

INSPECTION REPORT

BISHOPTON REDMARSHALL CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bishopton, Stockton-on-Tees

LEA area: Darlington

Unique reference number: 114233

Headteacher: Mrs Gill Wray

Lead inspector: Mr Andrew Scott

Dates of inspection: 4 - 6 October 2004

Inspection number: 266436

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 76

School address: Cobby Castle Lane
Bishopton
Stockton-on-Tees
Postcode: TS21 1HD

Telephone number: 01740 630339
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Steve Rickerby

Date of previous inspection: February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small rural school with 76 pupils. Most pupils come from the two villages that the school serves, but several pupils come from further afield. Nearly all pupils are from white British families and come from above average social backgrounds. There is some movement of population in the area, which affect some year groups more than others, but this does not have a major impact on standards. At present, pupils have average knowledge and skills when they start school. This varies from year to year, because of the small numbers of pupils in each year group. Thirteen per cent of pupils have special educational needs which is lower than average. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties, and some have speech and communication problems. There are two pupils with statements of special educational need. The school won a School Achievement Award in 2003 and is a leading school in the local authority for information and communication technology.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| 27545 | Mr Andrew Scott | Lead inspector | English |
| | | | Information and communication technology |
| | | | Art and design |
| | | | Geography |
| | | | History |
| | | | Music |
| | | | Special educational needs |
| | | | English as an additional language |
| 12511 | Mrs Linda Buller | Lay inspector | |
| 24031 | Mrs Iris Idle | Team inspector | The Foundation Stage |
| | | | Mathematics |
| | | | Science |
| | | | Religious education |
| | | | Design and technology |
| | | | Physical education |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school does not provide an effective education for its pupils, although aspects of its provision are satisfactory. Current standards in the main subjects are average in Years 2 and 6, and pupils have good attitudes to work and behave well. However, there are serious weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school, as well as the teaching and the achievement of pupils, all of which are unsatisfactory. As a result, the school does not give satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the school has not been decisive enough in improving the school since the last inspection and does not have clear and convincing enough plans for the future.
- Pupils, particularly the more able, do not achieve well enough.
- Teachers do not make effective use of assessment to set work for their pupils which is challenging and motivating.
- Pupils achieve well in reading and in music throughout the school.
- Pupils behave responsibly and have positive attitudes to work.
- There has been a very good record of attendance over recent years.

The school's progress since the last inspection has been poor. Assessment methods are more systematic and provision for the pupils' cultural development is better. However, the leadership, management and governance are not as good. Teaching is less effective, so pupils' achievement has deteriorated. The school has not successfully addressed all the key issues from the last inspection especially those concerned with using assessment information to provide work which matches pupils' capabilities, and also with checking how well pupils progress over time.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2004 |
| English | A | A | D | D |
| mathematics | A* | B | C | B |
| science | A | A | D | D |

Key: A - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E* - very low*

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

(Caution is required in interpreting the data. In years when there are 10 or fewer pupils, results may not be wholly reliable.)

Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall. At present, children enter school with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. They achieve satisfactorily in the reception class and reach the goals expected of them by the end of the year. However, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in Year 2. Standards are above average in reading and average in mathematics, but below average in writing, science and religious education. By the end of Year 6, standards are likely to be average this year in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory because they have made insufficient progress

compared to their standards in Year 2. Throughout the school, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with expectations but, in music, standards are above those expected. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily in all classes, because of the sound support they receive. Compared to the last inspection, standards are similar by Year 6, but lower by Year 2.

There is good provision for pupils' personal development. Their moral, social and cultural development is good and their spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils have good attitudes to work and behave well both in and out of classes. The level of attendance remains consistently high and is well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. The teaching of children in the reception class is satisfactory and so children's achievement is satisfactory. In Years 1 to 6, teaching can be satisfactory and sometimes good. However, over time, teaching does not ensure that pupils achieve well enough, particularly because teachers do not match work to pupils' abilities skilfully. The curriculum is satisfactory. There are good opportunities to enrich pupils' learning in the range of visits and visitors, but not in everyday lessons. The few displays around the school do little to celebrate pupils' achievements. There is satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs and for the well-being of all pupils but unsatisfactory guidance for their learning. Links with other schools and the local community are satisfactory. Partnerships with parents are unsatisfactory because the school does not keep the parents well enough informed of their children's progress.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory. The headteacher has not succeeded in developing the school enough since the last inspection. The school's procedures to evaluate the quality of its work, particularly the quality of teaching and learning, are poor. As a result, several vital issues have not been fully resolved and other weaknesses have arisen. In addition, the school improvement plan does not clearly define the aspirations of the school or identify all priorities. The headteacher has not ensured that senior staff are effective in developing the subjects for which they are responsible. The management of the school is inadequate, because staff development is slow and the systems for evaluating the school's development are insecure. Governance is unsatisfactory. The governors are supportive and hard-working, and they ensure that all statutory requirements are met. However, they do not hold the school to account with sufficient rigour.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents generally have a good opinion of the school. They consider the school takes good care of their children, especially when they first arrive. They believe staff are fair and that pupils' behaviour is good. The inspection team agrees with this. Parents also think that teaching is good, that teachers expect pupils to work hard and that the leadership and management are effective. The inspection team does not share these opinions, but does agree that the school does not keep parents well informed about their children's progress or consult them enough in the school's development. Pupils are positive about their school but do not all believe that they are required to work hard enough. The inspection team agrees with this.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that there is a thorough and clear-sighted development plan based on scrupulous and objective self-analysis, and which will be rigorously monitored.
- Ensure that teachers provide work for all pupils which is suitably challenging and stimulating in order to improve pupils' achievement.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The achievement of pupils is unsatisfactory. Standards in most of the main subjects are average in Years 2 and 6 and they are above average in reading. However, standards in writing are below average and, in Year 2, standards in science and religious education are below those expected. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. Compared to the previous inspection, standards are similar in Year 6 but have deteriorated in Year 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- The quality of writing throughout the school is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils do well in reading and music.
- Standards are not good enough in science and religious education in Year 2.

Commentary

1 At present, children begin school with skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age. Their attainment when they enter school varies from year to year because of the small size of some of the year groups. Children achieve satisfactorily in the reception class and are likely to reach the goals expected of them by the end of the year in literacy, language and mathematics. Children begin school with higher than expected personal and social skills and maintain these during the reception year. It was not possible to judge how well children do in the other areas of learning.

2 In the national tests of 2004, the standards of pupils in Year 2 were well below average in reading compared to the national average and very low compared to schools in a similar socio-economic context. In writing, standards were very low compared to all schools, which put the school in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. However, standards in mathematics were above average, although average compared to similar schools. The results in reading and writing can be explained partly by the fact that there were only eight pupils in the year group and a few of them had special educational needs or had recently arrived at the school. Over time, standards have been below the national trend.

3 Pupils' achievement in the current Year 2 is unsatisfactory. Standards in reading are above average and pupils achieve well in acquiring good word skills and confidence. Standards in writing, however, are below average. Pupils have weak spelling and have difficulty in constructing sentences; their handwriting is poorly formed and untidy. Standards are average in mathematics and ICT but they are below those expected in science, because pupils are not good enough at recording and explaining their observations. Pupils' attainment is below average in religious education because their knowledge is insecure. However, their attainment is above average in music because pupils have a good appreciation of a range of music and sing well together.

4 Pupils in Year 6 achieved standards in 2004 that were below average in English compared to all schools nationally and similar schools. Standards in mathematics were above

the national average but below similar schools. Standards in science were below average compared to national and similar schools. Standards have been above the national average in recent years and the drop in standards this year can also be partly explained by the relatively small number of pupils concerned. However, compared to their results in the national tests when these pupils were in Year 2, it is clear that they have not achieved as well they should have.

5 Pupils in the current Year 6 are likely to achieve average standards by the end of the year in English, mathematics, science and ICT. At present, there are weaknesses in writing, such as spelling, handwriting and creative expression, and there is not enough scope for independent learning in mathematics. However, the planned support from the school may well mean that standards could become average. Nevertheless, when compared to their performance in the 2001 national tests, pupils are not achieving satisfactorily. At that time, pupils were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. Some instability in staffing has contributed to this but the overall quality of teaching has not been good enough to keep standards high. Standards in music are above average because most pupils play instruments competently and sing melodically. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. The school makes good provision for social, moral and cultural development and satisfactory provision for spiritual development. The school has a clear policy on race equality so pupils know the importance of social interaction. Attendance is well above average and punctuality is good. Overall provision has, therefore, remained good since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers generally ensure that pupils are keen to learn.
- The good relationships between pupils mean that their behaviour is mostly good.
- The spiritual development of pupils is not as good as it might be.
- Parents are good at ensuring that their children attend school regularly.

Commentary

6 In most lessons, pupils enjoy their learning and respond well to their teachers. Teachers explain new information well and, as a result, pupils' focus and learning can be good. This was very much the case in a Year 5/6 ICT lesson on graphics. When given tasks, they settle down quickly to carry them out and often sustain good concentration. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for instance, applied themselves responsibly when writing out sentences in an English lesson. However, occasionally, when teachers do not check how well pupils are working, the pace of work slows, making learning satisfactory at best. Pupils often produce untidy handwriting and illustration, because teachers do not insist on them taking enough pride in the presentation of their work.

7 There is a good social atmosphere around the school. Teachers ensure that pupils move around considerately and play happily together in the playground. Lunchtimes are important social occasions. In lessons, teachers succeed in establishing clear guidelines about expected behaviour. Pupils sometimes misbehave but only when lessons fail to capture their interest or teachers neglect their supervision. Pupils get on well with one another. They

are patient and thoughtful. In music lessons, pupils wait politely while other pupils perform. In the Year 5/6 ICT lesson, a few pupils readily explained the new learning to several pupils who had missed the start of the lesson. The paired reading activity involves all pupils and is very effective at strengthening the bonds between them.

8 The school misses valuable opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual awareness. There are occasional moments in lessons and assemblies for pupils to reflect on personal and religious issues, and teachers promote an appreciation of music and the arts. However, lessons are mainly not inspiring or uplifting, and there is little evidence that pupils develop a sense of self-awareness or creative expression.

Attendance

9 Attendance is well above average and has been so for some time. It is as good as it was at the last inspection. Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and parents ensure that their children attend very regularly and arrive in good time in the mornings.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (96.8%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data | 3.2 |
| National data | 5.1 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National data | 0.4 |

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British |
| Mixed – White and Black African |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background |
| Parent/pupil preferred not to say |

| No of pupils on roll |
|----------------------|
| 70 |
| 1 |
| 2 |
| 1 |
| 2 |

| Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education that the school provides for pupils is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall, but are satisfactory in the reception class and some subjects. The curriculum is satisfactory and the school takes satisfactory care of the well-being of its pupils. Links with parents are unsatisfactory but the partnerships with other schools and the local community have a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment of pupils' work is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers do not plan work skilfully enough to match the abilities of pupils.
- Lessons are not routinely stimulating or inspiring, although the atmosphere in most lessons is such that pupils are happy to work.
- Although teaching assistants are mostly effective with groups of pupils and individuals, they are not always well deployed in whole class sessions.
- Teachers explain new learning helpfully but do not teach all basic skills well.

Commentary

10 Although most lessons observed during the inspection were satisfactory or good, teaching is not good enough over time because pupils do not learn satisfactorily. This is a weaker situation than at the last inspection. There has been some instability in the staffing of Years 3 to 6 and this has inevitably disrupted pupils' progress to some extent.

11 However, the main reason for unsatisfactory teaching is that teachers do not provide work for pupils that is closely matched to their abilities. Despite the fact that there are at least two year groups in each class and that regular testing highlights the wide range of ability, teachers frequently set work which is identical or too similar for all pupils in the same class. As a result, the challenge in the work is often too hard for most less able pupils to cope with and too easy for the more able pupils. For example, in ICT lessons, all pupils do the same work; less able pupils are helped by the adults, while more able pupils have to wait until everyone is ready to move on.

12 Lessons are not always sufficiently interesting to motivate the pupils. For example, literacy lessons on Monday mornings are devoted to spelling exercises and laborious handwriting tasks. Subjects are often taught in a humdrum fashion with lots of exercises on worksheets and with little reference to other subjects. As a result, pupils are not always stimulated to work productively. Teachers do not give pupils enough scope to learn and to think for themselves. This is why their skills in using mathematics are underdeveloped, for example. Teachers are not insistent enough that work is completed, mistakes are corrected or that good presentation is the norm and so pupils do not learn from their errors or take enough pride in their work.

13 The working atmosphere in lessons is mostly good. Teachers have good expectations of behaviour and establish effective routines. Pupils are eager to learn and so sustain concentration well. Exciting activities, such as computer graphics or weaving, inevitably ensure that pupils work hard. However, occasionally, teachers do not deal with misbehaviour promptly, and this disturbs the flow of learning, especially in physical education lessons.

14 Teaching assistants work satisfactorily with pupils. When they work with small groups of pupils, they are effective and produce good learning. The children in the reception class, for example, made swift progress when learning to programme a floor robot, guided by two teaching assistants. When classes work as a whole, teaching assistants are less effective and do not always advise and support less able pupils, or act quickly enough to deal with any behaviour issues.

15 Teachers are good at presenting new work to pupils. They explain new ideas carefully and use resources thoughtfully to reinforce particular points. For instance, the lively music and skilful demonstration by the teacher in a Year 3/4 dance lesson ensured that pupils were well aware of the need for precision and grace in their movements. Teachers teach other basic skills well, such as reading, word-processing and dance. However, they are less effective with some skills, especially writing. Pupils do not learn the correct skills early on and they tend to consolidate their inaccuracy as they pass through the school. This weakens their achievement in English.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 17 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 0 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

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

The curriculum

The school provides its pupils with a satisfactory curriculum. It enriches pupils' experiences with a satisfactory range of extra activities that boosts their skills in sports, arts, and personal development. The accommodation, staffing and resources for learning are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The carousel aspect of the curriculum is good and uses teachers' expertise sensibly.
- The curriculum is not devised skilfully enough to benefit all pupils in the same way.
- The school does not develop its curriculum methodically and creatively.
- Pupils have good opportunities to participate in music and sport.
- The outdoor accommodation for children in the reception class is not good enough.

Commentary

16 Good opportunities are provided for pupils to be taught several subjects by teachers with specific expertise. This is particularly evident in music where all pupils achieve well in appreciating and performing music because of the high expectations and skills of the specialist teacher. The provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection, partly because of better equipment, but mainly because of more specialised teaching and technical support. Pupils openly acknowledge how much they enjoy learning in this way.

17 The overall curriculum is similar to how it was at the last inspection. However, the school is not effective enough at tailoring the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. Most pupils receive a satisfactory curriculum, but not all. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, mainly because of the quality of adult support, rather than through specially planned work. The school has identified several pupils who are more able, but has not clarified whether they are gifted or talented and has, in any case, not adapted their curriculum accordingly. The school offers satisfactory provision for drugs awareness, as well as sex and relationships education, especially through the science curriculum and lessons on personal and social education.

18 The development of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The headteacher has been keen to adopt new initiatives, such as Brain Gym and thinking skills, and pupils enjoy the activities. However, the school has not concentrated enough on important areas and made sure that these are up to scratch. The school has not introduced any new, suitable methods to improve pupils' writing, for instance. The topic-based approach to learning is commendable, but teachers do not plan carefully enough to exploit opportunities to develop pupils' basic skills through these lessons in, for example, literacy and ICT.

19 Pupils benefit from a good range of different sports including football, netball and swimming. They participate in local netball and football tournaments and enter the local regional swimming gala. Pupils have good opportunities to play musical instruments such as the descant recorder, violin and guitar. A small group of pupils attended a recorder workshop at Durham University. Older pupils have visited a local theatre to see 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat' and all pupils take part in Christmas productions.

20 The outdoor play area provided for reception children is unsatisfactory. Children do not have direct access to a secure place outside where they can develop their independence and the full range of physical abilities. There is little outdoor play equipment provided and the equipment they use is borrowed from the private pre-school based in the school. The school's

leadership has been aware of this weakness for some time, but has not taken effective action to remedy it.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for the pupils' care, welfare and health and safety is satisfactory. The support, guidance and advice for pupils' personal development are unsatisfactory, although the school takes satisfactory account of pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does not keep a good enough record of how well pupils learn.
- The weakness of teachers' guidance does not help pupils to achieve well.
- The induction arrangements for children starting school are effective.
- Pupils have good opportunities to influence the school's development through the school council.

Commentary

21 The school is not efficient at monitoring pupils' progress over time. This was an issue at the last inspection and has not yet been satisfactorily dealt with. The school did put a system in place but the school leadership did not ensure that all teachers routinely entered all the data and so it gave only a partial picture of progress. A new process has just been adopted which may well provide a clearer picture but, at present, teachers do not fully appreciate how pupils develop from year to year in the main subjects. As a consequence, it is difficult for the school to know exactly what pupils need to do to improve.

22 The pupils themselves are not aware enough of what they have to do to improve. Although teachers' marking has been detailed and helpful very recently, overall it is not good enough. It often highlights errors but does not spell out how work could be better. Sometimes, the language used is too complex for pupils to understand. Teachers give pupils too little guidance on self-improvement. The school has just introduced a satisfactory system of setting targets for pupils in literacy and numeracy. This has taken some time to put in place and is not yet embedded in everyday practice.

23 There are good links with the private pre-school, situated in the building. The reception class teachers meet staff from the pre-school each half term to discuss both the work the children cover and their individual progress. The reception class teachers also visit the pre-school regularly on an informal basis and form good relationships with the children. This helps new children settle quickly into their life in school. Assessment records and portfolios of work give teachers good indications of the abilities of each child when they begin the reception year.

24 Pupils are proud of their work on the school council. The council meets regularly and involves pupils from Years 3 to 6. Pupils debate important issues and suggest improvements to the school. One successful proposal was for a cycle shed, which now sits gleaming by the front gate. However, pupils do not benefit fully from their role and opportunities to develop their independence are missed. For example, they do not chair meetings or take minutes, although they do interview potential new council members.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are unsatisfactory. Links with other schools and the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does not ensure that parents are well enough informed of their children's progress.
- The school does not take sufficient account of parents' views in its development.
- Parents are supportive of the school by giving good help to their children with their homework and staging social activities and fundraising for the pupils.
- There are close and mutually beneficial links with the pre-school.

Commentary

25 Links with parents have deteriorated since the last inspection. At that time, relationships were judged to be very good, but this is no longer the case. The school only holds one formal parents' evening each year to give parents the chance to discuss the progress of the their child with the class teacher. Parents feel that this is not often enough for them to receive a full picture, but they do have the opportunity to arrange to see teachers at other times. The annual reports on pupils' progress do not give parents clear enough information. Reports are often too similar for different pupils and do not say overtly how well pupils are achieving and what they can do to improve.

26 The school has sensibly begun to sound out parental opinion through a questionnaire. They have learned that parents generally appreciate the work of the school. However, the school does not deal with all parental concerns effectively. An issue about the school's communication with parents arose two years ago, and has still to be resolved. A significant minority of parents have expressed concern about the quality of homework. An important part of the problem is that parents do not know precisely what homework their children should have each week.

27 Parents help the school in a variety of good ways. They support their children's homework and ensure that work set is returned promptly. They check what books their children are reading and how much they read. The parents' association is very active, not only raising vital extra funds for the school but putting on social occasions for children, such as beetle drives and an Easter Egg Hunt.

28 The link with the pre-school is valuable to the school and to the local community. It makes sense to allow the pre-school to use one of the school's classrooms. The close proximity means that pupils enter the reception class, having already become familiar with the building and the other pupils. The reception class teachers often visit the pre-school to get to know the children and prepare them for the transition.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a lack of urgency by the headteacher to improve known weaknesses.
- The plans for the development of the school are poor.
- Subject co-ordinators do not have a clear overview of their subjects nor establish effective plans to improve them.

- The governing body does not monitor the school's progress with enough rigour.

Commentary

29 The development of the school since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. The headteacher, supported by key staff and the governors, has worked successfully to improve some former areas of concern, such as the provision for ICT and the systems for assessment. However, progress in other areas has been less successful. Teachers are still not analysing and using the data from assessment effectively to match work to the abilities of pupils, and the systems for monitoring pupils' progress are still inadequate. In addition, the quality of teaching and learning, and leadership and management have become less effective.

30 A major weakness in the leadership and management of the school is that the procedures for evaluating its own performance are poor. As a result, the school's plans for development are very weak. The school improvement plan identifies a few appropriate focuses for action such as problem-solving in mathematics and the provision for more able pupils. However, it does not, for example, include clear weaknesses, such as pupils' writing or developing the role of subject leaders. Furthermore, the proposed actions are vague and ill-defined. One planned activity in the numeracy action plan, for example, is to write a numeracy action plan. Many of the other priorities are essentially routine activities, such as reviewing policy documents.

31 Senior staff have too little impact on the development of subjects for which they are responsible. These teachers inevitably shoulder a heavy responsibility in such a small school, but they have not been given enough time or guidance to carry out their duties effectively. As they do not monitor teaching or pupils' work systematically, they do not have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. They are not active enough in checking standards and remedying perceived weaknesses. The headteacher does not have a systematic approach to observing the quality of teaching, and is not able to foster a system of professional development for staff, finely tuned to their individual needs.

32 The school's governors are supportive and very caring about the school. They keep abreast of the school's development and support the headteacher in times of need in, for example, staffing issues. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met. The governors are challenging of the school at times but do not insist enough that improvements are made within a reasonable timescale. Furthermore, they have a tendency to accept too readily the information they receive and they believe that the school is doing well. They are not fully involved in the development planning and they have not ensured that the school has developed satisfactorily since the last inspection.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 269,091 |
| Total expenditure | 263,396 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 3,512 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 14,000 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 5,695 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

33 Most children have skills and abilities that are typical for their age when they start school, although this varies from year to year. Children's achievement is satisfactory and they are likely to attain the goals expected of them by the end of the reception year. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers get to know children well before they join the class so that they settle very quickly into their new group. The children are well supported by teaching assistants who understand how young children learn and make sure the children understand the work they are doing.

34 The curriculum is satisfactory. At present, children are taught in the same class as Year 1 and 2 pupils, but teachers make sure that children follow a suitable curriculum for their age. However, the provision for outdoor play and activities is unsatisfactory because children do not have a secure, designated area of their own. The school has identified the outdoor provision as an issue to be addressed, but progress has been too slow. Children's learning is assessed satisfactorily at the end of a piece of work but the results are not recorded. Assessment is not clearly identified as part of planning and the day-to-day assessment does not influence teachers' planning enough. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Although the overall provision has remained similar since the last inspection, teaching is not quite so effective and so pupils' achievement is no longer good.

35 There was insufficient evidence to make judgements on the following three areas of learning.

36 In **creative development**, children learn happily through role play. Several children relished the pretence of being a princess with her servants and were busy making soup! Children can sing familiar songs from memory, although they are not very tuneful. Their knowledge of music is good, for example, they can recognise the sounds of many instruments.

37 Children learn **knowledge and understanding of the world** through activities such as ICT. They know, for example, how to 'program' a simple floor robot, so that it follows a given route. A recent walk in the village made children aware of the different kinds of housing, such as bungalows and terraced property.

38 In their **physical development**, children showed good skills. For example, most children have a good sense of balance, they can hop on each foot, they can skip and are developing accuracy in throwing and catching. Most of them can change into their sports clothes independently.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High expectations of behaviour produce confident and considerate children.
- Older pupils enable reception children to feel secure within a new learning environment.

Commentary

39 Adults form good relationships with children. Teachers and support staff establish clear guidelines for expected levels of behaviour and so children know where they stand. Teachers make it clear that any contributions children make during lessons are valued and appreciated. Consequently, this helps them to feel secure and confident to offer their ideas. They respond quickly to teacher's instructions, for example, to listen and clear away without making a fuss. Children achieve satisfactorily and are likely to exceed their goals in this area of learning because of the good teaching.

40 The good example of older pupils helps the youngest children to quickly settle into established routines. Children work alongside each other well and often share experiences. For example, children worked together to enter instructions into a programmable toy. Children work well in small groups without support.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers enable children to sustain good oral skills and develop an interest in reading.
- Teachers do not succeed in establishing good writing skills.
- The progress of children is not recorded regularly so that it influences lesson planning.

Commentary

41 Children enter school with good speaking and listening skills which they maintain through the reception year. Although children have only been in school a short time, they confidently explain, for example, that they are dressed up as 'a princess' and that they 'are making soup'. They can also say which kind of soup they prefer - tomato! They talk happily to older pupils in their shared reading time. Children enjoy sharing books as a whole class activity and follow the stories with interest. They know many of their letter sounds and some blends but do not know the letter names. Children are on target to reach their goals in reading by the end of the year and to achieve satisfactorily.

42 The majority of children start school with writing skills that are below those expected for their age. They lack confidence in making marks and forming letters but benefit from good opportunities to make letters using play dough. However, daily opportunities to practise writing letters are limited and so children struggle to be accurate. Half of the children cannot yet write their first name. Most children will not attain their goal in this area of learning by the end of the year.

43 Assessment does not influence teaching enough. Children's understanding is checked regularly because the number of children in the group is small. However, teachers do not keep a regular record of these findings and modify their planning so that any lack of understanding or uncertain learning are corrected. Teachers benefit from the children's records which are passed on from the pre-school but do not regularly update them. Overall, teaching and children's achievement are satisfactory.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children benefit from working alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- Children are well supported in their learning by good teaching assistants.

Commentary

44 Most children are in line to reach the nationally expected level in this area of learning by the end of their reception year. Children not only enjoy working with older pupils but gain much from the teaching of the different groups. They begin to understand how to measure, for example, as they see others using rulers, and they develop an understanding of counting in tens and most count to ten accurately. They find the understanding of 'one more than' and 'one less than' more difficult but this is reinforced well through singing games such as 'Five little speckled frogs'. Children show good skills when creating repeating patterns using beads and plastic shapes.

45 Two good teaching assistants support children's learning in mathematics well. They are effective at using questions and instructions to help children to understand their work as, for example, when children learned how to programme a floor robot, using number sequences. Children benefit from working in a small group with good individual support and this enables them to extend their learning well through practical experiences. Teaching overall, though, is satisfactory and so children's achievement is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is appropriate for children of this age but is not sharply enough defined to exact high standards from children with very different abilities.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers do not ensure that pupils achieve well enough, especially in writing.
- Teachers do not make effective use of assessment to provide work for pupils which is challenging enough for their abilities.
- There is a positive atmosphere in lessons, so pupils work and respond well.
- The school does not ensure that the priorities for developing the subject are appropriate.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop their literacy through other subjects.

Commentary

46 Pupils are likely to attain average standards by the end of Year 6. This is similar to the standards in the last inspection. Throughout the school, standards are generally above average in reading, because pupils have good word skills, although their range of reading is not very wide by Year 6. Standards in writing, though, are below average. Pupils' spelling is weak and their expression is not mature enough for their age. Handwriting is a particular problem because pupils are not taught effectively how to form letters properly, and there is an over-emphasis on the need for joined-up writing at an early age. Crucially, the school's own

records show that the achievement of pupils in Year 6 in English, compared to when they were in Year 2, is unsatisfactory.

47 Teaching is unsatisfactory because teachers do not take enough account of their pupils' abilities. Teachers know what pupils can do and understand because of good regular testing, but they do not use the results to plan work accordingly. As a result, work is too often identical for all the pupils in the same class, whether they are in different year or ability groups. There is often not enough scope for independent learning and this tends to inhibit more able pupils, in particular, from being more creative in their writing and more versatile in their reading. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily because they receive sound, and sometimes good, support from teaching assistants.

48 Pupils respond well when the teaching is stimulating. They enjoy discussion and giving opinions, although teachers do not usually develop these opportunities enough. Pupils are attentive and are quick to begin any task set for them. They work well together. The paired reading activity is a very good example of this. However, pupils understandably lose interest when lessons are mundane or undemanding. Sometimes, teachers do not keep a sharp enough eye on the progress of pupils in lessons, and so the pace of work drops and irrelevant chit-chat creeps in.

49 The school is not developing the subject well. The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory because key factors of development are inadequate. The monitoring of teaching, for example, is irregular and not systematic so that teachers can strengthen their skills. The priorities for improvement are inappropriate. There is a current focus on reading, where there are few problems, instead of writing, where there are considerable concerns. The library does little to encourage reading because it has become absorbed by the ICT suite.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50 The development of language and literacy through other subjects is unsatisfactory. Teachers are beginning to use historical topics, for instance, in developing factual writing, but this is not common. Teachers miss many opportunities for developing writing in subjects like ICT, geography and science. The widespread use of worksheets is not helpful and does not encourage pupils to take a pride in their work and present it neatly.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although teaching can be satisfactory, it is not good enough to ensure that pupils achieve satisfactorily over time.
- Teachers do not assess pupils' work effectively so that all pupils, especially more able pupils, are sufficiently challenged.
- The system of monitoring pupils' progress does not give pupils enough direction in their learning.
- Teachers do not make the most of other subjects to develop mathematics.

Commentary

51 Standards in Year 6 are average, which is similar to those at the last inspection, but those in Year 2 have declined. However, by the end of Year 6, pupils are unlikely to achieve satisfactorily compared to their standards in Year 2. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. The teaching of basic skills is sound but pupils are not taught how to use them skilfully to solve mathematical problems. Consequently, pupils find it difficult to achieve higher standards. However, pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily because of the extra support they receive. Overall the leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory because they have not succeeded in developing teaching and learning.

52 Although formal assessment systems are good, teachers do not use them fruitfully. Test results are analysed and teachers draw the right conclusions. For example, it has become apparent that pupils are not efficient at using their skills to solve problems for themselves. Yet, teachers have been slow to develop opportunities to improve this. In addition, teachers do not plan lessons based on pupils' existing abilities. Teachers tend to set the same work for all pupils in each year group. Teachers' expectations are similarly not high enough in ensuring that pupils present their work neatly. Pupils themselves are aware that they could work harder and achieve more.

53 Teachers do not maintain a methodical record of how well pupils are progressing, and so do not adjust their teaching accordingly. Teachers do not set clear, demanding yet achievable individual targets to motivate and galvanise pupils. Marking can be good, especially in Years 5 and 6, and pupils clearly understand what they need to do next. More usually, marking is brief and does not contain much guidance. The comments for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are often too hard for pupils to understand and do not help them to progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54 Teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to develop and use their mathematical skills in other subject areas. There are some good examples, such as a pie chart showing pupils' favourite foods, linked to their science work. However, these examples are few and far between, and do little to strengthen pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good emphasis on developing investigative skills by Year 6.
- Teachers do not encourage pupils to develop independent learning by Year 2.
- Teachers do not guide pupils' progress consistently enough through assessment and marking
- The school has done too little to develop this subject.

Commentary

55 Standards in Year 6 are average, much as they were at the last inspection. Teachers enable pupils to develop a clear understanding of fair testing and how experiments might work out. In an investigation into plants, for instance, pupils understood clearly that the one constant aspect was that each plant received the same amount of water. In discussion, pupils said that they enjoy the practical elements of their work but find work on photocopied sheets dull and uninteresting.

56 Standards in Year 2 have dropped significantly since the last inspection and are now below average. Pupils are very willing to learn and are confident when talking about aspects of science, such as electricity. They know how to make a light bulb work and showed some understanding of how electricity reached their homes. However, pupils have limited scope to record their work for themselves in their science books. They are not challenged by the routine tasks they are given, often on worksheets, and are not given enough opportunities to achieve higher standards in the national tests. Overall, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory because not all pupils achieve as well as they should, notably more able pupils. Therefore, teaching is unsatisfactory.

57 Assessment procedures in this subject are limited and no targets are set for individual pupils or groups of pupils. As a result, pupils are not clear about what they have to do to improve. Until recently, marking of pupils' work has done little to pinpoint areas of weaknesses and outline how work could be improved. However, marking has improved this term, especially in the Year 5/6 class. Here, the comments made by the teacher help pupils to improve both their presentation and their scientific knowledge and understanding.

58 The leadership and management of science are unsatisfactory. The new subject leader and the headteacher are only just beginning to analyse the results of national tests in order to identify difficulties experienced by pupils. The role of the subject leader is not clearly defined. There is, for example, no monitoring of teaching nor is there an effective overview of pupils' progress. The school has identified the need to further resource this subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has done well to develop the subject since the last inspection.
- Pupils benefit from good staff expertise, but the school has been slow to develop the skills of all its teachers.
- Teachers do not exploit opportunities to develop ICT systematically through other subjects.

Commentary

59 Standards have improved since the last inspection, when they were below average. Pupils' attainment throughout the school is now average because there is a suitable curriculum for all pupils. Although there has been a delay in upgrading the ICT suite, the quality and number of computers and other resources mean that pupils have had regular access and use in the recent past. Therefore, by Year 6, pupils achieve satisfactorily and are able to word-process competently, use and edit graphics, create a multi-media presentation with sound and images and access the Internet with ease. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory because of the overall improvement and the consistency of teaching.

60 The school wisely uses the expertise of staff to benefit the pupils. As part of its carousel curriculum, all pupils are taught by the same teacher who has good skills in ICT. She is, for example, able to use the interactive whiteboard skilfully to demonstrate new learning so that pupils understand readily. She is well supported by support staff, and the number of adults in the lessons means that pupils can often make good progress. The quality of teaching is satisfactory but not better because all pupils are given the same work to do. The less able pupils, therefore, sometimes find it hard to keep up with the others, and the more able pupils have too little scope to work at their own pace.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

61 The development of ICT through other subjects is unsatisfactory. Pupils occasionally use the Internet to research topics, for example, mountains in a geography project, and they sometimes word-process their poetry. However, there is little evidence of a planned approach by the whole school. Previous work shows little sign of the regular use of ICT in, for example, helping with experiments in science or presenting graphs in mathematics. Not all teachers have sufficient expertise in the subject and, as a result, do not fully appreciate how they can use other subjects to provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to practise and develop their skills.

HUMANITIES

62 No lessons were seen in geography and history during the inspection, and so it is not possible to make judgements on provision.

63 Sufficient work was seen in **geography** to indicate that standards are broadly in line with those expected by Year 6. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of rivers and environmental issues, such as traffic issues. A field trip to the River Tees, including a study of the waterfall at High Force, helps them develop their knowledge of rivers. However, there is not much evidence that pupils draw their own conclusions from their studies, and the presentation of their writing and drawing is often untidy and sometimes poor.

64 Very little work was seen in **history**. Consequently, it is impossible to evaluate pupils' standards. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a satisfactory awareness of how things change over time, such as swimming costumes and toys. Older pupils benefit from good coverage of ancient Greece, yet there is little evidence of pupils pursuing their own research or presenting their own findings. Teachers do not take advantage of history to reinforce good writing or drawing skills, nor do they insist that pupils take a pride in their work. Consequently, the presentation of pupils' work is often untidy and, at times, inaccurate.

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of pupils in Years 1 and 2 does not enable them to achieve satisfactorily.
- Year 6 pupils benefit from good opportunities to link their understanding of different religious beliefs and feelings with their own experiences.
- The subject contributes well to pupils' moral and cultural development, notably in Years 5 and 6.

Commentary

65 Standards in Year 6 are average and in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. However, standards in Year 2 have dropped since the last inspection and are now unsatisfactory. Teachers do not set work which is appropriate for these pupils. The text on many worksheets is too difficult for pupils to read without adult support and the teaching does not make it clear what it is they are expected to learn. The teaching here is unsatisfactory, as pupils are often confused and unable to achieve the tasks set. Pupils demonstrate, in conversation, a good maturity to be able to discuss issues, such as the Passover, but the activities and teaching they receive do not help them to link the activity to their previous learning.

66 Teaching is satisfactory overall. It was good in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Here, pupils had good opportunities to develop a strong understanding of Sikh worship and community life. They considered carefully the importance of the Gurdwara in the Sikh faith, the use of the Langar and the emphasis on sharing. The teacher linked these well to events in the pupils' own life and they had to think carefully about tasks they do and why they do them. Pupils had good opportunities to express their opinions and responded with considered answers. They were confident and keen to be involved in discussion. They felt, 'it is good to meet others and share food because we are all equal'.

67 Pupils have good opportunities to consider different faiths such as Christianity, Sikhism and Hinduism. They compare these well and consider issues such as death from different viewpoints. This work contributes well to their moral and cultural development. Pupils think carefully about the feelings of others when they learn about Joseph sold into slavery and characters in a Hindu story. Their study of equality shows a mature outlook as they identify problems relating to the colour of people's skin. In this lesson, they decided that people are sometimes racially prejudiced and this shouldn't be so, as 'it is important to tell them they are exactly the same as us'.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68 Few lessons were seen in these subjects during the inspection, and so it is not possible to make judgements on the provision, standards or the quality of teaching and learning.

69 In **art and design**, too little of the pupils' work had been retained from the previous year and little work has been done so early in the new school year. One lesson was observed

and this was good because the activity was purposeful and brisk, and pupils learned good skills in simple weaving. Other evidence indicates that pupils receive an adequate curriculum and that they produce drawings in other subjects like geography, history and religious education. However, teachers do not insist on enough precision, and so good skills are not acquired.

70 No lessons were observed in **design and technology**, and too little evidence was available on which to base any judgements.

71 Two lessons of **physical education** were observed but this did not provide a broad enough view of teaching and the curriculum. One teacher is responsible for teaching all the pupils. She has good subject knowledge, especially in dance, and so guides and motivates the pupils well. However, she does not manage pupils' behaviour firmly and this can result in some misbehaviour and inadequate learning. At times, there is not enough allowance for pupils of different age and abilities, particularly in the class with reception children and Year 1 and 2 pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to play sport in after-school clubs and competitions with other schools.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Skilful teaching encourages pupils to develop a strong appreciation of music and to perform well.
- The good range and quality of resources have a good impact on pupils' learning.
- The focused atmosphere in lessons encourages pupils to concentrate and enjoy their music.

Commentary

72 Standards are above those expected in Year 2 and 6, much as they were at the last inspection. This has been achieved through the good co-ordination and teaching of a specialist teacher who teaches each class in the school. She has good musical skills and is enthusiastic. In lessons, she is well organised and has high expectations of pupils. All pupils, for example, are required to learn musical notation, and sing and play instruments with some precision. In Year 5/6 lessons, the more able pupils play instruments, such as violins, violas and recorders with growing confidence and play together sensitively. All pupils sing melodically and rhythmically, especially because the teacher leads by example and makes pupils aware of their shortcomings, so they learn from their mistakes. The teacher insists on plenty of practice and praises good efforts, so that lessons go with a swing.

73 The good quality and quantity of resources enable all pupils to play a full part. For example, in a Year 5/6 lesson, all the pupils were able to rehearse for a community assembly effectively. The pupils were proud not just of their guitars and violins, but also their percussion and recorders. As a result, they were able to perform well at the assembly. There are extra lessons for pupils to learn instruments, as well as recorder clubs and choir activities led by the enthusiastic co-ordinator, all of which inspire the pupils.

74 Pupils enjoy their music. Although only pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to join the recorder clubs, for instance, there is plenty of demand. In lessons, pupils concentrate hard and learn to appreciate a wide range of influences. Some have impressive skills. In one lesson for pupils in reception, Year 1 and Year 2, one pupil knew that the flute heralded the arrival of the bird in Peter and the Wolf. In the same lesson, all pupils were eager to understand this piece of music and were genuinely appalled when the wolf swallowed the duck!

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

75 It is not possible to judge the provision for this subject, as only one lesson was seen. This lesson was satisfactory. It gave pupils in Years 3 and 4 a valuable opportunity to imagine a favourite place, although the teacher did not insist enough that pupils reflected on real places that were special to them and on the reasons for that. All pupils benefit from this kind of circle activity, when they can discuss and contemplate personal concerns and wider issues. Teachers encourage pupils to be considerate, and to be useful members of the school community. However, teachers do not give pupils enough scope to organise and be responsible for their own work. This is apparent in problem-solving activities in mathematics and in the poor quality of presentation in pupils' books.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 5 |
| How inclusive the school is | 5 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 6 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 5 |
| Overall standards achieved | 5 |
| Pupils' achievement | 5 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 3 |
| Attendance | 2 |
| Attitudes | 3 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 3 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 4 |
| The quality of teaching | 5 |
| How well pupils learn | 5 |
| The quality of assessment | 5 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 4 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 4 |
| Accommodation and resources | 4 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 4 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 5 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 5 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 4 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 4 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 5 |
| The governance of the school | 5 |
| 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).