

INSPECTION REPORT

BUSHEY MANOR JUNIOR SCHOOL

Bushey, Watford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117242

Headteacher: Sue Hellman

Lead inspector: Stephen Lake

Dates of inspection: 25 – 27 November 2003

Inspection number: 262503

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	170
School address:	Grange Road Bushey
Postcode:	WD23 2QL
Telephone number:	01932 226362
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Appropriate authority:	The Governors
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Bowtell
Date of previous inspection:	1 February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a smaller than average junior school with 170 pupils on roll, fewer than at the time of the last inspection. Seventeen pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which as a proportion is above average. The percentage of pupils believed to have English as an additional language is above average. One pupil is at an early stage of English language acquisition. Twenty seven pupils are on the school's register of special educational need, which as a proportion is below average. An eight-place unit for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) is attached to the school. At the time of the inspection only two pupils are in this unit. Including those in the EBD unit four pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. As a percentage this is above the national average.

Over the last two school years the turnover of staff has been very high. This is due to a large number of supply staff who have not always stayed very long. The headteacher has been rigorous in ensuring that teachers are of a sufficiently high quality and this has contributed to the high turnover. In other cases the change of teachers has been for personal reasons. The high cost of housing in the area makes it difficult to recruit staff. The local education authority has supported the school during the last few months and helped recruit teachers. At the time of the inspection, although the school had a full complement of teachers, four of these were absent due to illness during the inspection and their classes were taught by temporary teachers. Most pupils join the school from the feeder infant school. Attainment on entry to the school is above average and is rising over time.

In 2003 the school received an award for achievement.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22191	Stephen Lake	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology
12289	Sue Burgess	Lay inspector	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school has had a very troubled past 12 months with many changes of staff, and during this time it has not been effective. This has now changed and as a result of the **good** teaching the school now provides a **satisfactory** standard of education. Standards are rising and pupils are achieving **satisfactorily** in most year groups. However, although the governance of the school is satisfactory, the overall leadership and management are unsatisfactory. As a result of the recent improvements, the school gives **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The care and support of pupils are very good.
- The behaviour and attitudes of the pupils are good as a result of the good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quality of teaching is good and learning-support assistants make a good contribution.
- Although attainment is at least satisfactory at the age of 11 and getting better rapidly, achievement is still unsatisfactory in English and mathematics at this age.
- Certain elements of the leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory.
- Links with other schools are a significant strength and are supporting the school very well in difficult circumstances.
- The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory.

Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Standards of attainment are slightly better but have not improved as rapidly as standards nationally. The decline of the last few years in English has been halted. Most of the issues from the last inspection have been dealt with satisfactorily, although ICT has not improved enough. However, the quality of leadership and management has declined significantly and limits the capacity for improvement.

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	B	C	E
Mathematics	C	C	C	E
Science	D	D	B	D

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

The table above shows that, although standards attained by the end of Year 6 in 2003 were average or better, when they are compared with those in schools where pupils attained similar standards at the end of Year 2, achievement is poor. Standards in English have fallen steadily for three years. However, in the 2003 cohort many pupils joined the school after the age of seven. When the standards of those pupils who have been at the school for the whole four years are looked at then achievement is satisfactory overall but unsatisfactory in English and mathematics. Achievement has improved significantly this year as a result of the good teaching from the more stable staff.

Standards in English and mathematics are **average**. Standards in science are **above average** and pupils are achieving **satisfactorily**. Standards in religious education are **good** and standards in ICT are **average**. Pupils in Year 6 are making **good** progress and, although their achievement is still not good enough compared to their attainment at age seven, it is improving rapidly, and when compared

to their attainment over the last few years pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well in relation to the targets set for them. The trend in the school's results is in line with the national trend, but targets for attainment in English and mathematics were not met in 2003.

The provision for pupils' personal development including **their spiritual, moral and social** development is **good**. As a result pupils have **good** attitudes to school and behave **well**. Attendance is **satisfactory**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. The curriculum is **satisfactory** with some good features; in particular the curriculum is enhanced by a **good** range of extra-curricular activities. The quality of teaching is **good** and a key factor in the improvement this term, although only a small amount of very good teaching was observed. The care and welfare of pupils are **good**, with many **very good** features that support learning well. Links with parents are **satisfactory** and links with other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall the leadership and management are **unsatisfactory** at present. School records show that management was effective in the last 18 months, especially in dealing with the high amount of unsatisfactory teaching that held down achievement in the last school year. However, the many changes of staff have been a barrier to improvement. The headteacher currently has an unrealistic workload which reduces her effectiveness. This is partly as a result of unsatisfactory leadership at various levels in the school, insufficient delegation to, or empowerment of, subject leaders, and a leadership team that is not operating effectively. The key element is that leadership and management are too concerned with systems rather than people at present. The leadership of the special educational needs unit is **very good**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. A significant aid to the improvement taking place at present is the **very good** support from the local education authority and from a group of local heads.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Taking all factors into consideration parents are **satisfied** with the school, although very concerned about approaching it and about the standards in reading and writing. However, a number of parents took pupils away from the school last year. Pupils like the school; during the inspection many said that lessons are fun and they enjoy learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and ICT so that pupils are achieving satisfactorily.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management across the school.
- Seek further ways of stabilising the supply of teachers.
- Improve the provision for ICT including its use in all subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The standards attained by pupils are broadly average but improving. In relation to their prior attainment pupils' achievement is improving. Although achievement is still not good enough overall in English and mathematics at the age of 11, many pupils are achieving satisfactorily and the situation is improving rapidly as a result of the good teaching now in place.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are not achieving well enough in English and mathematics by the age of 11 although achievement is satisfactory compared to attainment at the end of Year 3.
- Standards in science and religious education are good.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- More-able pupils do not all achieve well enough.
- The high turnover of teachers has been a barrier to achievement, but the more stable teaching staff has improved this.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.9 (28.4)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	27.3 (26.9)	26.7(26.8)
Science	29.6 (28)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. The table above shows the standards attained by pupils in the 2003 national assessments. When these are compared with the results from schools where pupils had similar scores at the age of seven, achievement in English and mathematics is very unsatisfactory. Achievement in science is satisfactory. However, this only tells part of the story in this school. The detailed analysis shows that the pupils who were at the school continuously from the age of seven to the age of 11 did better. For this group of pupils achievement is broadly satisfactory. The large number of pupils who joined the school over that four-year period had generally achieved lower standards at the age of seven and this is not fully recognised in the published results. Standards have fallen since the last inspection due to the high turnover of teachers and the unsatisfactory teaching at times during that period. However, over time the trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend. Ambitious targets were set for attainment in English and mathematics in 2003 and the school failed to reach these targets.
2. The situation is changing rapidly. Inspection evidence shows that the good teaching that pupils now have access to is improving the progress that pupils are making, and standards in Year 6 are rising rapidly. Although not yet at the above average level that would be expected from pupils who had similar scores at the age of seven, attainment overall is at least satisfactory, with many pupils' work above average.
3. Inspection evidence supports the school's own assessment data that shows that pupils in Year 5 are achieving satisfactorily. At the time of the inspection some more-able pupils in Year 3 are not achieving as well as they could in mathematics, as the curriculum is not

managed effectively enough to ensure that they receive work that builds upon their prior attainment at the age of seven.

4. The table below shows the overall inspection judgements.

Subject	Judgements at the last inspection	National assessments for 2003	Attainment for the current Year 6 cohort	Comments
English	Above average, with pupils making good progress. Evidence to support this judgement came from the 1998 national assessments. However results of the 1999 national assessments of this group of pupils scores were a little lower than those of 1998 and indications are that attainment was closer to average at the end of the academic year.	Average.	Average but improving.	In comparison with their attainment at the end of Year 3 pupils are achieving satisfactorily, but compared to their attainment at the age of seven pupils are not achieving well enough. An examination of pupils' books shows that this situation is getting better and achievement is improving as a result of the good teaching.
Mathematics	Above average, with pupils making good progress. 1999 scores were a little lower than those of 1998 and indications are that attainment was closer to average at the end of the academic year.	Average.	Average but improving with many working above average.	Pupils are not achieving well enough compared to their attainment at the age of seven, but they are achieving well in many lessons as a result of the improved teaching.
Science	Average	Above average.	Above average.	Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts, but their understanding of the investigation process is only average. Attainment in science has improved since the last inspection.
ICT	Below average with unsatisfactory progress.	N/A	Average, with pupils making satisfactory progress.	Improvement since the last inspection has been good, but the limited resources mean that some pupils in the lower half of the school are not making enough progress at present.
Religious education	High in relation to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.	N/A	Above the standards required in the locally agreed syllabus.	Standards have fallen slightly in line with other aspects of the school's work, but achievement remains satisfactory.

5. It is not possible to make reliable judgements on other subjects in this inspection, but the samples examined indicate that all work is at least satisfactory.

6. The **good** support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve well as they pass through the school. This includes those in the unit for pupils with EBD. Many of these pupils join the school at different times and their attainment can affect the national assessments adversely. Almost all of them are boys and this affects the relative attainment of boys and girls. As a result girls overall attain higher than boys. In view of the fact that this is a specific problem created by the effect of pupils in the unit for pupils with EBD, this is not a particular weakness. The school monitors this and teachers are aware of the need to ensure that boys' performance improves.
7. More-able pupils do not always make as much progress as they should due to the variations in planning to meet their needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school are **good** and behaviour is **good**. Attendance is **satisfactory**. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave well as a result of the good behaviour-management policy that has been put into place.
- Relationships are good.
- The rate of exclusions last year was high but is now much better.

Commentary

8. Attendance is satisfactory and is in line with that of other schools. Suitable systems are in place to promote good attendance. Pupils generally arrive punctually in school and in lessons. As a result they are ready to learn.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	0.2
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.

9. Pupils have many good opportunities to explore beliefs and values and to understand emotions. The programme for their personal, social and health education is followed well. Teachers value pupils' questions and promote in lessons a culture of respect. Pupils are encouraged to make links through their learning and this helps attainment as they understand the purpose of what they are doing. Religious education is used effectively to encourage pupils to explore beliefs and values. This makes a **good** contribution to their spiritual development.
10. In the recent past behaviour was a significant problem in the school. In order to deal with this at a time when many changes of teacher were occurring, the behaviour management policy was revised as part of the **good** provision for pupils' moral development. This has proved to be very effective. Parents and pupils comment on the improvement in behaviour. The clear rules for behaviour are enforced consistently by all adults in the school. This provision of a clear moral code encourages pupils to think through the consequences of their actions and to respect others' needs and interests. This supports their moral development and has enabled them to learn more effectively as a result of the calmer classrooms. However, one consequence of the new system was an increase in exclusions as the new rules were

applied. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils say that there is someone that they trust who they can turn to when they need help.

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	153	9	3
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	33	0	0

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

11. The school makes **good** provision for the social development of pupils. The effect of this can be seen in the orderly community in which pupils work well together. The residential visits help to promote a feeling of community and opportunities to take responsibility prepare pupils well for life outside the school. The school council enables pupils to experience part of the democratic process, although they do not feel that enough notice is taken of their views. However, inspection evidence shows that an outdoor play area came about as a result of the school listening to pupils' views.
12. Many **good** opportunities are provided to develop pupils' cultural understanding. Through religious education pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs, and this makes a good contribution to their understanding in geography and history. Pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures was clearly demonstrated through the good contributions made by individual classes to the school harvest festival that was observed on the preliminary visit.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **satisfactory** with some strong features. Many of the concerns noted by the headteacher last year have been dealt with. The quality of teaching is **good**. The quality of the curriculum is **satisfactory**. Pupils are cared for and supported **well**. Although many parents express concerns about the school, links with parents are **satisfactory**. The **very good** links with other local schools make a significant contribution to the quality of education.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **good**. As a result of this, pupils are learning **well**. This has not been the case in the recent past and the improvement in the quality of teaching is significant in the improvement in achievement this year. The procedures for assessing pupils are **good**, but the information gained is not always used effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach.
- Learning-support assistants make a good contribution to the quality of teaching.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The high turnover and high absence rate of teachers result in some inconsistency.

- The temporary teachers employed by the school make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

Commentary

13. Teachers apply the new behaviour policy consistently and insist upon high standards of behaviour. This has a beneficial effect upon pupils' learning. They are ready to learn and listen attentively as a result. The high expectations are seen in the well-set-out pupil books and the large quantities of work completed. In mathematics the clear setting out of work helps pupils to see, for example, how digits have different values according to their position. Mistakes are easy to see and so can be corrected more easily.
14. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach. As a result many make good links between subjects that promote good learning by the pupils. Teachers seek ways to make lessons more interesting and enjoyable. A number of pupils spoken to said that learning is **'fun'**. The stimulating lessons are a key factor in the good achievement seen in many areas.
15. Over half of the teaching observed was good or better and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The table below shows the percentages of lessons observed that fell into each category.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (9%)	18 (56%)	11 (34%)	0	0	0

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

16. The teaching of pupils in the EBD unit by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is **very good**. She has great understanding of their particular needs. Pupils are helped by her supportive but firm approach, and her ability to identify the challenges they feel, which impede their learning. As a result these pupils achieve well in relation to the targets set for them and are included in almost all of the normal lessons in the school. Again the learning support assistants make a very good contribution to the learning of these pupils through the knowledgeable support that they give. Learning support assistants liaise closely with class teachers and help to record the progress made by pupils.
17. At the time of the inspection four teachers were away. The experienced temporary teachers are given good support by learning-support assistants who know the pupils well. As a result a lot of the teaching by the temporary staff was good and contributed to the pupils' learning well in those lessons. However, an examination of pupils' books shows that, where lessons are taken by temporary teachers, who are only in the school for a short time, work is not always matched to the needs of all pupils, especially the most able. An investigation showed that the biggest problem is that the temporary teachers are not always given enough information about the pupils and consequently have to spend several lessons assessing what they already know. The teachers observed during the inspection had put a great deal of effort into ensuring that they were meeting the needs of pupils, but this is not always the case. The management and induction of temporary staff are areas for improvement. However, during this inspection the contribution made to pupils' learning by the temporary staff was good. A key factor in this is the very good knowledge that the learning support assistants have of the pupils and which they share with the temporary teachers.

The curriculum

The curriculum provision is **satisfactory**, it is broad and balanced, meets statutory requirements, fulfils the aims of the school and is accessible to all pupils. A wide variety of school visits, visitors and a good range of extra-curricular activities further enhance these. The quality of the accommodation offered along with the range of resources is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A curriculum map provides good cross-curricular links.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Leadership and management of curriculum planning are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

18. There is a curriculum map in place which ensures good links across the curriculum as well as continuity and progression, although it is more securely embedded in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4. Long and medium-term planning is satisfactory in English and mathematics, but overall management of curriculum planning is not satisfactory, so that teachers, especially those who are working at the school on a temporary basis, are not always able to access these plans efficiently to ensure progress for all groups of pupils. The short-term planning available during the inspection was detailed and identified effective provision for the different needs of pupils. As a result, teaching and learning were good overall and pupils made progress.
19. There is **good** provision for pupils with special educational needs. They are always well supported in lessons, as classroom assistants and class teachers adopt approaches which help them to be fully involved in the lesson. There is also **very good** additional support, when appropriate, from the SENCO and the special educational needs teacher. The SEN teacher gives particular support to help pupils with language and literacy. The school ensures that all pupils, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity, have equal access to the opportunities that the curriculum provides. Pupils in the special unit have access to a curriculum that is well planned and taught. This makes a very good contribution to the achievement of these pupils.
20. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Outside visits are used well to extend learning. There are residential visits to the Isle of Wight and school camp, as well as to places of worship and those of historical or geographical interest. These motivate pupils well and make a good contribution to learning in all subjects.
21. The accommodation provided is satisfactory. Storage and display areas are functional, but opportunities are missed to enhance the learning environment with interesting, informative and creative displays. As a result pupils do not have enough examples of the standards expected of them.
22. Resources to support learning are satisfactory and have been improved recently with the allocation of an additional storage space and a teaching assistant to manage the resources. The school library is not adequate for the size of the school and is not well placed in the entrance hall. This limits its use and does not support learning in English well enough. However, action has been taken to improve this provision; there has been a recent audit by the Schools' Library Service and support from the local education authority English Team. As a result the range of fiction and non-fiction books will be updated and improved within this academic year and governors are aware of the need to enhance the provision for better independent study.
23. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. A recent valuable addition has been the provision of a separate base for Year 6, something which the pupils themselves greatly appreciate. The improved learning environment is already having a positive impact upon pupils' attitudes to

learning and this is seen in the improving standards. There are plans to improve the library area in the main reception area so that it is more inviting and easier to use. The school has been successful in a bid to the Learning through Landscapes scheme for substantial funds to improve the playground. Work is due to start on this after Christmas.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **very good** provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It offers them **good** support, advice and guidance. Pupils are involved to a **satisfactory** extent in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a secure learning environment in which pupils feel safe and confident.
- The pastoral support given to pupils is very good.
- Induction arrangements are good.
- Pupils lack guidance on how their ideas might benefit the school.

Commentary

24. Health, safety and security are given a high priority by the school, and pupils are well looked after. The safe learning environment is appreciated by parents and pupils and contributes to the quality of learning. Appropriate child-protection arrangements are in place and training is well organised so that all staff are up to date. The extensive grounds are kept tidy and litter-free, and the pupils clearly enjoy the amount of space they have.
25. The support given to pupils in their personal lives is very good. Induction procedures are well managed. Year 2 pupils from the link infant school visit for two half days at the end of the summer term and a buddy system is organised with Year 3. There is close liaison between the staff of the infant and junior schools with joint (please put in full also) on occasions and an exchange of relevant information between the special educational needs coordinators to ensure that pupils needs are met when they transfer between the schools.
26. The school council meets every week and gives pupils the opportunity to express their views and learn to respect other people's beliefs and opinions. However, pupils do not feel fully confident that their ideas will be listened to or know how their suggestions might be acted upon. One particularly positive way in which pupils were involved in the life of the school was when, together with parents, staff and governors, they helped to devise a new behaviour policy.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links are **good** between the school, and local community. Links with parents are satisfactory. Many parents, however, **remain concerned** about some issues. Links are **very good** with other schools, and pupils greatly benefit from this close partnership.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A significant minority of parents lack confidence in key aspects of the work of the school.
- Very good links with other schools help to make transfer smooth for pupils and provide useful support for staff.
- The school has worked hard to promote an effective partnership with parents.
- Effective links with the wider community make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

Commentary

27. Although the majority of parents are broadly supportive of the school, and a substantial amount of money is raised for pupils' benefit, nearly half of those returning the pre-inspection questionnaire did not feel confident that the school is well led and managed or that they are well informed about their children's progress. It is clear from written comments that many misgivings arise from the recent very high level of staff turnover combined with the unavoidable disruption resulting from long-term sick leave. Inspectors find that the headteacher and governors have fully recognised these difficulties and have worked hard to try to rectify the situation. They also judge that in fact the level of information available to parents about their children's progress is good. Annual reports clearly describe attainment and progress and contain targets for improvement. These targets are discussed with parents at the termly consultation evenings with teachers. Almost all parents answering the questionnaire felt that their children like school and most were confident that teaching is good.
28. Good links with secondary schools very effectively support the transfer of pupils at the age of 11. There are also very good links with two other local primary schools, sharing good practice, coaching and support for identified staff through an informal network.
29. The school has worked hard to improve its partnership with parents, offering curriculum-based evenings and promoting the national system of Parentmail so that parents can access all available information easily via the Internet. Letters home now keep parents up to date with staffing changes and contain an invitation to discuss any concerns with the headteacher. Home/school notebooks are used throughout the school as an additional means of communication.
30. Links with the community are good and particularly strong with the Baptist church, whose minister takes assemblies once a month. The school makes good use of the local area and places further afield to enhance the curriculum with visits; for instance, to the National Gallery, Watford Gurdwara and Hatfield House. Several parents and governors who volunteer to help in school and a good range of other visitors all help to broaden pupils' experience of life.
31. Pupils are positive about the school. They enjoy learning and feel safe. Many said that they like the school. However, the survey of pupils' views found that around a third think that other pupils do not behave well and almost a third did not think lessons were interesting or fun. Discussion with pupils showed that these comments referred to the situation last year. Most pupils think that the school is much better this year. All think that the new classrooms are an improvement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory overall. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. However, the high turnover of staff means that some of the key staff are new to the school and the **unsatisfactory** leadership is not effective in forming these people into a strong team. The way in which the management of the school deals with the retention, deployment and workload of staff is **unsatisfactory**. The high turnover of staff is a significant barrier to learning. The **very good** support given to the leadership of the school by the local education authority is a key factor in the improvements noted from last year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is monitoring its performance well and taking appropriate action.
- The leadership of the school does not inspire and motivate staff well enough.
- The headteacher has a significant overload which reduces her effectiveness in managing people.

- The special educational needs unit is managed very well and allows the pupils in that unit to be fully included in the school.
- The very high turnover of staff has been a significant barrier to learning.
- Governors deal with the budget well and are active in recruiting good staff.

Commentary

32. The performance of the school has been in decline for almost two years. The headteacher recognised this on her return to the school after a secondment and set about identifying the causes. With the support of the governors and the local education authority weaknesses were dealt with effectively and as a result standards of attainment are starting to rise again. Behaviour in school is being positively managed now and there are substantially fewer behaviour incidents reported in school compared to last year. This is as a direct result of the self-evaluation that has taken place.
33. At the start of this term over half of the teachers were new to the school and the membership of the senior management team had changed. Many subjects required new coordinators. Such dramatic change in the school requires managing effectively and needs strong leadership. This is lacking at present in many areas of the school. The headteacher has been working under a significant overload during the many staff changes and this has resulted in some decisions that were ill judged. For example, at the time of the inspection the headteacher was acting as coordinator for English, mathematics and music and as the mentor for the newly qualified teacher. The result of this overload is that new teachers have not been inspired or motivated enough and not enough responsibility has been delegated to other leaders in the school. As a consequence the middle management is not operating as an effective team to support the headteacher and challenge and motivate other teachers. At the time of the inspection four teachers were away with illness, including the acting deputy headteacher. This is further increasing the workload of the headteacher and reducing her ability to act as the effective leader and manager recognised in the previous report.
34. The senior managers in the school are not sufficiently empowered or involved closely enough in setting the priorities in the school improvement plan. The retention of key subject responsibilities by the headteacher limits opportunities for other teachers to share their expertise and help in setting new priorities. Although the school improvement plan is a satisfactory tool for bringing about school improvement, teachers do not feel enough ownership of the plan. The school goals and aims are seen by some staff as the province of the headteacher and some governors. The net effect of this is that some staff feel disillusioned and many do not feel valued enough. Despite this the qualities of the staff are evident in the way in which they are trying to deal with this situation and ensure that children are learning well where possible. This is a key factor in the improvements taking place in the school. The headteacher has sought support from the local education authority which is proving effective in dealing with the issues. The links with a local group of headteachers are also significant in providing advice and support for the headteacher in difficult circumstances.
35. A significant barrier to attainment in this school is the difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers. The headteacher is one of two teachers who were in the school at the time of the last inspection. The high cost of housing in the area makes it difficult to attract teachers. Following the departure of a number of members of staff for valid and personal reasons, the school has had to rely on a long stream of temporary teachers. The quality of some of these teachers was not seen as good enough by the headteacher and a considerable amount of effort has gone into recruiting good staff. The local education authority has given good support in finding teachers, and the more stable staff, after the problems of the last 12 months, is a key factor in the rising standards.
36. The SENCO has been in post only since the beginning of term. She provides **good** leadership and has already improved the provision for special educational needs pupils. There is now a comprehensive register of pupils that enables needs to be identified and dealt

with. The quality of individual education plans (IEPs) has improved, with class teachers contributing more strongly, although the school recognises the need for them to be more precise. The SENCO works closely with colleagues, including the SEN teacher, who provides **good** support and reports back on the progress pupils make.

37. The EBD unit currently has two pupils with placements. The unit teacher works very successfully with them, as well as alongside other pupils. Both unit pupils are now effectively integrated in mainstream classes for many lessons.
38. The governors operate satisfactorily. The systems for ensuring that they know the strengths and weaknesses of the school are satisfactory, and they take effective action. For example, they identified that a key difficulty in recruiting teachers was the quality of the accommodation and acted immediately. The resulting new classroom block is seen by teachers, pupils and parents as a significant improvement. In particular it is enabling more effective teaching that is contributing to the improvements in standards since last year. The budget is managed effectively and governors are able this year to retain eight small classes to enable teaching in smaller groups that they believe will help deal with some of the problems encountered last year. In order to sustain this for another year a contingency sum has been set aside.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	667,371
Total expenditure	634,874
Expenditure per pupil	2,952

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	51,708
Balance carried forward to the next	84,205

The overall costs are distorted by the cost of the unit for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The balance carried forward includes the contingency to maintain class size

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are not achieving well enough at age 11 because of the disruption of the last 18 months although this is improving rapidly and achievement in lessons is good.
- Teaching is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are supported well.
- The development of writing skills across the curriculum is good.
- Marking gives pupils a clear picture of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Reading areas in classrooms and the library are not well resourced or sufficiently stimulating.

Commentary

39. Standards in the 2003 national assessments were in line with the national average, but pupils' achievement was below that of pupils in schools with similar attainment at age seven. This statistic masks the fact that standards were held down by the large number of pupils with special educational needs in that year group, and the large number of pupils who joined from other schools. Pupils who have been at the school for the whole of their four years achieve satisfactorily overall. The standards attained by the current Year 6 cohort are at least satisfactory and pupils are making good progress as a result of the good teaching. This is a significant improvement upon last year.
40. As a result of the good teaching pupils are starting to make up for the lost ground that resulted from the disruption caused by the many changes of temporary teachers over the last 18 months. Although pupils are not achieving as well as they could in relation to their attainment as measured in the national assessments at age seven, they are achieving well in lessons. Examination of the school's records shows that in relation to their attainment at the end of Year 3 pupils are achieving satisfactorily. The evidence shows that it is particularly the Year 6 pupils that have suffered as a result of the disruption and in relation to their attainment at age seven pupils in Year 5 are achieving satisfactorily and they are achieving well in relation to their attainment at the end of Year 3. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported by work planned to meet their individual needs and the well-informed support and encouragement of learning-support assistants. As a result they achieve very well.
41. Standards in speaking and listening are good as a result of the good teaching. Pupils demonstrate that they can discuss a range of issues in a mature and confident way. In Year 6 they were learning how to construct an argument and listen to the points of view of others before coming to their own conclusions about issues related to eating junk food. In a religious education lesson Year 4 pupils shared some very insightful and thoughtful ideas about the Annunciation, while pupils in Year 3 read play scripts with very good expression, varying the voice to suit the character. Subject-related vocabulary is displayed clearly and referred to in lessons.
42. Pupils achieve well in reading as a result of the good teaching and pupils in Year 6 are making up lost ground well. The good teaching ensures that there are good opportunities during the day for pupils to engage in group, paired and silent reading, both in planned guided reading sessions and when they are engaged with texts in a variety of lessons across the

curriculum. This is a key factor in the improving attainment. In Year 6, pupils confidently discuss the differing styles of a range of authors and talk with enthusiasm about their preferences such as Anthony Horowitz, Jacqueline Wilson, J R R Tolkien and J K Rowling. However, the unsatisfactory library is limiting further improvement in this area.

43. Attainment in writing is mostly above average when pupils enter Year 3 and there is now a whole-school target to ensure that boys make good progress in writing and achieve well by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Year 3 know that all sentences need capital letters and full stops and many achieve above expectations because they are encouraged by teachers to write at length using paragraphs and interesting language. The quality of pupils' work in all year groups is celebrated in displays that demonstrate the fluency and neat presentation of pupils' writing for a range of different purposes. There were many good examples, including this poem in Year 3 about Ten Things to Find in a Wizard's Pocket, which demonstrates good use of alliteration:

*A squirming squeaking slimy snake
A round rapid book of spells
A wicked wacky wand
An excellent explanation elephant
A crazy crying crab
A loony lazy lobster
A perfect pally pet
A mysterious magic monkey
A dum doom dolly*

44. The subject leader is currently led by the headteacher who is in the process of handing over the leadership and management of English to another teacher. At present the management by the headteacher is satisfactory overall. She has set out a clear view of what needs to be improved, but as a result of her work overload does not have enough time to follow up the points identified for improvement. The support of a local education authority Literacy Consultant is helping to deal with the issues identified and support the new coordinator. Links for developing literacy across the curriculum are identified in the comprehensive curriculum map but have not yet been identified enough in the guidance to teachers especially in Years 3 and 4. As result not enough guidance is readily and quickly available for these year groups when new teachers join the school. This causes some disruption to pupils' learning and means that the new teachers have to work very hard initially to plan work matched to the needs of the pupils. This has been a key factor in the unsatisfactory achievement noted last year.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

45. Pupils use their language and literacy skills well in other subjects and have produced some creative and interesting books and diaries based on their school visits and special topics; for example, their visit to the Isle of Wight and books about the Tudors, Anne Boleyn and Mountain Regions.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are improving rapidly and although pupils' achievement at age 11 is not good enough it is also improving rapidly.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils and teachers.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs is good.

- Some activities do not always extend more-able pupils in the lower junior years.
- The quality of feedback to make pupils aware of their own learning is variable.
- The use and application of mathematics in other subjects are good.

Commentary

46. The standards of work of Year 6 pupils are average. A significant minority attain standards well above those normally expected for their age. Attainment in mathematics, although lower than that at the time of the last inspection, has remained similar to national averages. In the National tests for 11 year olds since 2001 there has been an upward trend in the average points score, with the school being above the national average in the last two years. When compared with schools with pupils who attained similar standards at age seven the progress made by many pupils is unsatisfactory. However, the Year 6 cohort last year contained many pupils with special educational needs and a significant number of the pupils joined from schools other than the normal feeder infant school. The achievement of pupils who have been at this school for all four years is significantly better although still just unsatisfactory. However, inspection evidence; for example, of the good teaching and the very positive attitudes shown consistently by pupils, indicates that pupils in Year 6 are making greater progress than they did last year and at present pupils are achieving well.
47. The good quality teaching observed is a key factor in the improving achievement. The quality of teaching was good in the majority of lessons observed. Strengths include:
- Clear learning objectives shared with pupils.
 - Very good use of visual resources which capture pupils' interest and deepen their understanding.
 - Developing a calm and trusting environment, so that pupils are confident about sharing their ideas and strategies.
 - Good questioning techniques used to challenge pupils and to check levels.
 - Involvement of well-briefed teaching assistants.

Thus most pupils are interested and keen to engage in the activities. As a result standards are rising rapidly and pupils are achieving well during these lessons. This is enabling many pupils to make up for the ground lost over the last 18 months when teaching has been very disrupted.

48. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure good support for pupils with special educational needs. They are helped to take a full part in lessons, there is constructive assessment to support them and they achieve well in relation to their abilities and prior learning.
49. The attainment of pupils entering the school is rising. Most pupils enter the school with good levels of mathematical understanding, However, in Years 3 and 4 there are times when work does not stretch the more able pupils. When this happens pupils do not achieve well enough. The quality of information given to pupils to make them aware of their own learning and of how to improve is variable especially in Years 3 and 4. For some pupils this also slows down their learning.
50. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The National Numeracy Strategy provides the basis of planning and has helped contribute to standards achieved by pupils. At the beginning of term the school introduced setting arrangements for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. These have helped raise standards but the mixing of Year 5 and Year 6 is limiting opportunities to ensure that the pupils in Year 6 make sufficient progress to make up for the problems over the last 18 months. Opportunities for joint planning in lower junior year groups have not been fully exploited in the same way. These arrangements will be evaluated by the school at the end of the term to check their impact upon learning for all the pupils. Monitoring of teachers'

planning, and observations of lessons by the subject leader, have contributed to the quality of provision.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. The pupils' use of mathematics in different subjects is increasing well as the school gives increasing emphasis to cross-curricular links in the school curriculum. There are good examples of such application of mathematics in subjects such as science and geography, and pupils are able to appreciate how such links support their own learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attainment is above average and they are achieving satisfactorily.
- Pupils' investigative skills are not as good as their knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

52. By the age of 11 pupils are attaining standards above average. This is a significant improvement on the standards of the last few years and maintains the standards noted at the last inspection. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily when their attainment at the age of seven is taken into account.
53. A lot of the teaching observed in science is good and is contributing well to pupils' learning. An examination of pupils' books shows that they have good knowledge and understanding. They conduct many investigations, but in some cases these are very teacher directed and pupils are not engaged enough in deciding which question is to be answered through the investigation. This limits their ability to plan a fair test. In some cases the written accounts of investigations are brief. Although they give the required information, this does not support the development of writing skills enough.
54. Pupils use their mathematical skills appropriately in science to record and display the results of investigations. Suitable use is made of ICT to support learning in some classes, but this is not consistent across the school.
55. The coordinator is in the process of handing over the responsibility to a new member of staff. Both are knowledgeable about the subject and understand how to raise achievement. Sound advice is given to colleagues as a result of the monitoring of pupils' work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**, although it has improved since the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The computers available are not reliable.
- A knowledgeable coordinator has just taken over the management of the subject and coordination is improving.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory although this is improving.

Commentary

56. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection and as a result of the hard work put in by teachers pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations at the age of 11.

The achievement of pupils in Year 6 has been held down by the many changes of teacher last year. New teachers have been appointed and are well aware of the work required to ensure that Year 6 pupils reach the required standard by the end of the year. Achievement is improving, although some unreliability in the ICT systems poses a small risk to the ability of teachers to ensure that standards will continue to rise at the level noted since September.

57. At the time of the last inspection standards in ICT were unsatisfactory, mainly as a result of the unsatisfactory resources. Since that time the governors have invested in an ICT suite. This has now been in place for three years and some of the computers are in need of replacement. The suite is too small for a whole class to work with a computer between every two pupils if the class size is over 24. The unreliability of some of the computers results in some being unavailable during lessons. In the inspection week several ICT lessons had to be cancelled as a result of computers not working properly. This puts quite a burden on teachers as they try to ensure that the planned lessons are delivered.
58. A teacher new to the school has taken over the coordination of ICT and already made significant improvements to the resources. He has a clear understanding of what is needed to improve ICT and to ensure that all pupils in Year 6 achieve the expected standards by the end of the year. However, it is too early to judge the impact of this management as some of the improvements to computers are not complete.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. Some opportunities are taken to use ICT to support learning across the curriculum, but this area is generally unsatisfactory. Good use is made of ICT to research information to support learning in history and geography and suitable use is made of spreadsheets to support some learning in mathematics and science. Not enough evidence was available of ICT supporting learning in English. Very few examples of extended writing using the computer to draft and redraft writing are available and this indicates that not enough use is made of computers in this manner. An exception to this is the special educational needs unit for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, where good use is made of computers to motivate pupils and support their learning.

HUMANITIES

60. It was not possible to observe the teaching of **history** and **geography** during the inspection and so work was sampled in these subjects. It is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision, but there is every indication from pupils' work that standards are broadly average and have remained the same since the last inspection.
61. In both subjects it is clear that a range of visits and visitors play an important part in making the work interesting and relevant. Investigative approaches to teaching and learning stimulate pupils' interest and enrich learning. In geography, for example, a visit to the Isle of Wight enabled pupils to understand some of the physical and human features of this type of environment. They could also describe the way their learning was enriched by measuring the flow of water in a stream. They develop a sound knowledge and understanding of people, places and environments as they build up a picture of life in places such as St Lucia.
62. Many pupils in Year 6 obviously enjoy history and spoke enthusiastically about their study of Henry VIII and the Tudors, and also of a visit to the British Museum while learning about Ancient Egypt. Pupils develop an understanding of people and events in the past, and have a sound sense of chronology.
63. The curriculum topics are drawn from national guidelines, and effective links are made between them in the school's curriculum map. This supports effective progression through the school for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, in skills such as mapping. Marking often provides informative feedback for pupils and helps them to

understand what they have to do to improve. They appreciate and make ready reference to curricular links between these and other subjects, but there are insufficient opportunities for using drama and for working with primary sources and artefacts.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good subject management supports good teaching and effective links across the curriculum.
- Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Assessment procedures do not ensure progression.

Commentary

64. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection remain at least in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Only three lessons were observed, all of which were at least satisfactory, and one was very good. Although much of this work focused on high-quality discussion, there were some very good examples of written work sampled in all year groups, as well as that on display. Analysis of this evidence and talking with pupils indicate that religious education is a strength of the school and that achievement is good.
65. From the work on display it is clear that pupils are gaining a sound understanding of a wide range of religious beliefs. They were helped to compare and contrast these differences in a Year 4 lesson where they were beginning to understand the story of the Annunciation from Mary's point of view. Pupils were provided with an excellent opportunity to explore the context of the story through the interpretation of a 15th century painting. The teaching was structured, lively and informative so that all pupils had every opportunity to explore the meaning of the story and empathise with Mary. During feedback from groups there were some excellent examples of pupils talking articulately and confidently about the main focus of the lesson.
66. In Year 5 and Year 6, pupils were given well-planned opportunities to identify and discuss the religious symbolism of Advent and their visit to a catholic church. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and as a result the lessons were interesting and motivating so that pupils learnt well and made progress. There were several examples of the way in which English is developed across the curriculum; pupils used good speaking and listening skills in discussion and also demonstrated the way that they can scribe for a group to feed back their ideas on the interpretation of symbols to the rest of the class.
67. The subject is led and managed well by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable coordinator who has monitored planning to ensure the correct coverage of topics. However, there are at present few opportunities to monitor teaching and learning and to strengthen assessment procedures across all year groups, which limits opportunities for further improvement.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68. Only two lessons were seen in design and technology, and none in art and design, music and physical education. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision. In addition to observing lessons, inspectors spoke to coordinators and teachers about their work, spoke to pupils about their learning in these subjects, and looked at teachers' planning, and at examples of pupils' work.
69. The **cross-curricular** links which are often found in these subjects have a positive impact, both upon standards achieved and on pupils' attitudes to their learning.

70. In **art and design**, discussion with pupils and looking at their work showed they are developing the expected skills and appreciation of techniques. Older pupils described how they had used an art sketchbook throughout the school. They appreciated its use to experiment with techniques, to compose draft outlines and sketches, and to record the progress they had made through the school. Year 4 pupils produced pastel sketches of a toy composition, and Year 5 pupils developed their appreciation of tonal quality when trying different methods of shading. Pictures are used imaginatively as a resource to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. However, too little use is made of pupils 'art work' for wall displays to enliven the learning environment. Pupils also value the Art Club.
71. In design and technology pupils gain experience of using a range of materials and of techniques. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were fully engaged in learning how cams can turn rotary movement into linear movement. After the introductory discussion led by the teacher they set about their plans and designs for a 'card toy'. In conversation with the inspector most could describe how the rotating cam affected the linear movement of the follower arm. Year 6 pupils recalled how they had designed musical instruments and made biscuits. It is clear that, while pupils are familiar with the "plan-design-make" stages of the process, they are less aware of the importance of evaluating their work.
72. In **music**, older pupils speak of the range of songs they sing. Many of these derive from other countries, such as Egypt, the USA, Spain and Indonesia. They also tell of the 'Singing Assemblies' which help all pupils to sing. They learn how to hold themselves, sit up straight, and breathe. They have good opportunities to learn an instrument. Recorder groups start in Year 3, and tuition in other instruments, often offered by peripatetic teachers, includes woodwind, keyboard, brass and stringed instruments. Other pupils take part in the school choir and the small school orchestra. The development of musical skills and appreciation is supported by a satisfactory range of instruments which are readily accessible to each classroom.
73. In **physical education** pupils usually enjoy two lessons, of 45 minutes, each week. One is outdoors for games, athletics or orienteering and one is indoors for gymnastics or dance. The curriculum is based on national guidelines, and this helps to ensure that pupils experience the expected span of activities. Pupils across the school also have swimming lessons, and develop their love of swimming and personal survival skills. All pupils can swim in Year 6. Learning experiences, and standards, will be enhanced by the links with Queen's School – a local secondary school which has Sports Status. The leader of physical education, who has recently joined the staff, has experience of coordinating this subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

74. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on teaching in this area as only a little was seen. However, the contribution made to this through the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As a result pupils are well behaved and confident. Pupils in unit for these with behavioural and emotional difficulties receive very good support that enables them to play a full part in the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
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	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
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	3
How well pupils learn	3
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	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
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	3
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	5
The effectiveness of management	5

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