

INSPECTION REPORT

MAPLE GROVE INFANT SCHOOL

March

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110640

Headteacher: Mrs Lynda Quince

Lead inspector: Mrs Vreta Bagilhole

Dates of inspection: 7-9 June 2004

Inspection number: 263929

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	259
School address:	Maple Grove March Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	PE15 8JT
Telephone number:	01354 653337
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Katharine Bultitude
Date of previous inspection:	19 October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Maple Grove Infant School is a large three-form entry infant school for children aged 4 to 7. Pupils' home circumstances are broadly average. The children starting in the Reception year cover the full range of abilities but overall their attainment is below average and in communication, language and literacy it is well below average. Most of the pupils are of white-UK background and a small proportion of them are of mixed white and Asian heritage. There are no pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Ten per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average and one pupil has a statement of special educational need. These pupils are receiving support for moderate or specific learning difficulties. There has been a new headteacher this year after a period of instability when there was no permanent headteacher.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the school is **satisfactory**. Standards are above average in reading and average in mathematics but below average in writing where the more able and less able pupils do not do well enough. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory and so are the leadership and management of the school. Pupils have good attitudes towards school and to learning. The school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils are achieving well in reading and mathematics.
- Standards are below average in speaking and listening, writing and information and communication technology.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning.
- The headteacher has brought stability back to the school and maintained a good climate for learning.
- The role of the curriculum co-ordinators in school self-evaluation is underdeveloped.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good.
- The marking of work and current assessment arrangements are not well established.
- The children are very well looked after.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in October 1998. Teaching has improved. Although standards are better than they were, reflecting improvements over the past two years, the trend over the last five years is below the national trend. Standards in reading have made a good improvement. The school's improvement is satisfactory in remedying the key issues from the last inspection but assessment procedures need more improvement still. There has been limited progress on aspects such as the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs, which was good and is now satisfactory. Also pupils' personal development, although satisfactory, is not as good as that reported at the last inspection. The school's health and safety procedures have made a good improvement and are now very good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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*

Overall **achievement is satisfactory** with pupils achieving well in reading and mathematics. The early indications from the 2004 test results show similar standards to 2003. Standards in science are below average but are better this year than in 2003 and more pupils have attained the higher level. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school has identified those pupils who are gifted or talented and they make satisfactory progress as well. The small number of pupils from other ethnic groups achieve satisfactorily. Standards in information and communication technology are below average but achievement

is satisfactory and there are some good examples of the pupils using computers to help them make progress in other subjects. In religious education, pupils' attainment is in line with expectations and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. The children enter the Reception class with below average attainment and make satisfactory progress but do not achieve the standards expected for this age group by the time they leave the Reception year. A significant number of the children in the Reception year have limited vocabulary and are not confident speaking to others.

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. **Their personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.** Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory with a significant number of good lessons. Learning is satisfactory overall and is good in reading. Some very good teaching was observed in the Reception year and in mathematics and science in Year 1. An unsatisfactory lesson was observed in science. The marking of pupils' work does not help show the pupils how they can improve and teachers are not tracking pupils' progress sufficiently well. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the progress the pupils make. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, which enhance the school's provision for music and sport. The overall provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. Links with parents are satisfactory. Links with the community are good. There are very good links with the local pre-school community playgroup.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory and so is the governance of the school. There has been a new headteacher this year after a period of instability when there was no permanent headteacher. The school uses performance data to monitor how well it is doing. However, it is not monitoring teaching and learning in the classroom well enough to find out why weaknesses are occurring. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators is underdeveloped. Statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents support the school and are pleased with most aspects of the school's work. The school has not had a special drive to involve parents in their children's learning and this aspect is a weakness. Most pupils like being at school and find the lessons interesting. They know the school has their interests at heart and like being consulted over matters that concern them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in speaking and listening, writing and information and communication technology;
- make sure that there is a rigorous programme for evaluating classroom practice which encourages initiative, is analytical and identifies what else needs to be done;
- develop the roles of the subject co-ordinators so that they effectively influence teaching and standards;

- make sure that that marking identifies how pupils can improve and that assessment arrangements are consistent, identify achievement in all subjects and are used to plan future work;

(The school has prioritised standards in writing, information and communication technology and assessment in its school improvement plan.)

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is satisfactory overall and it is good in reading and mathematics. In Year 2, standards are above average in reading, average in mathematics but below average in writing and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are achieving well in reading and mathematics.
- Standards are below average in speaking and listening, writing and information and communication technology.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use language to explain their ideas using a growing vocabulary.
- Reception children do well in creative and physical development and in reading.
- Boys are performing lower than girls in writing.

Commentary

1. The results of the national tests in 2003 for pupils in Year 2 were above the national average and those of similar schools in reading; they were average in mathematics but below average in writing. The results of teachers' assessments in science were below the national average. Early indications for the test results in 2004 show similar standards but more pupils are attaining the higher level in science. Overall pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory because planning takes account of their differing abilities and pupils are supported appropriately. These pupils are attaining standards that are below national averages but consistent with their abilities. The school has identified those pupils who are gifted or talented and they make satisfactory progress as well. However, there are not enough more able pupils attaining the higher level in writing. The small number of pupils from other ethnic groups achieve satisfactorily. The difference between boys and girls is similar to the national picture except in writing where not enough boys are achieving the standards expected. Conversely these boys are doing reasonably well in reading. Many of these boys have special educational needs and are achieving satisfactorily considering their low attainment on entry to the school but some of them are not doing well enough. The school has identified this in its school development plan.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.5 (15.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14 (12.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.2 (15.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 96 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The children enter the Reception class with below average attainment for their age. Although there is a range of abilities starting in the Reception year there are a significant number who start school with poorly developed language skills and their attainment in this aspect is well below those expected when they enter the school. The children achieve satisfactorily in Reception but by the end of the Reception year, most children will not attain the expected

standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development or in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Achievement is good in physical and creative development and the children attain the standards expected. Reading is well taught and the children achieve well, enjoying an increasing range of books and beginning to recognise some familiar words.

3. Achievement in English is satisfactory. Pupils achieve well in reading because the teachers promote skills effectively and have a good command of the subject. Achievement in speaking and listening is satisfactory but standards are below average. Many pupils are beginning to show confidence in talking and listening. However, the lower attaining pupils find it difficult to communicate clearly. They are still using immature speech and are not confident in speaking to other pupils. Opportunities to write for a variety of different purposes are satisfactory across the school. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily in writing but some lower attaining and more able pupils do not do well enough. Not enough pupils are attaining the higher level. A significant number of boys are not attaining the nationally expected standard in writing. This is partly due to the nature of their special educational need but is also because some are insufficiently motivated or challenged by the teaching and find it hard to work independently. Because of action to improve writing, pupils are beginning to show good attention to using punctuation marks accurately; this aspect is now well taught. Handwriting skills are taught appropriately but not applied well when writing in other subjects.
4. Pupils are achieving well in mathematics. Standards have improved over the last year because the test results are analysed carefully and weaknesses identified. Booster classes make an effective contribution to the quality of learning. The more able pupils are doing well. About one-third of pupils in Year 2 have attained standards that were higher than typically expected in the recent tests. Pupils' competence in mathematics also enables them to make progress in other areas of the curriculum.
5. Standards in science are below average by Year 2. Overall, achievement is satisfactory. Teaching throughout the school varies from being very good to unsatisfactory and these inconsistencies between classes are not being identified because no monitoring takes place. Some teachers are still directing the pupils too much, which was identified at the previous inspection and has not been effectively remedied.
6. Standards are below those expected in information and communication technology mainly because pupils do not have enough access to computers. However, there are some good examples of the subject being effectively used in other subjects. Achievement is satisfactory. Standards in religious education are in line with the local agreed syllabus and achievement is satisfactory. Music has improved from the previous inspection and now standards are typical of those expected. This is mainly because of improved teaching in the subject. Parents who responded to the questionnaire are happy with the standards that their children achieve and feel that they are making good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their personal development is satisfactory: moral development is good and spiritual, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Pupils' positive attitudes towards school and to learning enable them to do well enough in most lessons and activities.
- Pupils behave well in most situations and develop a good level of respect for each other.
- Although the school has tightened up on procedures to improve attendance, pupils' attendance rates remain below the national average.

COMMENTARY

7. Pupils' attitudes are good in most lessons and are never less than satisfactory. These co-operative attitudes have been maintained since the last inspection. Nearly all parents and most pupils confirm that children like coming to school. Pupils like the fact that staff help and encourage them to overcome any difficulties. This has a particularly beneficial effect on their standards in reading and, more recently, in mathematics. The oldest, more able girls are proud of their achievements in the recent national tests, which they enjoyed doing, and are keen to know their individual results. In lessons, boys and girls are attentive to their teachers and eager to be engaged in learning. In the best lessons, teachers build on pupils' enthusiasm well, by using materials that motivate them, such as toys for example. Pupils respond well when the tasks are pitched at their level of ability and they are supported by adults to make the best possible progress.
8. Good standards of behaviour were seen in most lessons and have also been maintained since the last inspection. There have been no exclusions. Teachers involve pupils well at the start of the year in formulating class rules and pupils respond well to the system of rewards. These have been particularly effective in improving behaviour in the dining room. Pupils of all backgrounds play constructively together in the spacious grounds at lunchtime, but have reported some problems in the playground which the school is tackling well. The school is dealing with pupils' concerns about bullying very well, for example through assemblies, the personal, social and health education programme, and inviting class representatives to discuss issues with the headteacher. Parents are confident that any bullying is dealt with effectively. Children from the youngest age are taught to think about others, for example through the Bible story of the Good Samaritan. The oldest, more able pupils understand that a few of their peers have challenging behaviour and need adult support to help them conduct themselves appropriately. Occasionally, this support is not effective and can result in a brief disruption to learning. Some teachers have difficulty in creating a suitable atmosphere in the large hall for assemblies, with the result that some Year 1 and Year 2 pupils have a tendency to fidget and chatter. The behaviour of children with special educational needs is generally good.
9. Pupils' personal development, although satisfactory, is not as good as that reported at the last inspection. The oldest more able pupils are confident and independent but the average, less able, and youngest pupils can still be quite timid and shy with a visitor and need support in expressing themselves. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is similar to that described in the last report but has not kept pace with developments in best practice, such as giving older pupils more responsibilities or using displays more strikingly to widen pupils' perceptions. Teachers are encouraged to identify opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness on their lesson plans, but the scope for exploiting these in lessons is not fully understood. Opportunities are also sometimes missed in assemblies, for example to make consistent use of music when pupils enter the hall (a weakness noted in the last two inspection reports) or to involve pupils in speaking out in front of others. Pupils are satisfactorily encouraged to learn about their own culture and the cultures of others through topics, stories, resources, visits and visitors, such as a local Indian lady who comes to school to talk about Hindu weddings and life in India.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year: 93.9%

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
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School data	5.0
National data	5.4

School data	1.1
National data	0.4

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

10. The school's overall attendance rate has improved since the last inspection, when it was 91.2 per cent, but it is still stubbornly below the national average. Unauthorised absence is well above average because the school quite rightly is rigorous in its approach to authorising term-time holidays. Since the headteacher arrived in September, a number of measures have been put in place to improve the recording, monitoring and following up of pupils' absences. The administrative secretary and education welfare officer are used well in this drive for improvement, and the headteacher's personal interventions with some families have had some success recently. Most pupils attend sufficiently regularly to enable them to make satisfactory progress, although the school has identified that a disproportionate number of boys have poor attendance. Pupils could achieve more if their parents ensured that they always come to school unless genuinely sick.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with several good features. The curriculum is enriched well and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities. Links with the community are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment is unsatisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and now over half the teaching is good or better.
- Pupils' progress is not tracked over time, so underachieving groups of pupils are not always identified, and the marking of work is unsatisfactory.

COMMENTARY

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	3 (9%)	14 (44%)	14 (44%)	1 (3%)	0 (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.

11. Teaching and learning in the Reception classes are satisfactory with instances of good and very good teaching. The very good teaching is in music and teaching in the youngest class is good. The music teacher emphasised the importance of an audience and enabled all the children to experience playing an instrument. Good teaching was observed in creative and physical development. The teaching of reading is well organised. The school day contains an appropriate balance of teacher directed and child initiated activities that contribute to children's growing confidence but opportunities to extend personal and social development during the play activities are not always seized. There are missed opportunities to encourage children to

write in the play activities. Teachers use the school site well to extend the children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

12. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection when 15 per cent was judged unsatisfactory. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 are careful to follow the national guidelines for literacy and numeracy. There is generally good organisation and effective management of pupils with good use of resources. Very good lessons were observed in mathematics and science in Year 1. In science the teacher grabbed the pupils' interest very well and used resources very well to enable the pupils to understand forces. In mathematics she directed questioning very well to ensure that the different abilities made good progress in their knowledge of odd and even numbers. Good teaching was observed in most of the subjects seen during the inspection but there was an equal amount of satisfactory teaching as well. Teaching assistants support the pupils well. They have organised effective reading sessions with groups of readers. One unsatisfactory lesson was observed in science in Year 1. In some of the satisfactory lessons work was not planned well enough to meet the needs of all abilities. In others questioning and discussion were not used effectively enough to extend pupils' thinking and language skills.
13. Pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory teaching. Teachers have appropriate expectations of what they can achieve. Progress is well monitored. In the Reception class children's needs are identified early and drawn to the attention of the co-ordinator. A regular check is kept on progress. The school is sometimes slow in placing pupils on the special educational needs list, even though they may cause concern for more than one term. This is a weakness in the present system, but the school is aware of it. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to ensure work is matched to targets. Provision is made for gifted and talented pupils, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. A spacious and well-resourced classroom is available for individual and group work.
14. The school is aware of the weaknesses in assessment and it is a priority in the school improvement plan. Assessment is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and in reading and mathematics but it is underdeveloped in all other subjects. After observing good practice at the Beacon School the school has produced a new skills record booklet covering the main five subjects which is due to be used shortly. After training for assessing pupils' attainment in science the staff have collaborated well with the result that more pupils have attained the higher level this year. However, teachers are not tracking the performance of pupils as they progress through the school so underachieving groups of pupils are not necessarily identified. Marking is unsatisfactory. Although teachers may comment to pupils during the lessons, the marking of work shows little attempt to highlight what the pupils are doing well and what else needs to be done to improve further. Work is often just ticked or praised, although spellings are corrected. There is some target setting for pupils but this is inconsistent between classes and subjects. There are good exceptions and the English work of a more able pupil in Year 1 was very well marked with challenging comments throughout. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs show that their needs have also been assessed appropriately.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment are good. Accommodation and resources are good overall.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There are some successful curricular initiatives for raising standards in reading and mathematics.
- Inconsistencies in the timetabling of information and communication technology and a shortage of computers have a negative impact on standards in information and communication technology.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to enhance their physical, creative and social development during and after the school day.
- Accommodation and resources are very good in the Reception classes and have a positive impact on provision for the youngest children.

COMMENTARY

15. The quality of the curriculum overall is broadly similar to that reported at the last inspection. The school has been a little slow in improving the curriculum through innovation or adaptations to national strategies and guidance, although it is now using its links with a Beacon school to gain new ideas. Members of staff value all pupils equally as individuals, whatever their needs, and work hard to make sure they get the best from their time at school. The school's well-established reading programme, whereby pupils have frequent timetabled opportunities to read aloud to adults, has a beneficial impact on the standards they are able to achieve in reading by the end of Year 2. The recent introduction of teaching mathematics to Year 2 pupils in sets (ability groups) has already had a noticeable effect on improving standards in that subject. There are some good links between subjects; for example, between English and geography when Year 2 pupils made notes about what Bear did on his visit to Boston, USA. Information and communication technology, although used satisfactorily in other subjects, is not timetabled in all classes and so skills are not systematically developed and pupils are not able to reach average standards by the end of Year 2. Teachers use local schemes of work satisfactorily to cover religious education and the required elements of personal, social and health education. Pupils with special educational needs are given full access to the curriculum and the provision is satisfactory. Much of the time they take part in class lessons, with work suited to their abilities. They benefit from the good support of the teaching assistants. A programme of training is ensuring that these members of staff are developing the necessary skills to be effective. Gifted and talented pupils are also receiving satisfactory provision and their individual needs are being catered for appropriately.
16. Parents are rightly pleased with the provision of extra-curricular activities for their children. These have been developed through the goodwill and expertise of some of the teachers and the school's good links with other agencies. Pupils have opportunities to learn the recorder, sing in a small choir and play football, and they can try out country dancing, tennis and skipping. These activities significantly enhance the school's provision for music and sport. Pupils also benefit from a range of visits and visitors; for example, authors and theatre groups have been invited in as part of the strategy to improve standards in writing. Pupils are able to take part in social activities outside the school day such as the after-school club run by the pre-school community group and children's discos run by the Friends of Maple Grove.
17. The curriculum for children in the Reception classes is significantly enriched by the spacious and well-equipped classrooms and the very good resources for outdoor play, which have a positive impact on children's physical and creative development. The grounds are used well to promote their knowledge and understanding of the world. The

quality and development of provision in the Foundation Stage have been somewhat hampered by changes in staff, together with the co-ordinator's additional responsibility for English.

18. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from the generous-sized accommodation and the generally good level of resources. The spare classroom is now used well for supporting pupils in small groups. The library is an attractive room with a good range and quantity of books which pupils borrow regularly. The school does not have a sufficient number of computers which means that pupils do not have enough access to them so that they can build on and practise their skills. Staffing is adequate with an appropriate mix of new and experienced staff. The use of a specialist teacher has helped to improve provision in music, which was a weakness identified in the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good overall. Provision for support, advice and guidance is satisfactory. Pupils are satisfactorily involved in the work and development of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety are very good.
- Arrangements to help children settle in when they start school are very good.
- There is some good use of monitoring information to raise pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics, but this has not been effective in writing especially for boys.

Commentary

19. The school has responded well to the minor issue in the last inspection report that it carry out a formal health and safety check. This is now done monthly and recorded very well so that the priorities for action and person responsible are clearly identified. The headteacher has very effectively brought in the expertise of a private company and the manager of the adjacent pre-school to assist her in carrying out her responsibilities. For example, following a recommendation by the pre-school manager, who is also a governor of Maple Grove, the format of recording accidents has been improved so that these can be monitored more clearly. Members of staff pay good attention to health and safety in day-to-day routines, such as ensuring that pupils are protected from the sun on a hot day. There are a good number of first aiders around the school who provide effective care to meet the medical and welfare needs of the pupils. The headteacher as the designated teacher for child protection has a good understanding of the issues involved in child protection and staff know what to do in the event of a concern or disclosure.
20. Parents are rightly very pleased with the transfer arrangements when their children move from the pre-school to Maple Grove. These are built on the very close links between the two organisations and the staff who work for them. Children from the pre-school visit the Reception class for story-time and parents are very well involved in their children's first few days when they start school in September. Registration periods are used positively by class teachers to establish a friendly and orderly start to the day which prepares pupils well for learning. Pupils are very confident that adults will help them if they have a problem. Nevertheless, one or two parents commented that some staff shout at the

children occasionally, and the inspection team confirmed that a very few members of teaching and non-teaching staff do not always speak to the pupils in a caring manner.

21. Class teachers' efforts to support and guide pupils to achieve as well as they can are hampered by the lack of rigorous assessment which tracks pupils from year to year, and also of clear targets shared with pupils so they know what they have to do to improve. There are some examples of good practice. Pupils are supported and guided successfully to achieve well in reading because there is a rigorous programme to hear and record them read. Some effective work has been done through setting Year 2 classes into ability groups and a catch-up programme, for example, to raise achievement in mathematics. On the other hand, attempts to improve standards in writing have not been so focused on areas of weakness. Support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Individual education plans are detailed, well written, and reviewed regularly. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress, and encouraged to help them at home. Pupils know what their targets are, and how well they are doing. Pupils with specific funding are well cared for by their named helpers. The progress of pupils in public care is carefully monitored and the school works well with an external agency to provide extra support when needed.
22. The headteacher already had plans in place to set up a school council from the autumn term, but has brought these forward to deal with pupils' concerns about activities and behaviour at playtimes. She shared the findings of the Ofsted questionnaire with the pupils at an assembly and asked them to nominate representatives from each class to discuss the issues with her. Year 2 pupils appreciate being involved in this process of consultation. One Year 1 teacher involves her pupils well in making decisions about the displays in their classroom. Pupils' involvement in the assessment of their work and in setting and reviewing targets is under-developed.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are satisfactory. Links with the community are good. Links with other schools are satisfactory with good features.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Parents have positive views about the school, but their support is not fully harnessed to benefit pupils' learning.
- The school makes good use of the community to enrich the curriculum and strengthen the work of the governing body.
- Links with other schools are being developed well to enhance staff and governor training.

COMMENTARY

23. Overall parents are pleased with the school's provision for their children. Only a small number of parents expressed dissatisfaction. The information provided for them has improved since the last inspection, when it was unsatisfactory. Annual reports on pupils' progress now meet statutory requirements. They report well on children's strengths and weaknesses in the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and the subjects of the National Curriculum, although there are some inconsistencies between teachers. Other written information, such as letters and newsletters, is satisfactory, and the school is appropriately planning to construct and maintain a website. Teachers are accessible at

the start and end of the school day, and the headteacher is making productive efforts to establish links with parents who do not feel comfortable in approaching the school. Parents of children in the Reception classes are informed and involved very well by being encouraged to come in with their children when they start school and find out more about the school's expectations. There is an active parents' association which runs a considerable number of events that benefit the pupils socially and in terms of extra resources purchased with the money raised. A small number of parents make a valuable contribution by helping in classrooms. A significant proportion, however, do not support the school as effectively as they could, for example by making sure that their child's attendance is as good as it can be or by attending meetings about the curriculum such as the recent drugs awareness evening. For its part, the school has not had a special drive to involve parents in their children's learning; for example, there is no mention of parents in the current 'interim' school development plan which places improvement in writing as a key priority.

24. The school continues to draw well on people and organisations in the community to widen the pupils' experiences. The governing body has successfully recruited educational and local education authority practitioners to enhance its expertise in moving the school forward. The school is used by community groups such as those run by the pre-school which shares the school site. Staff of the school and pre-school serve on each other's boards of management and ensure that the transition for young children into the Reception classes is very well organised. The school is working increasingly closely with the junior school across the road to which virtually all pupils go after Year 2. For example, teachers at the two schools are training together on an assessment system that both schools will implement in September 2004, and the two governing bodies are doing some joint training. However, there have been no recent events or activities organised by the two schools which help prepare pupils for transfer until the usual arrangements which take place in the second half of the summer term of Year 2. A constructive link has been established with an infant school in another area which has Beacon status. All teachers and teaching assistants have visited the Beacon school, key members of staff have formed useful liaisons, and practical ideas have been implemented such as setting by ability in Year 2 mathematics and producing a booklet for recording assessment information. Maple Grove, as the only infant school in the local cluster of schools hosted by the high school, is benefiting from provision for a World Arts Day before the end of term, and it will be hosting a training day in September on speech and language development. These links and initiatives show that the school is willing to learn from the expertise of others so that its provision can be improved.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. There are strengths in the leadership and management of the school but there are also some shortcomings.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has brought stability back to the school and maintained a good climate for learning.
- The role of the curriculum co-ordinators in school self-evaluation and planning for improvement is underdeveloped.
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and the curriculum are not well established.
- The governing body and the headteacher are identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the school well.

Commentary

25. The headteacher has re-established stability in the school after a period when there has been no permanent headteacher or deputy headteacher. She has created a strong ethos, which comes directly from her supportive and approachable manner and has gained the support of the parents, staff and pupils. There are effective relationships between all those involved in the school. The headteacher has introduced an acting senior management team until a new deputy headteacher can be appointed. There is a clear educational direction for the school and the main priorities have been identified.
26. The school uses performance data to monitor how well it is doing. It has identified appropriate priorities such as the performance of boys from its analysis of standardised tests. Some effective initiatives are taking place such as setting in mathematics. However, monitoring and evaluation procedures are not getting to the heart of teaching and influencing improvements based on accurate diagnosis. The monitoring of teaching and the curriculum by co-ordinators is at an early stage and too little classroom observation has taken place. Teachers have not yet agreed common criteria for monitoring teaching in the classroom which can identify good practice but also highlight any areas for development. The school is beginning to monitor pupils' work. Subject co-ordinators reviewed their areas at a training day earlier in the year, in preparation for the Ofsted inspection. Although they have drawn up an action plan in their subjects, many of these, such as English, are unsatisfactory. They are brief and lack analytical evaluation and a detailed outline of what needs to be done. There is good leadership and management in mathematics where there is a thorough analysis and evaluation of performance. It is also good in Reception where the leader has monitored classroom practice and made sure that staff changes have not had a negative impact on the quality of provision.
27. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately managed. The special educational needs co-ordinator is experienced and has relevant training. Systems are in place to identify and monitor pupils, and they make satisfactory progress. Some pupils who have caused concern for more than one term are not benefiting from an individual education plan tailored to their needs. The school spends the money it receives wisely. The co-ordinator does not monitor the work of teaching assistants, which means there are inconsistencies in provision.

28. The governing body has addressed the issue from the last inspection and now uses funds more flexibly and creatively, although there is a significant under spend which is due to be spent on staffing and premises and improving resources in information and communication technology. The governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met. The race equality policy is being implemented satisfactorily but no clear arrangements for monitoring its impact have yet been agreed. Governors have put a good emphasis on the employment of teaching assistants and provided training. After reviewing policies, governors have set up a good practice of evaluating the effect of these by visiting the school after a period of time to monitor the resulting changes in practice. They are beginning to challenge the school by asking questions and recently have attended training on school self-evaluation which has inspired them to begin questioning their role in the future direction of the school. All staff have access to guidance and a satisfactory level of training and have clear targets as part of their performance management¹ and the governing body has set appropriate performance objectives for the headteacher. The school is appropriately involved in the training of new teachers.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	598,454	Balance from previous year	40,613
Total expenditure	590,546	Balance carried forward to the next	48,521
Expenditure per pupil	2,190		

¹ Performance management refers to arrangements to support the training and continual development of those working in schools. It has replaced appraisal.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

29. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and has been maintained since the last inspection. Attainment on entry is below average in all areas of learning and is well below average in communication, language and literacy skills. The children enter the Reception year with poorly developed language skills. Achievement is satisfactory but by the time the children enter Year 1 most children are unlikely to attain all the expected goals. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with instances of good and very good teaching. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. The co-ordinator is an experienced practitioner who is a good role model. Four children have been identified with special educational needs. There are no children learning English as an additional language. Reception children are split into three classes in order of age each with a qualified teacher and a teaching assistant.
30. There are very good links with the local pre-school community playgroup and most children move from the playgroup to the school. This close working relationship contributes to the smooth transition from playgroup to school. There are very good links with parents and good arrangements for children when they join and leave the Reception year. Information to check on children's progress is satisfactory. The school has worked hard to develop the quality of the outdoor play area and resources and accommodation are very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children settle into school well and make a very good transition from the playgroup.
- Children form good relationships with adults.
- Children have a positive attitude to school and their learning.

Commentary

31. By the end of the Reception year the majority of children are unlikely to achieve all the nationally expected goals. Children make good progress in the youngest class and satisfactory progress in the other two classes. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and enables the children to enjoy school and to be interested in the activities provided: this contributes to their developing concentration and desire to learn. All children dress and undress independently for physical education lessons but a significant number still need adult support during the activities and do not initiate their own ideas. Children enjoy new experiences but many need adult intervention to explore their surroundings. Opportunities for children to be self-reliant and think for themselves are less well developed. Behaviour is good because children establish a positive relationship with adults who clearly identify guidelines and expectations. The role-play areas such as the travel agents' shop encourage children to co-operate with each other but not all children are aware of the needs of others especially in the older two classes.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is well below average in writing and in speaking and listening.
- Children achieve well in reading because teachers prioritise and organise these activities well.

Commentary

32. Achievement is satisfactory overall and it is good in reading. A few more able children will achieve the expected goals but the majority are unlikely to achieve the goals. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but the teaching of reading is good. All children have a positive attitude to books and reading is well organised. Consequently the majority of children make good progress in reading in all classes. More able children are well launched in reading simple text. Average and lower attaining children need adult help to tackle difficult words. They recognise letters but do not confidently use their knowledge of sounds. Children develop their communication skills as they co-operate with each other sharing travel brochures. A few more able children speak confidently but a significant number have limited vocabulary and are not confident in speaking to others. They use non-verbal communication to respond to each other and questions asked. Children make satisfactory progress with early writing skills, including letter formation. A few more able children write simple sentences but the majority need a lot of adult intervention and reinforcement. One particularly able child could write a postcard to Bear saying, 'I went to the park. I went to Peterborough'. There are missed opportunities to encourage children to write in the play activities, for example taking the food and drink orders on the school aeroplane and writing messages using the computer.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and make good progress in youngest class.
- Standards are below those expected for children of this age.

Commentary

33. Achievement is satisfactory. By the end of the Reception year a few more able children will achieve the expected goals but the majority are unlikely to achieve all the goals. Children make satisfactory progress in their ability to identify and count numbers because adults focus on this aspect. In the one lesson seen, teaching was good because the teacher was an experienced practitioner and challenged all the younger children well to count up and down from 20. Reinforcement was strong and younger children were encouraged to use their fingers to count simple numbers. Teaching assistants seize opportunities during activities to develop counting skills. The older children have made satisfactory progress in their ability to count and recognise numbers. Ability to use language to compare larger and smaller quantities is less well developed as is ability to describe solid and flat shapes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities to observe living creatures.
- The school site is well used to enhance learning.

Commentary

34. Achievement is satisfactory. By the end of the year a few children will achieve the expected goals but the majority are unlikely to achieve all the goals. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the school site is used well to show the changing seasons. There are good opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of living creatures such as giant snails, ladybirds and tadpoles. Children show curiosity and examine objects and living things such as giant snails but their ability to investigate objects is less well developed. Teachers plan appropriate opportunities to use the computer. Children make satisfactory progress learning to draw pictures and use the mouse confidently. Opportunities are sometimes missed for children to use the computer to extend writing and mathematical skills. Many children, however, do not know the day or their birthday despite teachers identifying the day during the registration session. Teachers use maps well to show different locations. Good teaching encourages children to locate the position of Boston in Lincolnshire and America.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in physical development.
- Lessons contain a good balance of creating, developing and identifying skills.
- The outdoor area provides good opportunities to extend physical skills.

Commentary

35. The children achieve well. By the end of the Reception year most children will achieve the expected goals because the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There are good opportunities to develop physical skills during the outdoor play and physical education lessons. They gain confidence and competence riding bikes and scooters and there are good opportunities to develop climbing and balancing skills on the outdoor adventure equipment. During a games lesson, children made good progress learning to strike a ball with a bat in different ways. More able children strike the ball confidently in different ways because the teacher maintained a good pace and expectations were clear. Teaching points were given from direct observation and consequently children made good gains in their learning. Children with special educational needs were guided well by the teaching assistant and consequently made the same progress as their peers. Most children grip pencils, paintbrushes and use scissors well. There are good opportunities for children to develop their co-ordination placing shapes in the correct place on jigsaws.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for children to use their imagination through role play activities are good.
- Children achieve well and make good progress because teaching and learning are good.

- Music is very well taught.

Commentary

36. Achievement is good. By the end of the year the majority of children will achieve most of the expected goals because the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There are good opportunities for children to develop their creative skills and experience a range of creative activities through role-play, art and music. Children use their imagination in the travel agents' shop and outside in the pirate ship. They enjoy using a range of materials and experience different artistic techniques. They fold paper to make the spider's legs and use string to create their own snails. The work of famous artists such as Matisse, Van Gogh and Henri Rousseau is used well to support learning. There are good opportunities to mix colours and learn how to clean brushes appropriately. Children are encouraged to observe how the colours change, for example when yellow is added to red it goes lighter and becomes orange. Children explore pattern creating their own tee-shirt design. Very good teaching enables children to make good progress in music. Children learn to strike, scrape, blow and shake a range of percussion instruments including shakers they have made themselves to accompany music played on the piano. Specialist knowledge ensures children gain confidence singing and playing musical instruments. Enjoyment is evident as children sing 'Bobby Bingo'.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**. Standards rise from well below average on entry to above average in reading, though they remain below average in writing and in speaking and listening.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is satisfactory overall with good achievement in reading.
- Standards are below average in speaking and listening and in writing.
- Much of the pupils' writing shows good attention to presentation and to the increasing use of accurate spelling and punctuation.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use language to explain their ideas using a growing vocabulary.
- Assessment and leadership are unsatisfactory.

COMMENTARY

37. National test results in 2003 for Year 2 pupils were above both the national average and those of similar schools in reading but they were below average in writing. Early indications from the test results in 2004 show similar standards. Improvement since the last inspection, when standards were well below average in all aspects, has been good in reading and satisfactory in writing. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good in reading and satisfactory in writing. The more able pupils also do well in reading but not enough of them are attaining the higher level in writing. Children who are from minority ethnic backgrounds do as well as other pupils. Girls are performing significantly better than boys in writing, although most of the lower attaining pupils are boys who have special educational needs. The school has identified all these

weaknesses but there is no evidence that the school has analysed why this is happening or produced a clear plan for improvement.

38. Achievement in speaking and listening is satisfactory but standards are below average. In Years 1 and 2, the teachers build satisfactorily on the skills developed by pupils in the Foundation Stage. Many pupils are beginning to show confidence in talking and listening, especially where the topics are relevant to them. Some higher attaining pupils show that they understand the main points of a discussion and are beginning to adapt their vocabulary and use Standard English well. However, the lower attaining group find it difficult to express themselves clearly, are still using immature speech and are not confident speaking to other pupils. They are reserved and shy when talking to an adult. Most pupils can listen to others but some still call out of turn with remarks that are nothing to do with the topic being discussed. Teachers ask questions of the pupils in lessons and use resources well, such as postcards from Bear, to stimulate discussion. Paired discussion is used in some classes to good effect. However, not all teachers use questioning to enable all abilities to make progress or to probe further to check pupils' understanding so that they can explain their reasoning and extend their language. Teachers' expectations in these sessions are not high enough. There is limited use of drama to help develop skills in speaking and listening. Some teachers expect the pupils to talk in front of the class at the end of the lesson but more use could be made of this. No pupils were expected to talk in front of the whole school in the assemblies observed.
39. The school has tackled the low standards in reading very well and now standards are above average and achievement is good. Teachers are passionate about the importance of reading and make sure that all pupils have regular reading practice focusing appropriately on intonation and expression. The school has motivated pupils well to enjoy reading and teachers share their enthusiasm for books well with the pupils. They keep good records and analyse individual pupils' reading well. There is good attention to the teaching of letter patterns and basic sight words. Teaching assistants are well used to give support. They take effective sessions once a week with readers who are causing concern. When an inspector listened to pupils in Year 2, they did well and pronounced most words with clarity, reading fluently and with an increasing amount of accuracy. It was interesting to note that in discussion with the inspector before and after some of them used immature speech and language and could not express themselves well. There is a good library containing books suitable for all abilities and interests and the children regularly borrow books. A pupil was able to describe exactly how you look for information and find non-fiction books in the library.
40. Achievement in writing is broadly satisfactory although some more able and less able pupils do not do well enough. Standards are below average. Opportunities to write for a variety of different purposes are satisfactory across the school. Pupils retell stories such as 'the Princess and the Pea'. They write invitations, book reviews and tongue twisters. By Year 2, many pupils present their work neatly and are beginning to use punctuation well. Although pupils are taught how to join their letters in handwriting sessions, very few apply this to their writing in other lessons. Teachers work effectively with groups and teaching assistants work well with individual pupils who have special educational needs. This means that other groups in the class can be left to get on with work independently. Some do this well but some groups of pupils, mainly boys, are slow to settle and work at a slow pace. They do not show enthusiasm for writing and hence their progress is not good. A higher attaining pupil wrote 'WAKE UP!' showing the careful choice of writing words for effect but there are too few examples of this. Generally pupils' writing is not imaginative or adventurous enough and many higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently.

41. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with a significant number of good lessons. A main strength in teaching across the school is the good attention paid to the correct use of punctuation such as capital letters and full stops. Teachers plan lessons well and make the content of the lesson interesting. In a good lesson, the teacher showed high expectations for pupils' writing when she encouraged the higher attaining pupils to go beyond mere description about their teddies and identify the teddy's personal qualities as well. She organised the learning so that pupils could talk to their partners to promote speaking and listening. These good features are not apparent in the satisfactory lessons and consistency in sharing good practice has not been promoted sufficiently by the subject leadership. Writing tasks for the most able pupils in Year 2 are often similar to those given to the rest of the class and, as a consequence, the work produced is not of as high a standard as it could be. Teaching assistants support individual pupils well on their writing or reading tasks but are not always involved during the whole class sessions. The marking of work and assessment are unsatisfactory. Pupils' progress is not carefully tracked although teachers do keep writing samples for each pupil. Reading records are good and teachers know how well the pupils are achieving in reading. Targets are displayed in some classes but the pupils do not have individual or group targets for improvement that they know and understand.
42. There are strengths and weaknesses in the leadership and management of the subject. The co-ordinator has played a major part in making sure that reading has been prioritised but she has not had an effective impact in monitoring standards and setting targets for improvement in writing and in speaking and listening. Although prioritised in the school improvement plan, the subject action plan does not state how the school intends to improve standards in these aspects further. Monitoring of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory and is not analysing the strengths and weaknesses in teaching well enough.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

43. Language and literacy are satisfactorily promoted in other subjects of the curriculum. There are examples of teachers using work in history, geography, religious education and science to develop reading and writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strengths in teaching and the curriculum result in average standards and good achievement.
- Leadership and management of mathematics are good.

Commentary

44. Results in the national test results in 2003 for Year 2 pupils were average. Indications from the test results this year show similar standards. Achievement is good. Since the last inspection standards and achievement have made a good improvement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are doing well because planning takes full account of their present levels of performance. Since January 2004, Year 2 pupils

have been taught in ability groups and this is contributing to the improved performance. Resources and planning have been improved.

45. Examination of pupils' work shows that there has been good progress in applying mathematics and using mathematical knowledge to solve word and number problems. More able pupils use their knowledge of numbers well to solve problems. They can work out that if a table measures 38cm, the length doubled is 76cm. Knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes is satisfactory and pupils can identify basic shapes.
46. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with instances of very good teaching in Year 1. Lessons are well planned with a variety of interesting activities and the main learning thrust of the lesson is shared effectively with pupils so they know what is expected of them. Year 2 teachers use movement well to make learning fun, for example pupils jump once to show numbers ending in 5 and twice to show numbers ending in 0. In the very good lesson the pace and teacher's enthusiasm for mathematics motivate pupils well. Very good teaching ensured lower attaining pupils could identify odd and even numbers. Pupils were appropriately challenged and more able pupils could identify odd and even numbers between 50 and 70. Average pupils matched odd and even numbers between 41 and 50. Reinforcement was good throughout the session and this helped less confident pupils consolidate their learning. Year 2 pupils make good progress in the ability grouped sessions but opportunities are often missed to tailor work to match individual differences within the set groups. More able pupils can explain the significance of a simple block graph, they construct it using given data and can explain differences, for example the numbers shown and the times the dice were thrown.
47. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader is enthusiastic and a very good role model for other staff. She has clear vision to develop the subject. Planning is monitored closely but opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning are less well developed. The co-ordinator has worked alongside other teachers in a supportive role and this has been beneficial to developing confidence in teaching. Test results are analysed carefully and weaknesses identified. Booster classes make an effective contribution to the quality of learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

48. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics across the curriculum with instances of good use. There are good examples of using mathematical skills in literacy. Word problems reinforce competence in number work. In Year 1 number poems show good links with literacy e.g., 'Matthew, Matthew this is number 2. He is always wearing blue'. There is satisfactory use of pattern and shape in artwork.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have raised standards for higher-attaining pupils.
- There is some very good teaching.
- Because the co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning, inconsistencies between classes are not being identified.

- Marking is not used consistently to help pupils to improve.

Commentary

49. In the teacher assessments in 2003, the school's results were below the national average. Indications from assessments this year show that standards remain below average overall but the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 has improved considerably. This is because teachers have worked together successfully to assess the progress of these pupils. Achievement is satisfactory. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they might because the work is not matched to their differing abilities and marking is limited. Coverage of the curriculum is good. Sometimes the teacher directs experiments too closely and pupils do not have opportunities to find things out for themselves. This was identified at the previous inspection and improvement has not been good enough.
50. Teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory, but is satisfactory overall, as it was at the time of the last inspection. In very good lessons the teacher planned carefully to make the work relevant and interesting; for example, in one Year 1 class pupils were invited to experiment with toys to find out if a push or a pull was needed to make them move. The teacher harnessed their enthusiasm well, and all pupils made strides in their learning. In an unsatisfactory lesson the task had not been well planned and the teacher could not motivate pupils, which led to problems with class control.
51. Leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the role and is enthusiastic. Development is at an early stage, with insufficient focus on the quality of teaching and learning. Inconsistencies between classes are not being identified because no monitoring takes place. Assessment is underdeveloped. Where teachers have collaborated, for example in extending the learning of higher attaining pupils, standards have improved. At present pupils' progress is not tracked over time, so the underachieving groups of pupils are not always identified. Marking is not used consistently to help pupils improve their work. There are some links to other subjects, for example through the seaside topic in Year 1. Computers are used appropriately to support learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are not enough computers for the number of pupils in the school.
- Links with other subjects are developing well.
- The co-ordinator's non-contact time is inefficiently used to manage the subject effectively.
- There is some good teaching.

Commentary

52. Standards are below average. This is mainly because pupils do not have enough access to computers. Classes only contain two or three machines for 30 pupils. It is thus difficult to teach skills, especially as not enough time is directly allocated to the subject in timetables. Teachers often intend to use computers during the day but this does not always happen. Overall achievement is satisfactory because teaching is often good and sometimes does not require computers. There are imaginative links with other subjects, and good examples of pupils' work are displayed on the walls.
53. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject. Some have computers at home, which they use to support work at school. They particularly enjoy designing graphics. Teachers' subject

knowledge is mainly secure. Planning is not always very specific, and work in books does not show how much help pupils have received. In the good lessons teachers made tasks interesting and presented information in a lively way. Year 1 pupils investigated how we control machines by looking at everyday objects and toys. They had a good understanding of how things work.

54. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is clear about what needs improving but little progress has happened since the last inspection. The subject is still a focus of the school improvement plan, but intentions lack rigour. Pupils' skills are being assessed appropriately but it is not clear how the school will measure standards to see if they are rising. Non-contact time is devoted to trouble-shooting technical problems rather than monitoring the quality of provision. This is not a good use of the teacher's valuable time.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

55. There are some good links with other subjects, which are evident around the school. For example pupils designed a multi-coloured coat for Joseph using a graphics program, and have produced graphs in science and mathematics. The computers are often used for word-processing and pupils use virtual web pages in religious education. Links are not, however, routinely included when planning for other subjects.

HUMANITIES

56. There is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on standards and achievement or teaching and learning in **geography** and **history**. No lessons were observed and there was a limited sample of children's work available. Display work indicates appropriate coverage of the requirements for geography and history. Artwork is well linked to work in geography. There are attractive displays of pupils' work linked to Mexico. Pupils design and make masks and displays contain a good range of easily accessible books about life in Mexico. Every opportunity is seized to show locations locally, nationally and internationally on a range of maps throughout the school. History has an appropriate focus around the school. There are attractive history displays in Year 1 enhanced by Victorian and Edwardian artefacts. A visit to the local museum is well used to extend learning and Year 1 pupils write about their visit and favourite objects. Literacy skills are well used, for example a Year 1 pupil writes, 'I liked the mangle and kitchen and played with the toys'. There are different time lines to reinforce pupils' understanding of the passing of time. These are well considered and they show a range of different homes from a cave to a modern home. Year 1 pupils show their understanding of differences between homes long ago and homes today by arranging the homes in the correct historical order, for example from a cave home to a modern detached home resembling ones built today.

Religious education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils gain a good understanding of how different religions welcome young people into their faith.
- There are some good links with information and communication technology and design and technology.

- Teachers do not use questioning sufficiently well to challenge pupils and probe their understanding.

Commentary

- Standards of attainment at Year 2 are in line with the requirements of the local agreed syllabus for religious education and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
- Pupils' work shows a good use of literacy skills. After learning about the Ten Commandments, one lower attaining pupil in Year 1 wrote his eleventh commandment 'We cannot have everything we want'. There are some good links with design and technology such as making a poppy for Remembrance Day and designing a Muslim prayer mat. Scrutiny of work and displays shows that pupils have a good understanding of Christian baptism and know about special books of the major religions. Pupils visit the local church and use the Internet to take a virtual tour of a mosque. Pupils also use computers well used to design Joseph's coat of many colours.
- The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with good teaching by the co-ordinator. Teachers use stories well to convey messages such as how both Christians and Muslims feel it is important to have a special place where you can go alone if you need to. One story outlined how Mohammed found a special place in a cave. Appropriate use is made of questioning but teachers do not challenge the pupils enough. They accept pupils' answers and do not probe them sufficiently to think about the questions more deeply. In one lesson, pupils discussed their special place with a partner although there were minor problems when boys did not want to partner girls. In a good lesson, the co-ordinator brought her wedding dress in and discussed the main aspects of a wedding with her pupils. This was particularly relevant for the pupils as some had attended her wedding. She challenged the pupils well to use the correct language when a pupil called a veil 'the thing that goes over the head and down the back'. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs well.
- Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the subject and has ensured that the new scheme of work is workable in the school. She knows what needs to be done and has identified general priorities but these lack any detail on exactly what will be done and how any initiatives will be evaluated. Assessment and marking procedures are unsatisfactory. In the action plan, training for assessment is identified for next year but there is no urgency in ensuring that pupils' work will be assessed during that time. Very little work is marked with simple comments for the pupils to read what they have to do to improve or how well they have done.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

61. Neither **art and design** nor **design and technology** were a focus of the inspection, so there are no judgements about the overall provision. In **art and design** no lessons were observed, but planning was examined, work scrutinised, and discussions held with pupils and teachers. Pupils have opportunities to draw from life (for example Victorian objects) and from their imaginations (based on seeing part of a poster). Cultural links are established through Mexican masks and Muslim prayer mats. An interesting study has been made of the work of Henry Moore, and exciting sculptures created. Standards of work vary considerably but overall appear to have declined somewhat from the picture portrayed at the time of the last inspection. In particular specific skills are not always taught systematically, resulting in work that is often immature.
62. In **design and technology** one lesson was observed, planning was examined, and discussions held with pupils and teachers. The lesson seen was satisfactory and enabled pupils to develop their cutting skills and to design a repeating pattern. Tasks are sometimes rather narrow, relying on templates. Some of the 3D work is impressive, especially by the Year 1 pupils. Year 2 pupils designed and made imaginative glove puppets, which were carefully stitched. There is an adequate scheme of work in place now. There are good links with other subjects such as religious education and personal, social and health education
63. No judgement can be made about the standards pupils achieve or the quality of teaching and learning in **physical education** as only one lesson was observed during the inspection. In the Year 2 lesson teaching was satisfactory and standards were typical for pupils' age. All pupils achieved well in the lesson and developed their ability to aim, bounce and catch a ball. They were aware of the effect of exercise on the body because the teacher used questions well to reinforce their understanding of this. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported by the teaching assistant and made the same progress as their peers. The lesson contained appropriate opportunities for pupils to create a sequence using three different ways to send a ball. Opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and others' performance were less well developed. Resources and accommodation are good and teachers make good use of the equipment trolley. There is a tennis and football club but this was not inspected.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to extend their learning in extra-curricular clubs.

Commentary

64. Since the last inspection the school has made good improvement in raising standards and the quality of teaching and learning in music. Musical resources have been extended and these are now all stored centrally and are easily accessible.
65. Pupils achieve well and attain standards that are typical for their age. A musician works regularly with teachers and consequently music now has a higher profile in the school. Teaching is satisfactory with instances of good teaching. In the good lessons high expectations and challenge are evident, consequently more able and average pupils are

developing a growing awareness of rhythmic patterns in music. More able pupils in Year 2 identify and explain the meaning of pulse, pitch, tempo and scale. They enjoy clapping a range of rhythmic patterns to accompany Scooby Dooby Do. The quality of singing is average and pupils are encouraged to recognise rhythmic patterns as they sing songs like 'Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor'. The quality of singing is improving because the teacher has specialist subject knowledge and is a good role model. Opportunities, however, are sometimes missed for all pupils to explore and create their own responses individually and with a partner.

66. Extra-curricular clubs are making a good contribution to raising standards and the profile of music. Teachers leading the recorder club and the choir all demonstrate good subject knowledge and consequently challenge pupils well. During recorder club Year 2 pupils make good progress learning to play a range of songs following musical notation to guide their performance. The school choir is well attended and pupils participate keenly in singing a range of songs. The subject is appropriately led and managed.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school creates a caring ethos.
- There is no school council at present.

Commentary

67. There are regular opportunities for pupils in each class to discuss relevant issues such as healthy lifestyles and keeping safe. The school is working with local schools on a drugs awareness initiative. An appropriate policy is in place for sex education. Of the three lessons observed one was good and two satisfactory. In the good lesson, the subject of bullying was discussed sensitively, and pupils helped to understand how to recognise and deal with it. At present there is no school council to provide pupils with a formal opportunity to communicate their views about school life, although one is planned. The co-ordinator is not allocated time to monitor teaching, but training is provided. There is no formal assessment of pupils' progress.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
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	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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