4	3	2	4	0	0

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

Commentary

13. High expectations, careful planning and stimulating teaching in all subject areas leads to pupils achieving well in the Year 3 and 4 class. Teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy are very good. The work pupils do is carefully assessed, which allows the teacher to plan work that is challenging to pupils of all abilities. Target setting for individuals is beginning to be developed. There is a good emphasis on teaching strategies in numeracy and pupils gain a real confidence in solving problems. Because the teacher questions pupils well, asking them to describe how they worked problems out, pupils become adept at mental manipulation of numbers and confident in explaining their workings. Literacy lessons are stimulating and pupils develop an enjoyment of literature. Especially effective is the teaching of speaking and listening skills and pupils are able to discuss maturely which poems they prefer and why, using language such as 'alliteration' and 'onomatopoeia'.
14. In science, pupils are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively. They sometimes work in mixed-age and ability pairs where they co-operate very well and less able pupils and pupils who have special educational needs are able to take a full part in the lessons. There are also more challenging tasks planned for more able pupils, such as presenting their results as a graph using a computer program. Pupils collect their own equipment responsibly and look after it well. They enjoy the challenge of devising and carrying out their own investigations.
15. Teaching and learning in the reception, Year 1 and 2 class is unsatisfactory, particularly in literacy and numeracy. It is satisfactory in most other subjects and good in art. Although teachers make sensible use of nationally recognised schemes of work as a framework, they do not adapt these enough to meet the needs of the wide range of ages and abilities in the class. Teachers do not always mark pupils' work and do not assess pupils' achievements regularly enough to enable them to match work to individual needs. Consequently, work does not challenge the more able and older pupils and is often too hard for the younger and

less able pupils. In some subjects, such as science, there are too many worksheets, often undated and unmarked, with unchallenging tasks such as colouring in and cutting out.

16. There is too little support to help the very youngest pupils and those who have special educational needs, who are not achieving as well as they could. Often the pace of lessons is slow with too long spent listening to the teacher. Pupils behave well and try hard, but inevitably there is some lack of concentration and restlessness, especially amongst the younger pupils.
17. The teaching of art is good and pupils' skills are above average. They are able to choose from a wide range of good quality materials and are inspired to produce good quality work. There is very good specialist teaching of dance, drama and music from a teacher who works in a group of local schools. The teaching is knowledgeable and stimulating and pupils respond with enthusiasm, reaching above average standards. Pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class were able to create moods imaginatively, as they moved to three different pieces of music. With pertinent teaching points from the teacher, they practised and improved their performance. Relationships between the teacher and the pupils were excellent and pupils responded by behaving very well, trying hard and working confidently. Particularly good was the use of demonstrations from pupils to help others improve their work. Pupils demonstrated what they could do with pride. They co-operated well together when they worked in mixed-age and ability pairs or small groups.

The curriculum

The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of opportunities. It is enriched by good quality provision for the arts and a varied programme of visits and visitors. Accommodation and resources support the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Current staffing arrangements make curriculum planning difficult and cause imbalances in the curriculum in the reception year and in Years 1 and 2;
- The curriculum is used flexibly by teachers to make links between subjects and follow pupils' interests, but no one keeps a close enough eye on the provision that pupils receive through the school;
- There is good provision for the creative arts and pupils achieve well;
- A varied programme of visits, visitors and effective use of the local environment enhance the curriculum throughout the school.

Commentary

18. The curriculum is planned in a two-year cycle to cater for the mixed-age classes, using nationally produced schemes of work as a basis, to ensure progression as pupils move through school. However, the two classes plan their work separately and there is no one person with the responsibility for a subject throughout the school. Consequently, there is no one monitoring how the schemes of work are being implemented and ensuring full coverage of the National Curriculum. Currently, the reception children do not have access to a curriculum that fully meets their needs. They are taught in the youngest class, alongside Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, and a lack of planning and limited support often results in their not having the opportunities they need.
19. No one person has an overview of the curriculum in the Year 1 and 2 class, which is taught by two teachers and as a result, it is unbalanced. Too long each day is spent on literacy at the expense of other subjects. In addition to the literacy hour in the morning, pupils have half an hour reading and half an hour story most afternoons. Short-term planning in this class, particularly for literacy and numeracy, is not done in sufficient detail to provide work

that is challenging enough for the oldest and most able pupils and for the youngest and least able pupils. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

20. The school is committed to providing a good quality creative arts programme for all pupils. There is a specialist teacher for music, dance and drama and pupils enjoy very good quality experiences, resulting in good achievement. Pupils in Year 3 work with other Year 3 pupils from local schools on a dance and drama project, which ends in a performance. Provision for art is good, throughout the school and pupils reach above average standards. Speaking and listening skills are promoted well in the Year 3 and 4 class. Opportunities are planned for pupils to develop these skills throughout the curriculum, for example, at the end of science lessons they question each other about what they have been doing, talking confidently to the whole class.
21. A varied programme of visits and visitors, appreciated and enjoyed by pupils, brings outside expertise into school, helps pupils to be aware of a wider community and enables them to participate with other schools. A residential visit for Year 3 and 4 pupils is effective in enhancing the curriculum and includes orienteering and other adventurous activities. The local environment is used imaginatively, as when pupils designed and built a seat for the disabled in the nearby National Trust area.
22. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. Pupils are identified appropriately and have individual programmes written for them to follow, which are reviewed regularly. A teaching assistant works with them effectively and helps them to learn and complete their work accurately. However, there is too little teaching assistant time, especially for younger pupils. Additional one-to-one sessions from volunteer helpers help to improve reading and writing skills. In Years 3 and 4, pupils achieve well because their individual programmes are used by the teacher to plan adapted work for them, so that they can take a full part in the lessons. In Years 1 and 2, progress is not so good, because these individual programmes are not always used when planning and so work is not always at the right level of difficulty.

Care, support and guidance

The school has very good procedures to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils. Staff provide good levels of support, advice and guidance for pupils. The school makes good efforts to involve pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All adults create a secure and attractive environment for children;
- Staff have a wealth of knowledge about the children in their care;
- The school has effective systems to help new children settle in easily;
- There are regular opportunities for pupils to discuss school life with staff.

Commentary

23. Pupils are very relaxed and well protected in these attractive surroundings. Carefully organised safety procedures ensure that pupils and adults have regular opportunities to practise emergency evacuations and pupils are familiar with the drills. A secure buzzer system enables teaching staff to deal with visitors on days when there is no secretary in school. Any relevant dietary information is passed on to kitchen staff and adults pay close attention to any of the children's individual medical needs. All staff receive regular first aid training. Issues relating to child protection are conscientiously dealt with by the headteacher and any necessary support is obtained from appropriate outside agencies.
24. Some of the teaching staff have taught at the school for a long time and consequently, they know a great deal about many of the children who come here. Some parents were taught by their child's teacher and this continuity allows staff to understand very clearly some of the

problems children face in their daily lives. Adults can offer timely support and guidance and children flourish personally in their care. Parents, too, come in for a chat about problems with which the headteacher tries to help. Home visits are always an option if the headteacher feels they are preferable. She is quick to invite parents into school to talk about their child if she feels there is a pressing concern.

25. The majority of parents are very happy with the way their children are welcomed into school and made to feel at home. They can attend five sessions each week in the on site Cygnets pre-school group. In the term before they start school full-time, children can attend five weekly sessions in reception and meet up for whole days with future classmates. Cygnet children use the school hall, the cloakrooms and other facilities; they soak up the school atmosphere and by the time they start full-time, they are really at home.
26. The school is careful to listen regularly to pupils' views through school council meetings, class discussions and, more formally, via questionnaire responses. Overwhelmingly, children say that they like coming to this school and feel it is a very friendly place. Firm favourites are school dinners and the dinner nanny. She strikes up very warm relationships with the children, offering them responsibility and respect which they repay in kind. Currently, the school is working on a long-term project to redevelop the outdoor area and pupils have had a strong input into its design.

Links with parents, other schools and the community

The school establishes good links with parents. There are very good links with other schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is strong staff commitment to effective home school liaison;
- Community involvement in school life is impressive;
- Firmly established cluster school links greatly enhance children's learning;
- Parents are generous fundraisers for the school;
- Some parents do not offer enough support for the school's work;
- Governors should ensure there are no minor omissions from their annual report to parents.

Commentary

27. The headteacher and staff are keen to maintain productive links between school and home and are the first to recognise the importance of parental involvement in children's learning. Indeed, the headteacher was very concerned that a few parents, in their responses to the inspection questionnaire, felt that they could not approach the school readily enough. The recent, temporary relocation of the whole school, due to environmental problems has caused a few minor hiccups in the usual flow of information to parents. This may account for some parents feeling that they do not get enough information about what is going on.
28. Parents are encouraged to help in school and some are very active. Parent governors, for example, take their role very seriously and are keen to help in any way they can. Parents are also effective fundraisers and this helps to improve the school's resources, purchasing outdoor toys, books and a shed along with a host of other items. When asked, most parents show loyalty and support for the school and its work. They particularly value the good standards of behaviour in school, the high expectations of staff and the way children increase in maturity during their time at school. Some parents express concerns about the workload of the headteacher and the perceived differences in provision between the two classes. A few parents are currently concerned about the provision for children in the reception year. At the same time, some parents are not as responsive as might be expected. For example, less than half of all parents have signed and returned the home school agreement, a surprisingly low return.

29. There are regular opportunities throughout the year, for parents to meet with staff to discuss their children's work and progress. Similarly, parents receive an annual progress report on their children's progress at the end of the summer term. These provide some clear evaluations about what pupils can do, although the overall content of the report is not especially individualised. Notice boards provide useful information for parents and the school's website contains charming insights into, among other things, the likes and dislikes of the staff. The school prospectus is informative as is the governors' annual report to parents, although the latter does lack the required information about pupils' absence rates.
30. This is a school that brings the community to its heart; the community, for its part, holds the school in high regard. Close links with the local church enable pupils, parents and parishioners to celebrate Eucharist together. Unusually, the school takes an abridged version of school productions 'on the road' into the surrounding area. Community helpers regularly offer support in school with accelerated reading and writing programmes and community governors are extremely committed to the school. Very good use is made of community resources to add interest to pupils' lessons. Artists, actors and sports coaches all share their talents with the children and help them to learn new skills. Creative links with a nearby hall allow pupils to plant daffodils and chart their growth and to make their mark for posterity as when they helped to plant the Millennium Maze. Through parent links, coastguards come in with their vehicles to talk to pupils about local hazards; one of the coastguards is an old boy of the school.
31. Significant advantages flow from the Sheaf cluster group of six local first schools to which Embleton belongs. The schools provide support and professional development opportunities for their members and collaboration enables the schools to fund jointly and share the creative talents of a music and dance teacher. The highly impressive creative spin offs in terms of quality dance and music lessons enjoyed by pupils are clear for all to see. Pupils are also able to participate in cluster group football and cricket competitions - the school was victorious in the Kwik Cricket tournament last year. Pupils have golden opportunities to sing with 190 of their peers in concerts and dramatic productions. This helps to ease their transition to middle school, as they have already met many of their new classmates.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is unsatisfactory; the leadership of key staff is satisfactory. The overall management of the school is unsatisfactory. Governance is satisfactory.

For almost the whole of the autumn term the school was relocated to two mobile classrooms sited behind the village hall, a distance away from the school building. Staff worked hard to limit the impact on pupils but the whole situation was quite traumatic for all involved. It is inevitable that such an event would have a negative effect on such things as school development plans.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a strong commitment to the school and strongly promotes the positive ethos. However, her leadership role overall is not effective enough;
- The full-time teacher supports the headteacher well and makes a valuable contribution to curriculum development;
- No one has an overview of how well subjects are taught through the school and what standards are being achieved;
- Since the last inspection, the work of the governing body has improved considerably.

Commentary

32. The headteacher has been at the school for a long while and has a very strong commitment to it, its pupils and their families. She has effectively promoted the ethos of the school, with

its emphasis on treating people as individuals, which has such a positive impact on pupils' personal development. This is recognised and valued by all parents. However, she does not currently provide sufficient leadership in other aspects of the school's work. The full-time teacher supports the headteacher very well and makes a considerable and valuable contribution to curriculum development and innovation. She provides a very good role model in the quality of her teaching and her professional approach. All staff work together with a determination that all pupils matter and are cared for and supported.

33. School development planning is detailed and provides a good idea of what the school wants to do. However, it is ambitious for a small school and priorities are not clear. The really important things get lost in and amongst the range of ongoing maintenance detail. Some effective self-evaluation has taken place. For example, it was recognised that writing was weak and action was taken to address this. However, the impact of this has not been evaluated and in fact it has had much more impact in Years 3 and 4 than it has in Years 1 and 2. Systems for analysing performance data and for tracking pupils' progress are being developed, but as yet, there is no whole school picture of how well pupils are doing through the school.
34. Indeed the main weakness in the management of the school is the lack of a whole school approach to evaluation. Subject responsibilities are all shared and no one in the school has a clear idea of the quality of teaching and learning, standards in subjects or quality of curriculum delivery through the school. So inconsistencies have developed and now teaching and learning and achievement are much better in one class than they are in the other. One of the key issues from the last inspection was the lack of monitoring of teaching. The headteacher now has more management time and there has been the opportunity for her to monitor teaching. There has also been some peer support taking place. However, this action has not had an impact on addressing weaknesses in the youngest class. Parents are aware of some of this and their comments show that they do not have the confidence in the overall management of the school that they used to have.
35. At the time of the last inspection, governors were considered not to know enough about the school and its work. Since then they have worked very hard to develop their role. In particular, the new chair of governors has been determined that they should get themselves organised and take on a much more strategic role in the school. They are now very well organised, with committees and clear roles and responsibilities. Governors are loyal to the school and its community. They are a committed group of people, bringing a range of expertise, interests and enthusiasm to the role and are very keen to support the school. They have now a much better knowledge and understanding of the work of the school and are learning all the time. Supported by the local authority, they now fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Although they had not realised the full extent of the weaknesses in the school, they are in a very strong position now to do something about them and ensure that improvements are made.
36. Although currently, children in reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not achieve as well as they might do, pupils in Years 3 and 4 make rapid progress. All pupils achieve high standards in their personal development. Therefore, despite the serious weaknesses in teaching and learning and in the management of the school, overall the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	152,452
Total expenditure	157,632
Expenditure per pupil	3,152

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	14,842
Balance carried forward to the next	9,662

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

There are currently only three children in the reception year and they are taught in the mixed-age Year 1 and 2 class. There was, as a result, insufficient evidence to make a judgement on each area of learning.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **unsatisfactory**. Children usually make good progress and most reach the goals expected of children by the end of reception. However, currently achievement is unsatisfactory and children are not at the levels that might be expected.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children settle well into the school and soon cope with the learning environment;
- Planning does not identify how the needs of the children will be met in lessons;
- There is very limited support for the children and little direct teaching of skills;
- Children spend too much time listening to the teacher and there is not enough time for them to develop language skills, choose their own activities and to work independently.

Commentary

37. Children enter the reception year with a range of skills, usually better in mathematical development than in language. Data from assessments made at the end of the reception year shows that last year children made good progress through the year and most reached the goals they are expected to reach. Currently, however, children are not doing as well as they could. This is, as a result of the unsatisfactory provision made for them.
38. Until this year, reception age children have been taught separately, even if only for part of the day. This has been successful and parents have been very pleased with the arrangements. At the last inspection, this was found to be working well. This year, because of a drop in numbers, the children in the reception year are taught alongside Year 1 and 2 pupils in a mixed-age class. Although the teachers try to include these children in the whole class lessons and provide specific activities for them, the provision is not well planned and there is very limited extra adult support. Currently, these children do not have a curriculum that fully meets their needs.
39. At the time of the last inspection, planning for the youngest children when they spent time in the mixed-age class was weak and it has not improved. Current planning does not identify clearly how the needs of these children are to be met in each lesson, and they are not given the support they need. As a result, they waste a lot of time. Particularly in the morning sessions, they are often not quite sure what they are supposed to be doing or are working on tasks that are inappropriate for them. When adult support is available, this is not planned properly, so that the best use is made of it. Teachers are not clear enough about what they want children to learn, so adults are often confused about what the children are doing. Teaching is better in the afternoon, when the teacher is more skilled at meeting the needs of the youngest children.

Personal, social and emotional development

40. Children settle well in the school. They are well cared for and soon become part of the 'big family'. They cope confidently with school and class routines, for example, playtimes and lunchtimes and form good relationships with each other and the older pupils. They can listen attentively in lessons, although they often get restless when they have to sit and listen for

too long. They are quite capable of selecting their own activities and organising themselves, but they get too little opportunity to do this.

Communication, language and literacy

41. Some children enter the school with weak language skills and usually they make good progress in developing these. Currently, provision is not good and they are not making the progress that might be expected. They listen well, although often they have to listen for too long a period and they lose concentration. They can take part in class discussions, especially when teachers make a particular effort to involve them. However, they are too often swamped by the older pupils and, with the lack of regular support, do not have enough opportunity in their own small group to talk and develop their language skills. Children enjoy stories and respond well to them when given the chance. They gain good reading skills, particularly when they are helped by their parents at home. They are learning sounds with the rest of the class and are beginning to match letters with sounds. They do not gain writing skills as effectively. They spend far too much time writing over the teacher's or other adult's writing and do not have enough direct teaching of letter formation or enough opportunity to develop their own emergent writing.

Mathematical development

42. Despite usually doing well in developing mathematical skills and understanding, currently children are not achieving as well as they might. The work they are given to do is not accurately matched to their needs. In one lesson they were given a similar task to the rest of the class, but they had an adult to help them with it. However, the task was too difficult for the ones who are not confident with numbers. Their needs had not been assessed and a more appropriate and practical task involving working with numbers provided for them. Too much of their work involves completing worksheets and they do not get enough opportunity to talk about and work with basic mathematical ideas.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

43. The teacher in the afternoon has carefully planned the curriculum for the reception children to fit in with the rest of the Year 1 and 2 work. This is appropriate and the children have the opportunity to learn about the world about them alongside the others. However, mainly because of the lack of support, the work they are given to do is often not practical enough and usually involves a lot of colouring in of worksheets. Children do get opportunities to work on computers and they show considerable skill and confidence in this. For example, they independently experimented with a paint program. When given the chance they select their own construction toys and work with a high level of concentration on quite complex models.

Physical development

44. Reception children join in quite happily with whole class physical education lessons and show that they have good control and balance as they run, hop and jump. However, by itself this is not adequate provision for their physical development. There is now a secure and imaginatively planned outdoor play area attached to the classroom, a big improvement from the last inspection. However, because of supervision difficulties, it cannot be used on a regular basis to provide children with the opportunity they need to take part in physical activity.

Creative development

45. There are good opportunities for children to take part in creative activities and this is one area where children achieve well. In an art lesson, the teacher chose the right moment, after a whole class session looking at illustrated books, to provide the youngest children with the

chance to experiment with cutting and sticking. Overall, this was a good session in which children had the opportunity to explore materials and tools and try things out. Reception children join in with the music and dance lessons provided by the specialist teacher for the whole class. She is skilled at making sure that they are involved at all stages with the lessons and often gives them their own specific task alongside the others. Children really enjoy these sessions and achieve well in them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards reached by the end of Year 2 are below average and pupils do not achieve as well as they could;
- Pupils reach at least average standards by the end of Year 4 and achieve well;
- Teaching and learning is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2, very good in Years 3 and 4;
- Pupils behave very well, enjoy their work and try hard;
- No one has an over view of the provision or the standards in the subject.

Commentary

46. The teaching of literacy in the Year 1 and 2 class is unsatisfactory and despite the high percentage of time spent on literacy, pupils do not learn as well as they could. Although many pupils reach near average standards in reading, too few reach higher levels. In writing too few pupils reach the average and above average levels. Writing is often on loose, unlined pieces of paper and is messy and untidy, with poorly formed letters and spellings.
47. Teachers in this class do not regularly mark work or assess pupils to find out what they have learnt. Consequently, they are not able to plan work that meets the needs of the wide range of ages and abilities in the class. This means that more able, older pupils are not challenged sufficiently, while younger and less able pupils often do not understand what they are doing. The pace of the lessons is slow and pupils become restless as they spend too long sitting 'on the carpet' and too little time doing things themselves. Opportunities are missed to allow pupils chance to talk to each other and they spend too long listening to the teacher. The extra reading session in the afternoons is not structured well enough to be worthwhile for all pupils. While the teacher hears individuals read, the rest tend to complete unchallenging activities. Pupils are not given enough chances to practise and consolidate literacy skills in other subjects. Pupils only achieve as well as they do, because they behave well and try hard in their lessons.
48. Pupils who have special educational needs in the Year 1 and 2 class make satisfactory progress against their targets, because they receive individual help from volunteers in reading and writing. However, in lessons they do not always receive as much help as they need and often find it difficult to complete and record their work accurately.
49. The teaching and learning in the Year 3 and 4 class is very good and pupils achieve well. Lessons are stimulating and enjoyable and the excellent relationships between teacher and pupils helps to give pupils confidence to express their opinions. Because marking and assessment are thorough, the teacher knows what pupils can do and is able to plan work that challenges pupils of all ages and abilities. Pupils really enjoy reading, fiction, non-fiction and poetry and many reach above average standards. They complete a wide range of imaginative and extended writing and are starting to use powerful and descriptive language in their work. They have addressed handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation

systematically in the literacy lessons. However, their use is still inconsistent, even with more able pupils, especially when writing in other lessons.

50. Speaking and listening skills are very well developed, both in literacy lessons and throughout the curriculum. In one lesson, pupils discussed maturely the figurative language and the quality of poetry. Pupils enjoy literacy lessons, they behave very well and work hard, helping them to achieve well.
51. Pupils who have special educational needs in the Year 3 and 4 class make good progress. They receive good quality help from a teaching assistant and the teacher uses the individual programmes to plan work at the correct level of difficulty for them.
52. Leadership and management of literacy are unsatisfactory as no one has an over view of the provision or the standards reached. This means that inconsistencies in teaching and learning go unchecked. The school has identified improving the quality of writing as an area for development and strategies to improve it are being put in place. However, these are too recent to have yet had an impact on the standards achieved. In the Year 1 and 2 class since the last inspection, despite the introduction of the literacy strategy, pupils do not achieve as well as they did. However, achievement has improved in the Year 3 and 4 class.

Language and literacy across the curriculum.

53. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are used to very good effect in other subjects, such as history and geography. Pupils record their work well, for example, in science. However, presentation skills are weak in all subjects, particularly in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 and 4 pupils effectively use their reading skills for research.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good in Years 3 and 4 and pupils achieve well;
- Weaknesses in planning and assessment in Years 1 and 2, result in pupils not achieving as well as they could do;
- Older pupils enjoy problem solving in mathematics and they work hard;
- There is no overview of how the subject is taught through the school or what standards are being achieved.

Commentary

54. Pupils in Year 4 achieve well and standards are above average. They have a good understanding of quite large numbers and can carry out calculations confidently and accurately. They have learnt a range of strategies to help them solve a problem and can explain how they did so. They use simple fractions and can round numbers up and down. Standards in Year 2 are usually above average, with most, if not all, pupils achieving the expected level. However, last year standards were lower and currently pupils are not achieving as well as they could do. Pupils gain satisfactory number skills. For example, they add and subtract numbers to at least twenty and work out ten less and ten more than given numbers. However, they do not have the opportunity to develop these skills further, for example, by solving problems. Higher attaining pupils in particular do not achieve well, as they do too much consolidation of skills they are already confident with. This was reflected in the results last year, when no pupils reached the higher levels in the end of key stage tests.

55. Teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4 are very good. The teacher plans carefully to meet the needs of all pupils. She encourages pupils to think and gives them time to explain how they are working. There is a wide range of attainment levels within the class, but the teacher manages to keep all pupils involved in lessons. The work they are given to do is pitched at the right level to provide them with a challenge, but ensure that they will have some success. Lessons have a good pace and pupils work hard throughout. They gain skills and understanding and make good progress. Pupils in this class enjoy mathematics. Relationships are positive and pupils feel secure enough to have a go with answering questions without fear of failure. They respond well to challenges and work hard at solving problems.
56. Currently, the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are unsatisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, lessons were slow in pace with long introductions and planning was not precise enough. These are still key weaknesses in this class. It is not clear in the planning what the teacher wants each group in the class to learn and tasks are not always linked to pupils' attainment levels. Work is often either too easy or too hard for pupils and this leads to them wasting time or becoming frustrated. Introductions are still too long and pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher. Higher attaining pupils are usually given the same tasks as everyone else and then some extension work when they quickly finish, instead of them having work at the start that would take them onto the next step in their learning. Pupils are not gaining the skills they need and although they work hard, they are often bored and restless.
57. Assessment systems are in place and they are used well in the Year 3 and 4 class to help the teacher plan to match work to attainment levels. Assessment is used very little in the Year 1 and 2 class. In this class there is no recording of pupils' ongoing achievements, their work is often not marked and pupils have little idea of how well they are doing and what they need to do in order to improve.
58. The national strategy for numeracy has been adopted and this has supported teachers in their structure of lessons. However, overall planning is weak and no one has an overview of what is happening in the subject through the school. So there is an inconsistency between the classes and a negative impact on pupils' achievement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. There was little evidence of pupils using mathematics in other subjects, except in science in Years 3 and 4 when pupils are able to measure and record their findings during investigations.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 2 are below average and pupils do not achieve as well as they could;
- Standards by the end of Year 4 are average and pupils achieve well;
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2, good in Years 3 and 4;
- In Years 3 and 4, there are good opportunities to investigate and experiment practically, which help pupils to develop scientific enquiry;
- Good use is made of the environment to enrich the curriculum and make lessons stimulating and memorable.

Commentary

60. Pupils in the Year 1 and 2 class have only an hour of science a week and this is not long enough to fulfil the curriculum requirements. Although pupils do complete some investigations, too much work is completed on worksheets which are often undated and unmarked. Too much of the work is unchallenging, especially for more able pupils, for example, colouring in and cutting out. Because work is not assessed regularly, planning does not take enough account of the different ages and abilities of the pupils. Consequently, pupils who have special educational needs and more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
61. Teaching and learning are good in the Year 3 and 4 class with many opportunities to experiment and investigate. For example, pupils carry out an enquiry into the absorbency of various materials. They are able to devise the question they want to answer, plan what they are going to do ensuring it is a 'fair test', complete the investigation and record their results. The teacher questions pupils well, asking them to explain why they think things are happening as they are. Pupils are in mixed age and ability pairs and they co-operate very well together, enabling pupils who have special educational needs to take a full part in the lesson. More able pupils are challenged by using a computer program to present their results as a graph. Pupils are encouraged to be independent and are able to collect their own equipment responsibly and look after it well. They really enjoy the lesson, they behave very well and work hard. At the end of the lesson groups report back to the class on what they did and are questioned confidently by the class, some suggesting improvements.
62. Good use is made of the nearby countryside and the coast. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 search for insects and other 'minibeasts', while older pupils investigate the rock pools on the coast and go 'dipping' in the river.
63. Weak management of the subject means that the inconsistencies in teaching and learning, standards and achievement go unchecked. Although standards in science have not improved overall since the last inspection, there is now more experimental and investigative work in Years 3 and 4 and more able pupils in this class are completing more challenging work and achieving well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

There was not enough evidence during the inspection to be able to make an overall judgement on quality of provision or standards achieved. Each class has a set of computers that are easily accessible and make good working areas. These are used well in the Year 3 and 4 class and less well in the Year 1 and 2 class. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were seen using computers to draft their written work and to put results from a scientific investigation into a graph. They work confidently with several aspects of the information and communication technology (ICT) curriculum. For example, they use digital cameras and they work with design programs to create patterns.

HUMANITIES

No lessons were seen in **geography** and only one lesson was seen in **history**, so no overall judgements can be made about these subjects.

Pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class are studying ancient Greece. They are enjoying a variety of experiences that make the subject alive for them. For example they use Greek pottery to deduce what life was like, they draw their own pots and they dress up in costume to experience a Greek day. There is good support for literacy as pupils devise five questions to answer about school life in ancient Greece, use books and the Internet to answer them and then compare differences and similarities between then and now. There are also planned opportunities for pupils to swap partners, discuss their findings and report back to a group, developing speaking and listening skills well.

Pupils have very good relationships with each other, co-operate very well together and are happy to support younger or less able pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Provision for the creative arts is a strength of the school and makes a major contribution to pupils' personal development. Art and design is reported in detail below. There was not enough evidence to be able to report in detail or make an overall judgement on standards or provision in music, design and technology or physical education.

A specialist teacher comes into school to teach **music** and this is very good provision. In the one lesson seen, Year 1 and 2 pupils joined in enthusiastically with songs with movements. They worked with different time patterns as they 'conducted' and they had the opportunity to beat out rhythms on drums. They showed a satisfactory understanding of elements such as rhythm and they responded to moods in music.

Although it is not possible to report on **physical education** as a whole, evidence from two lessons shows that provision for dance is very good. The school makes very good use of a specialist teacher who works in schools in the cluster. The quality of her teaching is excellent. She inspires pupils with her lively approach, her enthusiasm and good humour. She makes the very best possible use of a short space of time to enable pupils to achieve very well. All pupils take a full part in the lessons; they concentrate the whole time and work very hard. Their achievement is impressive. For example, in one lesson Year 1 and 2 pupils were using different body parts to create shapes. They worked with a good level of control and co-ordination and, not only carried out individual movements accurately, but also managed to successfully link movements together. They worked effectively to a rhythm and co-operatively in small groups. Pupils are working at levels above what might be expected, using movement imaginatively and expressively. In another lesson, the responses from Year 3 and 4 pupils were excellent. They worked hard and enthusiastically throughout the lesson and achieved very well. They moved imaginatively, creating a mood through their movements. For example, their slow and serious curls and stretches made for a serious and sombre movement to represent loneliness. The teacher used demonstrations very well to help pupils improve their work and sensitively supported the less confident. All pupils were successful and very proud of what they had achieved. Achievement is very good and standards are above average. Through the cluster initiative, pupils get the opportunity to take part in performances of music, dance and drama, working with pupils from other schools. This makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' creative, personal and social development, their confidence and self-esteem.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils achieve well;
- Pupils are introduced to a wide range of media and materials;
- Displays are used effectively to promote an interest in art and design;
- The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural development.

Commentary

64. Pupils in both classes achieve well in art and design. They reach standards that are above average; the quality of their work is good. This is an improvement from the time of the last inspection. Year 4 pupils explore ideas and collect visual information for their work. For example, they have been studying a wide range of patterns and are now using these ideas as a source for their own patterns for printing blocks. They have looked at how different artists portray relationships and then have made a very good attempt at doing this

themselves. Year 2 pupils also explore ideas. For example, they have been looking at patterns in nature and then using them in their own designs. They have used a variety of media, such as crayons and pastels and have tried different ways of printing. All pupils use sketchbooks well, being given the opportunity to experiment with designs and try things out.

65. The teaching in both classes is good. The teachers have a good knowledge and understanding and interest in the subject and this inspires pupils. They plan carefully and use a wide range of good quality resources to interest pupils. They teach skills and then give pupils the opportunity to use the skills in their own work. For example, in one lesson the Year 1 and 2 teacher used book illustrations to give pupils design ideas and she showed pupils how to use glue efficiently. Pupils then had the time to experiment with paper collage and they worked skilfully and effectively and some quite complex pictures emerged. Pupils enjoy art lessons and they work hard with a good level of concentration. They are pleased with what they achieve and are able to evaluate their own work and that of others.
66. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural development, as they are introduced to artists and their work and get to use a wide range of resources. For example, the Year 3 and 4 teacher had gathered together a collection of articles from various cultures to show how pattern is used in different ways. The effective way in which such resources are displayed in classrooms and around the school promotes pupils' interest and the thoughtful way in which teachers display pupils' own work indicates how it is valued.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHCE) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- PSHCE enjoys a high profile in school;
- Staff expertise in delivering the 'Philosophy for Children' programme has a huge impact on pupils' self-esteem;
- The 'Healthy Schools' award highlights the importance of healthy living to pupils.

Commentary

67. Although the school provides all the usual ingredients within its PSHCE programme, such as drugs, sex and relationships education and the basics of healthy living, it strives to offer pupils much more than this. Staff are strongly committed to the 'Philosophy for Children' programme and have attended courses so that pupils of all ages can experience the many benefits this approach brings. Pupils, particularly in the older class, are able to debate across a whole range of issues relating to mental and physical health and well being, in a strongly supportive peer forum that helps to raise their self-esteem.
68. In one excellent lesson, Year 3 and 4 pupils considered the merits or otherwise of lying:

The class teacher reminds pupils of the question and of the rules of the enquiry. She re-emphasises these precisely, so that everyone is clear about the approach to take. Pupils sit in a circle and debate their chosen question for the day, 'What is lying?' They are exceptionally polite and very at ease, using the strict protocols and vocabulary required in philosophical debate. They often chip in with 'Can you explain that a little bit more please?' and start remarks with 'I agree/disagree with ...' The teacher acts not as instigator but as facilitator, keeping the exchanges going but taking a back seat in the debate. She exhibits huge patience, just sitting and listening, as pupils sometimes struggle to explain precisely what they mean. It is well understood by everyone that this is the pupils' debate; pupils are confident enough to point out robustly that they do not need any help but can unravel complex arguments for themselves. Relationships are exceptionally supportive and everyone listens with respect to others' points of view. The quality of philosophical debate is impressive for 8 and 9-year-olds. One exchange was 'Lying is not telling the truth' which drew the response 'There is such a thing as not telling the truth but it's not lying'. Another train of thought was 'People who lie are being selfish' which drew the response 'Selfishness and lying are different. One is what you want; the other is not telling the truth.'

69. Children are encouraged to take a strong interest in their general health and well being. A number of changes have taken place in school linked to its recent Healthy Schools' award. Milk is available to pupils each day, there are water fountains and pupils drink from water bottles during the day. Pupils can buy fruit to eat at break time; no biscuits, crisps or sweets are allowed in school. Local service providers come in to talk to pupils about healthy and safe lifestyles during the year.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	5
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	5

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