

INSPECTION REPORT

BRADY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rainham, Essex

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 102314

Headteacher: Mr T Bradbury

Lead inspector: David G Collard

Dates of inspection: 6th - 8th December 2004

Inspection number: 266473

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	205
School address:	Wennington Road Rainham Essex
Postcode:	RM13 9XA
Telephone number:	(01708) 555 025
Fax number:	(01708) 555 025
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Darren Saunders
Date of previous inspection:	12 th April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Brady Primary School is situated in Rainham, Essex. There are 205 pupils on roll. There is a higher proportion of boys in Years 3, 4 and 5 and more girls in Year 1. Children are able to start in the reception class at four years of age. The families of the pupils come from a mixture of different socio-economic backgrounds. The local housing is mixed and includes both rented and owner-occupied accommodation.

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (15 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average. The number whose mother tongue is not English (four per cent) is higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is higher than average, although the overwhelming majority of these children are competent English speakers when they enter the school. There are no asylum seeker children in the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (16.4 per cent) is broadly in line with the national average, but the number with statements (2.4 per cent) is above. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly below that expected nationally for their age.

In 2003, the school achieved a Schools Achievement award for the progress that pupils made between Years 2 and 6 along with the Activemark, and Investors in People award. In 2004, the school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11122	David Collard	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs
8919	John Kerr	Lay inspector	
22990	Christopher Furniss	Team inspector	English Geography English as an additional language
34431	Mary Usher-Clark	Team inspector	Mathematics History Music Physical education Foundation Stage

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal Education
1 - 4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is fairly effective but has some serious weaknesses and presently provides unsatisfactory value for money. Children enter the school with standards that are below those expected nationally. By the end of Year 6, standards are at average levels but they have fallen since the last inspection. Achievement over time is satisfactory overall but unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is satisfactory but too variable, as pupils make more progress in the upper end of both the infants and juniors. The management of the school is satisfactory but the leadership is unsatisfactory because of a lack of clarity about the strategic planning that would improve overall provision.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards, particularly in English, have declined since the last inspection; although they have improved in information and communication technology.
- The provision in the Foundation Stage is not good enough to speed up pupils' learning.
- The leadership has not brought about enough substantial and lasting change.
- More innovations have been made to the curriculum which now provides much better opportunity for independent work.
- Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour have been maintained at good levels.

Variable but unsatisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection. In the key areas identified, standards and provision in information and communication technology (ICT) have substantially improved, as have the opportunities for more independent research and investigation. There is now a better range of assessment data but, until recently, this was not used well to plan for pupils' needs. Provision in the Foundation Stage has not improved and so pupils are not prepared well enough for future work within the National Curriculum.

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	B	D	C
mathematics	A	C	A	A
science	B	C	C	C

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

Achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 6. Children enter the school with standards below those expected nationally, particularly in the basic skills of language and number. They make satisfactory progress against the Early Learning Goals¹, but progress is limited by the lack of structured play opportunities that help to develop speech, language and creative skills. On entry to Year 1, many have not attained the expected levels for their age. Through the infants, many basic skills have not been mastered so standards in reading, writing and mathematics are still below average by the time pupils finish Year 2. Through the juniors, progress is more rapid, particularly at the upper end so achievement by the end of Year 6 is good. The lack of effective strategies has resulted in a decline in test results although by Year 6, pupils do make at least satisfactory progress when measured against their prior attainment in Year 2. Those in the present Year 6 have below

¹ Early Learning Goals are a set of national standards, which, it is expected most children will reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They are set out into six different areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

average standards in English, although it is close to average in reading, speaking and listening, above average standards in mathematics and average standards in science. Standards in ICT have substantially improved from below average to average and achievement is good. Achievement is at least satisfactory in all other subjects including religious education and the use of specialist teaching in physical education and music enhances the opportunities offered.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are good, as is the provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils settle quickly to their work, concentrate well and are enthusiastic about school. They know the difference between right and wrong and are tolerant of others. Attendance is below the national average. The school is not proactive enough in ensuring all families make the effort to ensure their children attend school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a sound quality of education. Teaching is satisfactory and ensures that pupils make satisfactory progress over time. This is similar to the last inspection and the number of unsatisfactory lessons has halved. The strongest teaching is characterised by clear challenges for the class, well planned and demanding work, based on knowledge of what pupils have learnt and a wide variety of resources and teaching methods. Where teaching is sound or, on two occasions unsatisfactory, it is because the teachers are not confident about the age range they are teaching, lessons are not planned well or the work is less demanding. This accounts for the falling standards in some subjects. Where training needs have been identified, such as in ICT, or specialist support introduced, then there has been a significant impact on the quality of learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are suitably supported and make similar levels of progress to their peers. The curriculum is balanced, except in the Foundation Stage where work is not planned well enough. Overall though, it has improved since the last inspection. Through the infants and juniors it effectively promotes investigative and experimental work that enables pupils to think for themselves. The care, welfare and safety of pupils have continued to be good, as have the links with parents. Innovative links with the local secondary school have been forged recently and are having an impact on pupils learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the school is unsatisfactory although the management is sound. The headteacher has not provided a sufficiently strong strategic lead and tackled the most urgent problems quickly enough. Senior management teams are supportive and some co-ordinators provide good leadership. The school has undergone some significant staffing changes, which have enhanced the overall quality of teaching, but decisions about their deployment have not always been based on improving pupils' academic and personal needs. The school improvement plan, whilst being very comprehensive, does not clearly link to raising achievement. The governors provide a satisfactory overview and have come to terms with the relative strengths and weaknesses and how these need to be addressed through professional development and performance management. They meet their statutory responsibilities.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

In general, parents have faith in the school and respect the leadership. However, a significant minority feel that standards have slipped and that there is some indecision about dealing with important matters. Nearly all pupils fully support and enjoy school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in English and particularly in writing.
- Develop a clearer strategic vision for whole school improvement through better self-evaluation and ensure that planned improvements are carried out with determination and energy.

- Improve the provision for children in the Foundation Stage, including the assessment arrangements.
- Improve attendance with more stringent procedures.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The standards pupils reach by the end of Year 2 are below the national average but by Year 6 they are **average**. Pupils achieve **soundly** through the infants and **well** through the juniors.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards overall have fallen since the last inspection; although they have risen in information and communication technology.
- Progress is more rapid through Years 5 and 6; pupils' progress is at least satisfactory by the time they leave the school.
- Achievement in the Foundation Stage is too low and has not improved since the last inspection.
- Achievement has improved since the last inspection in using and applying knowledge and in investigations and experimentation.

Commentary

1. Children enter the school at four years old with standards that are broadly below average, particularly in language and literacy and in numerical development. Some social skills are also underdeveloped such as those connected with group working, speaking and listening. Overall achievement is sound in the Foundation Stage although it is unsatisfactory in three areas of learning and there are some weaknesses in the progress that children make in the basic skills of language and mathematics. Consequently, by the time of entry into Year 1, standards are still below those expected nationally by the Early Learning Goals². Throughout the infants, pupils achieve soundly and, they make some better gains in basic skills but by the end of Year 2, standards are still below those nationally. Throughout the juniors, achievement continues to be sound but improves to good through Years 5 and 6. By the end of Year 6, standards are at the national average except in English. This represents a fall from the last inspection when standards were above average in English, mathematics and science. However, there has been a substantial rise in the standards in information and communication technology, which are now at the expected level; this improvement is due to a very well focused whole school plan, better resources and a good training programme for teachers. The school received a School's Achievement Award in 2003 for the progress that pupils made between Year 2 and Year 6 during the previous year.
2. The provision for the Foundation Stage was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection and continues to be so. As a result, through the infant years, key skills still need to be developed. A major contributory reason for this is the many staffing changes that have taken place over the last three years. This has meant that improvements have not had time to be established and then stabilised. In addition, national approaches to the teaching of this age group have not been implemented well enough. Children achieve satisfactorily in personal, social and emotional development, and in mathematical development. The development of communication, language and literacy is satisfactory but there are not enough opportunities for children to learn the rudiments of writing and to work independently. The opportunities provided in physical development, creative development and in knowledge and understanding of the world are unsatisfactory because activities are too teacher directed and are not connected well enough with the individual and group play activities.

² Early Learning Goals are a set of national standards, which, it is expected most children will reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They are set out into six different areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

3. For pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, results in national tests have varied considerably over the last five years but overall have not improved as well as the national trend. At the end of Year 2, In 2004, standards were well below average in reading and writing but average in mathematics. This represents a further fall in reading and writing from 2003, which had steadily dropped since 2002. In contrast, there has been good improvement in mathematics, which has risen from well below average. The school, through its strategic plan, has now put in place some significant initiatives to improve the performance of pupils. These include a more structured approach to the teaching of reading and participation in a local authority scheme aimed at improving boys' writing. It is, as yet, too early to see how effective these procedures will be, but initial observations suggest that they are likely to improve the standards by the end of this year.
4. The standards in national tests for those in Year 6, when measured against all schools, were well above average in 2001 and 2002 and then started to fall in 2003. Again, the picture is very variable. Standards have fallen in English, have risen in mathematics and been stable in science. On the positive side, pupils have regularly achieved at least as well as expected when comparing their previous performance in Year 2 and in mathematics they have exceeded their expected performance substantially. The initiatives for English are beginning to have some effect so that the very low 2005 targets set for those in the present Year 6 are likely to be exceeded.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.6 (28.2)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.7 (27.0)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.4 (28.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. For those in the present Year 2, standards in English have now stabilised and with the extra support show signs of improvement. They are close to the national level in speaking and listening and below this in reading and writing. By the end of Year 6, standards have risen in reading to average levels although they are still below average in writing. However, achievement is satisfactory through the school because these standards reflect the predicted levels that were made on the basis of attainment on entry to the school and in Year 2.
6. The picture in mathematics is more encouraging. Although standards are below the national average for pupils in the present Year 2 they are above the national average in Year 6. This represents good achievement by the end of the juniors, and pupils are exceeding their predicted level of progress, particularly in applying and investigating number work, a criticism in the last report. Pupils have made great strides because the teachers have focused more closely on this important aspect.
7. Standards in science in the present Year 2 are below the national average but by Year 6 they are average. Again, achievement by the end of the juniors is good because pupils start in Year 1 from a low base and as in mathematics much more is now done to provide practical experience allowing pupils a chance to use their previously acquired knowledge and to think more for themselves.
8. The provision in information and communication technology is now satisfactory. Standards are at the level expected nationally for pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is sound through the infants and good through the juniors. Here, it is better because pupils have had to make more substantial levels of progress from a lower starting point. Standards in religious education are satisfactory although knowledge levels are better than the written work would suggest. Achievement is sound.

9. From more limited evidence, achievement is satisfactory in all other subjects. In geography and history the resources and artefacts are used well to provide some stimulating work and in art and design and design and technology, work is appropriate to the needs of individuals and year groups, with a balance between learning and practising skills. The use of a specialist music teacher is ensuring that pupils are able to perform, compose and interpret different types of music in a sequential way, thus building up their experiences year on year. The provision for physical education has improved with the use of specialist trained sports leaders and specialist coaching.
10. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. Their needs are identified early through monitoring programmes provided by the co-ordinator. The individual education plans are comprehensively written in conjunction with the classteacher and support by learning assistants is well focused. Those with physical disabilities are sensitively monitored and supported and additional resources are used as and when they are required. This is ensuring that all pupils are fully integrated, a high priority within the school.
11. Pupils from different ethnic minorities are encouraged to contribute to discussions linking different cultures and traditions. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. At present, one pupil receives extra assistance. Another pupil was receiving help until last year but was deemed to no longer need it, although his needs are still monitored. A recent arrival into the school is being monitored and will be given support when and if appropriate. Other bi-lingual pupils are being monitored but are progressing satisfactorily.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good**. Pupils' attitudes towards school and behaviour are **good**. Attendance is **below** the national average and punctuality is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are willing participants in lessons and in the other activities that the school offers.
- The range of responsibilities for pupils has improved since the last inspection.
- As pupils get older they become increasingly mature in their attitude towards work.
- Opportunities to encourage spiritual awareness have improved since the last inspection.
- The school needs to take a more proactive and stringent approach to monitoring attendance.

Commentary

12. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes towards their work. They come into lessons in an orderly way, settle quickly and participate in discussions. They are very willing to ask questions and are generally inquisitive, particularly when the teaching is inspiring and challenging. When undertaking independent work, even some younger pupils are able to concentrate for long periods of time. Classroom assistants support the work of the teachers through answering any questions in their small groups and supporting those with difficulties.
13. Pupils want to take on responsibilities. These include, for instance, being responsible for turning on recorded music during assemblies. Pupils are also responsible for the smooth running of the council. Each class has a number of monitors and a set of classroom rules that all pupils are expected to follow. Relationships between the pupils are generally good although there are some isolated incidences of boisterous play, and bad behaviour when individuals are not in the direct control of adults. Bullying is not tolerated and is generally dealt with quickly. Some parents feel that it is not and that decisions are not always fair. It was not possible to confirm this during the inspection although there were no instances of this poorer behaviour during lessons. As pupils move into the juniors they become increasingly confident and display good levels of maturity in Year 6. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have high levels of self-esteem, a desire to learn and are happy to talk to visitors about what they are doing. The

school works hard and is successful in ensuring that all pupils, whatever their ability, gender or race are included in its activities.

14. Since the last inspection, the school has developed better systems to help pupils develop their self-knowledge. These include the use of discussions, the school council and more integrated systems linking better sex education and drugs use awareness. Spirituality is promoted both in religious education lessons and through assemblies. This ensures that pupils have a suitable basis of understanding about the wonders that can be gained from an appreciation of art, music and nature. They have a tolerant attitude towards other cultures and beliefs because they are taught how these are relevant to today's society. They know about what is right and wrong and take responsibility for their own school community.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	93.4	School data	0.7
National data	94.5	National data	0.4

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

15. Attendance is below the national average although it is currently improving in some years, notably in Year 5. Punctuality is satisfactory. Although most parents see that their children attend school regularly, there is a significant minority of parents who are not so responsible. The school provides insufficient rigour in persuading parents not to take their children for holidays in term time and more needs to be done to follow up cases of absence promptly and efficiently.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
169	2	0
1	0	0
4	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
12	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
7	0	0

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

16. One boy was excluded during the last reporting year on two separate occasions. There have been no other exclusions since then.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **sound**. Teaching and learning are both **satisfactory** and provide appropriate opportunities for pupils. The curriculum is **sound**. The care, welfare and safety of pupils are **good** and parents generally appreciate the **good** procedures to support them. There are **effective** links with the local community and **good** links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has reduced since the last inspection.
- Pupils make adequate progress by the end of Year 6; although their progress is much swifter in different parts of the school and not good enough in the Foundation Stage.
- Teachers encourage pupils well; pupils all take an active part in lessons and become involved in their own learning.
- There are good support procedures for pupils with special educational needs.
- Assessment has improved; although it does not form the backbone of the planned work for different levels of attainment.

Commentary

17. Teaching and learning through the school are satisfactory but much stronger in Years 2, 5 and 6, where the majority of very good lessons were seen. This is because pupils are given more challenge and the teachers are more experienced in teaching the age group to which they have been assigned. Teaching in the Foundation Stage, whilst generally satisfactory, is unsatisfactory in two areas. Planning does not relate well enough to individual need and teaching does not develop the potential of play. There is potential for learning in the other classes to improve as teachers become more confident in providing the correct level of work for the age range they are teaching. The quality of teaching during this inspection is similar to that at the time of the last report, although the number of unsatisfactory lessons has reduced by half.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6	8	11	2	0	0

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

18. In the Foundation Stage there have been a number of staffing changes that have resulted in uncertainty about how best to provide for the national guidelines. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematical development and physical development are satisfactory. The teaching of communication, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development are unsatisfactory. In the stronger lessons, there is a clear purpose to the play activities that will promote a specific piece of new knowledge and understanding. The main reasons for weaker teaching are the lack of opportunities for the children to develop their learning through well-structured activities linking both independent learning as well as more formal teaching. In addition, not enough is done to promote speaking and listening skills and creative work through structured play activities. There is not a good enough range of assessment to ensure that staff know what to plan next.
19. Through the rest of the school, teachers have suitable subject knowledge to enable them to plan the lessons for the range of attainment within the class. This results in pupils becoming engaged in what they are doing and, on occasions, showing high levels of concentration. In Year 1, for instance, the pupils joined in enthusiastically with a discussion about the structure of a face during an art and design lesson because the teacher was clearly enjoying what she was teaching and had planned it carefully. Teachers do rely quite heavily on commercial schemes and this somewhat restricts the learning of individuals, sometimes those with higher attainment and sometimes those within the middle range of attainment. The objective or learning intention is given at the start of most lessons and often, as in a Year 4 English lesson, these are copied out into books and discussed at the end of the lesson.

20. The range of teaching methods is suitable and these are enhanced with visits and visitors, practical demonstrations and, lately, with the use of the interactive whiteboards. Since the last inspection, teachers have worked at providing more independent, practical investigations and experimentation as part of the learning process. The pupils react well to these experiences and are keen to undertake what they are asked to do. In a Year 3 lesson, for instance, the use of role-play helped develop an understanding about bullying. The questioning presented the class with an opportunity to say how they felt and reflect on the bully as well as the person who was bullied. A very good English lesson in Year 5 demonstrated that the teacher had clearly thought out her strategy over a series of lessons and this ensured that the pupils were extremely clear about what and why they were learning about how to write instructions. The very recent use of the local secondary school for the teaching of ICT has provided a further enhancement to the subject and there are plans for this to be extended to other subjects over the coming year.
21. The school has an adequate range of resources although some of these, particularly for the Foundation Stage are rather 'tired.' Teachers ensure that all these are ready and accessible so that no time is lost and by Year 6 the pupils are expected to think for themselves and collect what they need as a matter of course. This contrasted with the very well organised science lesson in Year 2 where the teacher not only had practical resources laid out but had also used the whiteboard to demonstrate what was expected. In all classes, the standard of behaviour is good. Teachers ensure that all pupils get a chance to be involved and that nobody dominates discussions.
22. The school places a high priority on providing equal opportunities for all. Pupils with special educational needs are closely monitored through their individual education plans and appropriate support mechanisms. The support staff work well in conjunction with the teacher when pupils are working in small groups. They are briefed prior to the lesson so that they know what to focus on. They are expected to give a review of what has taken place at the end of the lesson and, with the special educational needs co-ordinator, play an active role in assessing the pupils. Teachers and support assistants give good support to the small number of pupils with English as an additional language. This enables them to progress at the same rate as the rest of the pupils. Those with specific talents are being identified and provided with extra opportunities through special classes or clubs.
23. The range of assessment has improved considerably since the last inspection. The school now has relative figures from national and internal tests so that comparisons can be made about the performance of pupils through each year. The co-ordinator, recently appointed, has, as yet, only managed to collate this information so there are no sophisticated measures, which would enable the school to focus its improvement plan more carefully. Some co-ordinators, such as those for English and science have a very good view about how well their subject is doing but this is not consistent. An analysis of the national test results is starting to indicate where there are deficiencies but these do not form part of an overall school plan for improvement. However, a good start has been made and teachers now have more detailed information and have begun to target specific groups of pupils who might otherwise underachieve.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is **satisfactory** overall, but curricular opportunities in the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment are **satisfactory**. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.
- There have been good improvements in ICT provision.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

- The teaching assistants give good support.

Commentary

24. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum overall, meeting statutory requirements, including the provision for sex and drugs education. Personal, social and health education and citizenship are timetabled into the curriculum and religious education is taught through a locally agreed syllabus. The school has successfully invested in information and communication technology since the last inspection and the new computer suite and good use of interactive whiteboards during lessons are helping to raise standards.
25. Although some improvements have been made since the last inspection, curricular provision in the Foundation Stage remains unsatisfactory. Planned activities are not sufficiently developed to promote effective learning and do not match the individual needs of the children.
26. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported during lessons. Early identification of need is in place, and has improved since the last inspection. The teaching assistants are used effectively and give good support, particularly with lower attaining groups of pupils.
27. A large number of sporting activities enriches the curriculum. Strong links with the local secondary school provide coaching in tennis, cricket, tag rugby, and athletics. All pupils take part in visits to local museums and places of interest. Year 6 pupils go on a residential visit to the Isle of Wight. Visitors to the school include a theatre group, the police, a librarian and the local RSPB. A visiting music specialist ensures the teaching of music to all pupils throughout the school.
28. Accommodation is satisfactory overall, although some open plan teaching areas suffer noise from adjoining classrooms. The school grounds provide a good mix of quiet places to sit and play areas. The large expanse of grass outside the reception class is underdeveloped and not used effectively to promote all the areas of learning for the youngest children in the school. Resources are satisfactory although some subjects still need to be audited. Many resources in the Foundation Stage need renewal.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes **good** provision for the care, welfare and security of the pupils. The provision for support and guidance of pupils is **satisfactory**. There are **sound** procedures for seeking pupils' views and involving them in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils are well cared for and they work in a secure environment.
- There is a friendly atmosphere in the school and staff know the children well.
- The school council is active but there are not always clear lines of communication between the council and senior staff.
- The induction arrangements for children at the start of their life in school are not well developed.

Commentary

29. There is a happy atmosphere in the school. Pupils feel secure and they are well cared for. Pupils say that it is easy to make friends, as a result, those joining the school as new pupils settle quickly. Staff are vigilant about health and safety matters. Governors and senior management conduct regular inspections of buildings and equipment. Defects are noted and swiftly dealt with. Staff are qualified to attend to pupils who are sick or injured. Records are kept and parents informed. Child protection procedures are clear and staff know their responsibilities. Parents are satisfied with the way the school looks after their children.

30. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well. This helps them as they guide their pupils. However, they lack the data from a secure monitoring system to give effective guidance on how pupils can improve their achievement. Pupils do not always have the confidence to seek the advice of their teachers. They say they would usually go to their parents to initiate a discussion with their form teacher if they had a concern. Teachers are always ready to involve parents but parents report that there is often a lack of follow-up if they have initiated a serious concern.
31. Induction arrangements as children start school are not satisfactory. Staff are slow to assess children and their needs are not clearly defined. This means that children are slow to benefit from their early learning experience and do not develop significantly before joining the main school. Parents are provided with good information about the school before their children come to the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in their secondary school. Many go to the secondary school on the same site, where they already know members of staff, have experienced some lessons in the school and know their way about.
32. The school is relatively successful in seeking pupils' views and involving them in planned developments. The school council meets regularly. Members of the council, who serve for a term, are democratically elected. Members take their duties seriously. They say their ideas are listened to but the progress of their suggestions is not always efficiently fed back to the council by the school's senior management.
33. There is appropriate liaison between the school and the EAL (English as an additional language) support group and guidance and support is given to teachers and support assistants to enable them to give effective support. Recently, the school has been given information, advice and resources to further assist with this.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents, other schools and with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are supportive of the school and its activities.
- The school values parents' views but their concerns are not always adequately dealt with.
- There are good links with local schools and colleges but links with local nurseries and playgroups are not well developed.
- There are good links with the community which help pupils to broaden their education beyond the school boundaries.

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Commentary

34. Parents are satisfied with the school and all that it provides for their children's education. They appreciate the work of the teachers and teacher assistants and the encouragement they give to their children. Parents are kept well informed about the school and its activities. Consultation evenings and well-written annual reports keep parents informed about their children's progress. Parents of children with special educational needs are not always so well informed. They feel that their knowledge of their children's particular needs could be more readily taken into consideration when discussing their individual education plans. Parents report that there is a lack of communication and feedback in general on such matters as homework and in resolving their particular concerns. They see inconsistencies in the management of the school and much negativity. They recognise many good features but they see the school's reputation slipping.
35. One very good feature is the recent introduction of the Parent Link Group, which acts as a parents' forum to deal with issues as they arise. Parents, who are elected to the forum,

discuss issues with senior management in meetings with a structured agenda. Already they work very well together. They have carried out careful research and established contacts as they seek to establish a school crossing and improvements to relieve morning and evening traffic congestion. This is having a very beneficial effect in strengthening ties between the school and the community as well as with parents. There is also a strong parent teacher association, which is successful in organising school events and in raising funds, which benefit the school.

36. Parents confirm that there are ample opportunities to meet with class teachers who help them so they in turn can help their children to cover their work more effectively. As a result, a majority of parents make a contribution to their children's learning at home. This is by no means universal, with a result that some pupils' reading ability suffers and their imagination in written work is underdeveloped. Senior management are always ready to listen to parents' concerns but there is often a lack of action and poor communications leave parents unsure of outcomes.
37. There are good links with the community. Visitors to the school help to make pupils aware of their own and other cultures. Visits to museums and the local RSPB reserve on the marshes, enrich the curriculum. There are good links with the local church and the school's involvement with the Village Fair helps to broaden pupils' education and prepare them for life beyond the school. There are good links with the adjacent secondary school, which ensures that pupils transfer happily to the next stage of their education. Links with local nurseries and play groups are not well developed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. The headteacher provides **unsatisfactory** leadership, although his management of the school is **satisfactory**. The subject leaders are providing satisfactory direction to the development of their areas of responsibility.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of education is sound but there is a lack of clarity and focus, particularly for the Foundation Stage, resulting in uncertainty and inertia in decision-making. This adversely affects the standards pupils achieve.
- All staff have a shared commitment to improve.
- English and information and communication technology are being developed well by their subject leaders.
- The school has a good commitment to the inclusion of all pupils and there is a positive ethos.
- The governors now have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, which will assist them in helping to move the school forward.
- The school is not yet making effective use of a good range of data to assist in self-evaluation.

Commentary

38. The quality of leadership of the headteacher is unsatisfactory because there has been a lack of improvement in key areas since the time of the last inspection in 1999. The most significant of these is the Foundation Stage, which was a key issue last time and is still unsatisfactory. Leadership for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory and the team there lacks effectiveness, partly because of lack of direction and experience. Although the school improvement plan is quite comprehensive and detailed, it lacks clarity and focus. For example, there is little specific mention of raising standards, even when outlining how key targets were arrived at. There has, though, been significant improvement in the provision of information and communication technology and the headteacher has worked closely with the subject co-ordinator to implement this improvement. The leadership of other key staff is satisfactory and the subject co-ordinators in English and information and communication technology provide good leadership, which is now developing these subjects well.

39. The headteacher and staff are committed to ensuring that every child is fully included. This helps to create a positive ethos. Programmes of training and performance management are in place and this has helped to maintain the overall quality of teaching despite a number of staff changes. Recent initiatives have put into place tracking systems to monitor the progress and development of pupils and these should help highlight areas of need and assist in providing structured help. Teaching is monitored and there are appropriate procedures in place to support new staff, but these are not well focused. There are at least three teachers who lack experience with the age range they are teaching. The Strategic Teaching Group is part of the management team and meets at least twice per term but, as yet, different roles have not been assigned. The school has not used its data to assist in self-evaluation and this has hindered improvement.
40. The governing body now has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have begun to be much more proactive in seeking to direct the school and ensure that standards are raised. The Strategic Management Team, which includes representatives of all stakeholders as well as governors, has now become much better focused. However, not all governors yet share the same clarity of understanding of what needs to be done. There is full compliance with statutory requirements and governors are very supportive of the school and of the headteacher. Several of them visit the school regularly and many have been involved in shared training days with staff.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	£628,331	Balance from previous year	£1,540
Total expenditure	£625,671	Balance carried forward to the next year	£4,900
Expenditure per pupil	£2,979		

41. The school has sound monitoring procedures to ensure that funds are allocated sensibly and carefully. Larger than expected capital expenditure, due to unforeseeable difficulties, such as drainage problems, has resulted in a deficit but it is controlled. The governors are aware of the tightness of the budget and of financial implications should the pupil roll fall below a certain level. Principles of best value are in place and these were used, for example, in purchasing the interactive whiteboards that are beginning to be used effectively.
42. Although there have been some improvements since the last inspection, such as in information and communication technology, the pace and amount of improvement have been unsatisfactory. Results in the national standard tests have declined during the past five years for both seven and eleven year olds, whereas the national trend has been upward. The annual expenditure per pupil is about in line with the national average, consequently, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is **unsatisfactory**.

Although there is a wide range of ability, children enter the reception class with levels of attainment which are below expectations. They arrive from a local nursery and playgroup but the forwarding of any assessment information is not comprehensive. The school assesses the children on entry, using a commercial scheme, but this data is not fully used or understood.

By the end of their year in the reception class, only the more capable children will have reached the final stage of the foundation curriculum and most will be still working within the final stage or "stepping stone" in each area of learning. In relation to prior attainment, achievement is satisfactory.

Due to the many staff changes in this stage over the last five years, the provision has improved since the last inspection, but still remains unsatisfactory. Although the teaching was mainly satisfactory, the impact on children's learning is not high enough over the longer term. There is an insufficient balance between teacher led and child initiated activities, and in addition, many opportunities are missed to consolidate learning.

Assessment is unsatisfactory and therefore lesson planning does not take into account the needs of the children to build on and reinforce their learning experiences. The planning does not link well enough to the Early Learning Goals to provide purposeful activities either inside or outside the classroom. Rigorous assessment, more focused planning and an urgent review of the curriculum is needed. The outdoor environment is not used effectively to promote all areas of the curriculum and resources are very limited. There is no shelter for outdoor use in inclement weather.

The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory as they lack clarity. The co-ordinator is not presently teaching within this year group and this presents difficulties in monitoring what is happening. The co-ordinator, having reviewed the systems and procedures, knows that training is required for all foundation staff to improve the provision and this has already been started as a matter of urgency.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment on entry is below the expected level.
- There are caring relationships between children and adults.
- There are few opportunities for children to plan and think for themselves.

Commentary

43. Children start school with levels of skill below those expected and achieve satisfactorily and attainment in this area is sound. By the end of the year, satisfactory levels of good behaviour, confidence and self-esteem are achieved. However, not enough opportunities are provided to allow children to make choices and take part in their own planning and to help them grow in independence and become more confident.
44. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, although variable. During one session, children were constantly interrupting the teacher for help and consequently, the group she was working with had little guidance. However, a group working with play dough interacted well together and

talked about what they were doing. Early identification of needs ensures behavioural targets are set, and as a result, children are generally well behaved.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children with language difficulties are well supported.
- Not enough use is made of the role-play area to develop speaking and listening skills and initiate ideas.
- There is little challenge and low expectations.

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Commentary

45. Standards are below average on entry and most children are still working within the Early Learning Goals at the end of their reception year. This represents satisfactory achievement. Teaching is just satisfactory. The teaching assistant gives children who speak English as their second language and others with specific needs extra support and some of these children are confident enough to answer questions during circle time sessions. They hear and listen to stories well and are beginning to understand the rudiments of reading, spelling and the links between the written and spoken word. However, these are not always fully developed and so teaching and learning overall are unsatisfactory. For instance, only rarely did an adult support role-play and therefore children could not explain the purpose of their play and thus enhance their language and vocabulary. Most played in isolation and communication was minimal. Most children copy sentences written for them by an adult and although a group of children were asked to make letters using play dough, there was little guidance and inappropriate follow up. Opportunities are missed to extend learning as little challenge is given, particularly to those children of higher ability.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of ICT to support learning.
- Children are not observed and assessed to provide the planning for the next stage in their learning.

Commentary

46. Children make satisfactory progress, although many are still working towards the Early Learning Goals when they enter Year 1. Achievement is satisfactory, particularly in the development of number. Children recognise numbers, count fairly accurately up to ten, and readily join in to sing counting rhymes. They use the interactive whiteboard confidently to recognise numbers and can perform simple addition satisfactorily. They also use a number-matching program in the computer suite to reinforce their learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but variable. During a lesson on two-dimensional shapes, children were able to say the correct names of common shapes. Without proper observations and continual assessment, children that are more able are not being challenged and are not having their potential needs met and expectations are sometimes too low. Lesson planning lacks appropriate detail for children with different abilities. Even despite these shortcomings, the provision has improved since the last inspection.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

47. No judgement could be made about the provision in knowledge and understanding of the world, as there was little evidence of opportunities for the children to find out about the world in which they live. The classroom and outside environment were sterile and lacked imagination. There were no areas or artefacts of interest on display and no photographic evidence of any previous work.
48. During the inspection, children cooked Christmas biscuits and used a mouse competently in the computer suite. No water play was seen and sand was enclosed in restricted trays with little room for discovery. A small, enclosed area and a large grassed area are in need of development to provide an outdoor learning environment where children have opportunities to observe, question and discover the natural world.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- Accommodation and resources restrict learning opportunities.
- Planning does not take enough account of the national guidelines for this area.

Commentary

49. Standards are below average, achievement is unsatisfactory and opportunities for learning are hampered because of the accommodation, inadequate resources and the failure of planning to include the outdoor environment. The current organisation of the accommodation makes it difficult for children to move spontaneously between the indoor and outdoor environments. There are no covered areas available; restricting the amount of time children can spend outside. There are no outside resources for climbing and balancing. Few suitable trikes and bikes were available, but children enjoyed time on the marked out roadway. When given tools to use with the play dough, children used them competently but many children lacked the ability to use scissors accurately to cut round shapes. These all combine to make teaching and learning unsatisfactory.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- Achievement is unsatisfactory.
- There is little children's artwork on display.
- There is no photographic evidence of any previous work.

Commentary

50. Standards and achievement are unsatisfactory due to the lack of development against the requirements of the Early Learning Goal for this area and teaching is unsatisfactory. Adults give too much guidance to children's creative work and this limits their ability to create their own pictures and artwork. The small amount that is on display, all looks the same. Adult interpretations of Christmas are seen on the walls and children's own work is not correctly valued and displayed.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below the expected level through the school, particularly in writing.
- The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and what needs to be done to improve; although the downturn in standards has not yet been fully stemmed.
- The subject is well led and managed and strategies are being implemented that should help raise standards.
- Effective tracking and monitoring systems are now in place to help focus support.
- Although pupils are regularly given targets to improve, these are often not specific enough.

Commentary

51. The results of the 2004 national tests for seven years olds were poor in both reading and writing when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. There has been a decline in the school's standards over the past five years whilst trends nationally have been upward. English results in the 2004 standard tests for eleven-year-olds were just below the national average and below the average for similar schools. The decline in the past five years has been even more marked than for seven-year-olds. The previous inspection, in 1999, found that standards in reading were well above average for both seven- and eleven-year-olds and that writing standards were above average at seven and well above average at eleven. To put this in perspective, it needs to be recognised that the results for seven-year-olds in 2004 closely reflected predictions based on baseline entry scores and that overall English results for eleven-year-olds were more or less in line with prior attainment for that group of pupils. Nevertheless this is a disturbing trend, and one that the school has recognised and has begun to take steps to rectify. The present inspection found some signs of improvement, with standards in speaking and listening at about the expected level in Years 2 and 6. Standards in reading are still below the expected level in Year 2 but in line by Year 6. Writing standards are below the expected level throughout the school. Achievement in English is satisfactory, with all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, making satisfactory progress. The decline in standards means that there has been unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
52. Most pupils enter the school with limited vocabulary and underdeveloped listening skills and these are well developed by teachers. Teachers use techniques such as 'talking partners' and effective questioning that challenge pupils and encourage them to express themselves. Year 1 pupils, for example, in circle time with the class teacher, talked well about what Sid (a cat) might eat and went on to make a menu for him. Drama is also being used more regularly and Year 3 discussed and listened well to a playscript of Little Red Riding Hood. Pupils are encouraged to listen to each other and to the teacher. By Year 6, pupils can hold sensible and mature conversations.
53. A number of strategies have been introduced to help raise reading standards. One is the Jolly Phonics system and, although it is too soon to evaluate what effect it is having, it is certainly giving a focus to an important area of learning in both reading and writing. Pupils have positive attitudes to books and are keen to read. Most read at home. By Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge of reading and can talk about plot and characterisation with understanding. They use books regularly for research as well as pleasure and can explain how to find a book in the school library. They also regularly use the Internet for research, a good example of this being the biographies they have researched. The school library, though not very large, is well stocked and is used effectively to support learning.

54. Writing, and particularly boys' writing, has been identified as a priority. The school is part of a local authority strategy to improve standards in boys' writing and although it is too soon to draw conclusions there are hopeful signs. Writing by a number of pupils lacks a confident and mature style, although by the upper juniors this is starting to improve. In the Year 6 lesson, there was very effective integration of the teaching assistant and student teacher that enabled the class teacher to concentrate on a focus group of boys. The close attention and the stimulating activity motivated them well and they made good progress. Handwriting has also been targeted as an area of need. There are still inconsistencies, for example in the introduction and use of joined up writing, but there are clear signs of improvement.
55. The quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen and some teaching was very good. A scrutiny of work done during the year indicates that teaching over time is satisfactory. In the better teaching, planning is now good, with clear learning objectives and success criteria that enable the teacher to assess how well the pupils have learned. Teachers have good relationships with pupils; they use encouragement well and successfully motivate pupils and engage them. There is an insistence on high standards of behaviour and most teachers have a range of good behaviour management strategies that keep pupils on task. Teachers, learning support assistants and student teachers work well together and give effective support to pupils. Work is regularly marked and all pupils are now regularly set targets to help them improve. However, the targets are commercially produced and not enough thought is being given to making them relevant to the actual needs of the pupils and so they are not focused enough. Not all teachers are marking consistently and in a way that will help pupils to improve. Some of the planning is also generic rather than specific to the school and whilst this in itself is not a problem, some teachers are not adapting the planning, and particularly the work set, to the actual needs of the class being taught. This results in some pupils being insufficiently challenged.
56. The subject co-ordinator has been in the school just over a year but has already helped implement a number of initiatives that should help to raise standards. She has a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has identified areas of need in her action plan. There have already been some improvements to targets set and the need for consistency of handwriting has been raised at staff meetings. She is managing the subject well, monitors the planning and has scrutinised pupils' work, writing quite extensive notes for teachers on areas that need improvement – such as marking. She recognises that although pupils' progress may be seen as satisfactory, there is a need for a more focused approach if standards are going to be raised. The monitoring and tracking system that is now in place is good; although quite recently introduced, it will help identify areas of need and target help where it is most needed. There has been an analysis of the 2004 standard attainment test results and areas of common weakness identified so that these can be more effectively covered in future.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. These are effectively supported across the curriculum with examples of extended written and computer generated work seen in geography, religious education, history and science. Information and communications technology is now used effectively to support language and literacy, with pupils regularly visiting the computer suite and being given opportunities to produce writing, posters and letters etc. They use the Internet regularly for research purposes. These are all helping improve the overall writing standards.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average at the end of Year 2.
- Older pupils achieve well and standards are above the national average by the end of Year 6.
- Good use is made of ICT to support numeracy.
- Good use is made of teaching assistants to support pupils with special educational needs.

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Commentary

58. The results of the tests in 2004 were below the national average for pupils in Year 2 and above the national average at the end of Year 6. There has been significant improvement made in standards since 2003 when they were low at both ages. Older pupils are making good progress and the present group of pupils in Year 6 are likely to achieve well and exceed the targets set by the school, which appear to be low. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are catching up well with their learning and achieve suitably. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well due to the good support of the class teachers and their teaching assistants.
59. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory and some teaching was very good. In the very good lessons, pupils were suitably challenged and teachers had high expectations. Pupils were clearly aware of what they were being asked to do and what they would learn. Teachers vary their methods of teaching and as a result, pupils are keen to participate and maintain interest. Lesson planning is well linked to take into account all the levels of attainment within the class. All teachers made good use of the interactive whiteboards to enliven teaching and clearly illustrate key facts.
60. The youngest pupils are not achieving the standard expected at this age particularly in number work. Older pupils' work is of a better standard and some good work is produced at the top end of the school. Work in all the four areas of mathematics is now covered much more closely and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Older pupils in the school have a weekly tables test. These results are given to the co-ordinator to provide an overview of progress in this area of mathematics.
61. Leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware of standards and recognises the need to undertake a full review of the subject. Resources need to be reviewed to improve quality and quantity. There has been satisfactory progress made since the last inspection with some good innovation, such as pupils now working on problem solving in a specially designated book.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. Links with ICT are particularly strong and pupils enjoy using the interactive whiteboards. Pupils make good use of their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills during mathematics lessons.
63. There are some links with other subjects such as ICT where pupils use spreadsheets and in science when they are calculating the range of data that they have collected. In design and technology, they use measure and calculation for planning their designs. There is less evidence of this work in geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6, standards are at the national average; although they have fallen since the last inspection.
- Teachers' planning now shows a better understanding about how to use experimentation and investigation as a way of building scientific knowledge.
- The good, though temporary leadership, has a clear grasp on how improvements should be undertaken.

Commentary

64. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below the national average and by the end of Year 6 they are average. This represents a decline from those at the last inspection when they were both above average. In the 2004 national teacher assessments, pupils in Year 2 had below average standards. Pupils then in Year 6 had average standards but this has steadily dropped from a high in 2000. Through the infants, the teachers have to develop scientific skills quickly as standards are below those expected on entry to Year 1. There has been an improvement in standards in Year 2 since last year when the teacher assessments indicated that standards were well below average. In the infants, there is now a much better approach to the teaching of the subject. In the juniors, the teaching is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6 and this is where the best achievement can be seen.
65. Achievement by pupils of all levels of attainment is sound through the infants and good through the juniors. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are given experiences related closely to those within the national guidelines and good opportunities to work practically. In Year 2, for instance, they can talk about the properties of bread. Approximately two thirds of the class can describe what they see when bread is toasted and are beginning to think about the implications of what they are studying. By the use of investigation and careful questioning, they are starting to understand the need for 'fair testing' and how this can be achieved. Through the juniors these skills are built upon so that by Year 6 pupils are more confident about conducting their own tests and experiments. At this stage of the academic year nearly two thirds are already working within the national average Level 4.
66. Teaching and learning are sound through the school. It is strongest in Years 2, 5 and 6. In a very good lesson in Year 2, the teacher used clever questioning techniques that promoted pupils' thinking. She made sure that the pupils made close observations of what they were seeing and that they related this to irreversible change. "*Can we change the toast back to bread once it has been toasted?*" An interesting session of work seen in the scrutiny of books in Year 4 showed that teachers try to encourage pupils to think scientifically. Here, comparisons were being made between the three states of matter. Pupils were asked to decide whether syrup was a liquid or solid and how definitions could be made. By Year 6, piling bricks upon one another and comparing this with a pile of sand is developing even higher levels of thinking.
67. Pupils are keen to be involved in science work. They enjoy practical lessons and during these times concentration is high. They work well with each other and show real excitement when they discover some new fact. Relationships between the staff and pupils are good so that in the best lessons, learning is fun. Teachers' planning is thorough. All strands of the subject are covered suitably. Good use is made of a variety of resources such as websites and practical materials. In the infants, teachers make sure that these resources are all ready to hand so that little time is lost. Through the juniors, pupils are allowed to make more decisions about what they will need although this could be further developed and allow pupils, particularly those with higher ability, the chance to use the knowledge that they already have acquired in unfamiliar situations.

68. Leadership of the subject is good. The temporary co-ordinator, has an made an analysis of the provision for the subject and has clear ideas about how to make progress better. Since the last inspection, the previous co-ordinator had worked hard to develop investigation and experimentation. The high levels of professional development in 2001/2 mean that teachers are now more confident to try out new ways of working. The use of a commercial scheme has ensured that all areas of the subject are covered but this is now more allied to the requirements of the national guidelines and extra skills have been added. Books are monitored every half term to provide an overview of the coverage although this needs further development to highlight where improvements can be made. In addition, regular half-termly assessments provide further information. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been considerable improvement in the last six years; standards are now in line with national expectations and are set to improve.
- Resources for the subject are good.
- Teachers are now confident to teach the subject and know how to provide challenging lessons.
- The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced; providing a good balance between learning new skills and using these in real life situations.
- The co-ordinator has a clear view about how to continue the improvements; there is a capacity for further development.

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Commentary

69. The school has greatly improved the provision in ICT since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. The headteacher and co-ordinator have developed a good plan for the subject. This has included the building of an ICT suite with high quality computers and good peripheral hardware. In addition, teachers have been trained so that they are now competent and confident to teach the subject in greater depth. As a result, the standards of the pupils at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are at those expected for their age. Pupils achieve soundly in the infants as they learn the basics of the different programs they are given to work with. Through the juniors, pupils achieve well as these early skills are developed through a consistently challenging curriculum.
70. By the end of Year 2, pupils can use computer programs with some confidence. In a good Year 2 lesson, the pupils demonstrated their ability to draw lines using an art program linked to the work of Mondrian. In a previous lesson, they had learnt the rudiments of drawing using this technology and were now extending this knowledge by drawing boxes and then flooding them with colour. Through the juniors, pupils learn how to use word processing programs, spreadsheets, research using the Internet and to produce simple presentations. An innovative link has been forged with the local secondary school where pupils have the chance to be taught by a specialist teacher in a more advanced computer suite. Whilst this has only started very recently, a Year 4 class made great strides in their learning. They were being taught to make simple slides. This balanced the learning of new skills well with a realisation that ICT should have links to the work in other subjects. Consequently, by Year 6, pupils are far more confident than was the case at the last inspection when standards were below those expected for their age.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Work is planned to link with other subjects so that pupils can use the skills they have acquired. A commercial scheme helps to provide a continuous improvement each year although teachers also adapt these plans to the needs of

their own class. Pupils respond well to the challenges they are offered. They concentrate well, share the equipment and relish the chance to undertake practical work. The level of concentration is good and relationships mean that each pupil is willing to help the other. Professional development and the use of a lottery funded training programme have boosted teachers' understanding about how lessons should be developed. More professional development is planned during next year to evaluate and review how best to incorporate ICT across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are fully supported both by the teacher and their assistants. They make similar levels of progress to others in the class. Care is taken to support those who need it. For example, those with physical difficulties now have a more appropriate 'rollerball' that has been provided to replace the computer mouse. The newly introduced interactive whiteboards are proving a success. They are providing teachers with an opportunity to provide a wide variety of visual stimuli for their class as well as allowing pupils to demonstrate their own work. All teachers are becoming increasingly confident about developing their planning, worksheets and showing examples to the class using the equipment.

72. The co-ordinator, supported by the headteacher, has been instrumental in the developments within the subject. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is a very clear view about why and how improvements should be introduced. There is a good understanding about the competence of the staff and some individual training has been given to enhance teachers' skills. The success of the improvements can be seen in the increasing levels of achievement and progress by the pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. ICT is used suitably across the curriculum. There are a number of links to English, the humanities, mathematics and art and design. The school recognises that still more needs to be done and has planned a series of training sessions to undertake a review. However, the use of technology across the curriculum has vastly improved over recent years.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All areas of the statutory curriculum are covered in sufficient depth; an improvement since the last inspection.
- Religious education supports the learning in other subjects such as English.
- Themes are supported well through assemblies and visits.

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Commentary

74. Due to timetabling restraints it was only possible to observe one religious education lesson and the amount of written work produced during the year so far has been very limited. It is not, therefore, possible to make secure judgements in a number of areas. A review of work and of the subject co-ordinator's file and the planning indicates that all elements of the locally agreed syllabus are satisfactorily covered and the subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of the pupils.
75. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards in Year 2 as only two pieces of written work have been completed this year. The work seen is satisfactory, focusing on special books such as the Bible and the Koran.

76. In the lesson seen in Year 6, pupils were looking at the Bible story of Christmas. Pupils were able to reflect on the feelings and reactions of the shepherds as when they received the news of the coming birth from the angels. In relating it to their own lives and how people might react today, they showed sound understanding of what the birth of Christ might mean to Christians. This emphasis on reflection and 'How would you feel?' is also seen in the work sample. Pupils are not merely learning the facts about different religions but are seeking to understand why they are important to people. Although the work sample is still quite small as much of the work is done through discussion, there is enough to judge that standards are in line with those expected of the agreed syllabus by Year 6. Progress is good through Years 5 and 6 and achievement through the juniors satisfactory.
77. With only one lesson seen it is not possible to make a judgement about teaching and learning. In the lesson seen, these were satisfactory. The lesson was well organised and effective questioning challenged the pupils to make them think. Books are regularly marked but marking does not always show the pupils how well they have done or how they could improve. Religious education supports language and literacy well, with opportunities to develop important skills such as note-taking and extended writing. There is some use of information and communication technology to support the subject, for example, pupils use the Internet for research purposes. Use of information and communications technology has been identified as an area needing further development.
78. The subject co-ordinator leads and manages the subject satisfactorily. Monitoring has been done through work reviews and so far these have tended to focus on coverage of the curriculum rather than the standards being achieved. There has not been any opportunity for her to observe other teachers teaching the subject in recent years. The co-ordinator has a sound, general view of what is happening in the subject but her action plan is fairly vague and not in written form. The main aims; to raise standards and improve use of information and communication technology, are appropriate but more specific plans will need to focus on how this is to be done. Resources are sound, with a range of artefacts. Use is made of trips to local churches and, sometimes but less consistently, a synagogue or a gurdwara. Themes from assemblies often support religious education, as for example during the inspection week when pupils were encouraged to think about how children in different countries celebrate Christmas.
79. **Geography** and **history** lessons are usually in alternate blocks of several weeks and for this reason there was only a very small sample of work available to review. It is not possible, therefore, to make any judgement on the standard of work being produced or about overall provision. In geography, the work seen is at the appropriate level for the age of the pupils. Year 2 pupils have been looking at the story of Katie Morag and the Isle of Struay and there are some good links with literacy and writing as pupils wrote letters to Katie. Year 6 pupils have been looking at mountain ranges of the world and mind mapping and report writing again provide good literacy support.
80. One history lesson was observed during the inspection. From the sample of work it is clear that in Year 6, pupils achieve at a satisfactory level and standards are in line with those expected nationally.
81. Younger pupils had insufficient work in their books for it to be possible to make a clear judgement on standards, although there is a high number of worksheets. In Year 2, pupils learn about their own families and growing up and the Great Fire of London. Older pupils learn about the Greeks and Romans, the Egyptians and the Victorian age. In an English lesson, good curricular links were made as pupils were asked to plan a newspaper report about Tutankhamen. In a history lesson on the Pyramids good use was made of the interactive whiteboard and pupils displayed good knowledge and understanding from previous lessons.
82. Resources and artefacts are good and used well and the history curriculum is enhanced by appropriate visits to local museums and places of interest. A theatre company, which runs workshops, visits several times a year and provides good links with drama.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. No **music** lessons were timetabled during the inspection. Pupils sang tunefully during assemblies and in a carol singing practice. Due to lack of expertise within the school staff, a music specialist comes to the school once a week and teaches a half hour session in every class. The planning shows there is a good balance between all the various strands of the subject. Photographic evidence shows pupils enjoying a percussion lesson. Pupils have the opportunity to play, listen and evaluate music from different genres. Some pupils take private instrumental tuition from visiting teachers of brass, woodwind, strings and guitar, although there is no school choir.
84. During the inspection, no **physical education** lessons were observed and therefore a judgement on provision cannot be made. However, an audit and review have led to a new scheme of work, which gives staff greater confidence to teach physical education. Strong links made with the local secondary schools, particularly the one that shares the site, enhances the entire physical education curriculum. Pupils benefit from the School Sports Co-ordinator Programme which provides sports coaching, most recently in tennis and cricket. They have the opportunity to experience many different sports and presently dance is a focus. The school is receiving tuition from a Junior Team Sports Leader from the secondary school, who is teaching older pupils team games that can be played with younger pupils during break times. Sport and gymnastics clubs further enhance the curriculum. Leadership from the co-ordinator is good and a well-focused programme of activities has helped to raise the quality of teaching and improve opportunities since the last report.
85. In **art and design**, a clear set of themes is taught within all years. These include some interesting cultural links connected with different cultures such as Mexican, African and Egyptian art. Many of these are on display, such as a thorough investigation of the work of Kandinsky. Key skills are linked to the various topics and these are monitored carefully by the co-ordinator. They include the use of texture, form and tone and teachers are expected to develop these through two and three-dimensional work. One good example has involved learning how to stitch Indian embroidery. Some commercial schemes are used, incorporating the work expected within the national guidelines. ICT has increasingly become central to the work in art and design and new resources have been purchased to further enhance this area.
86. Although only a small number of lessons were seen it is clear that pupils enjoy art and design. They can talk about some of the areas they have covered and have particularly enjoyed being challenged by new skills. The school has tried to encourage more work through an art week centred on Van Gogh and Year 3 produced a scarecrow for a community week. Overall, attainment is at the level expected for pupils' ages but there are also some talented artists within the school.
87. **Design and technology** is less well developed than art and design. Examples on display include moving toys and packaging made by Year 3, money containers by Year 4 and shelters and structures by Year 6. All these suggest that attainment is at the expected level. Pupils have done some evaluation and redesign of existing plans. The best example is the CD covers that have been thought out very well and have incorporated work through a number of different subjects including ICT.
88. The co-ordinator for both subjects is well qualified, has a very clear view about what needs to be done next and provides good leadership. She has been able to monitor and evaluate some aspects including resources through programmed release time. Too few lessons were seen to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching within these two subjects although it has not deteriorated since the last inspection. In art and design, the school has addressed a weakness that was identified at the time of the last inspection by establishing a much closer link with non-western art.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

89. Since the last inspection more specific lessons have been introduced to encourage a better understanding of the issues relating to personal, social and health education and to provide pupils with an opportunity to think about their roles within our society. These include regular discussion periods known as 'Circle Time.' Pupils are able to talk about the personal qualities of others and about how friendships interrelate. The school has also recognised the need to improve the quality of lunchtime behaviour and the supervisors are encouraged, through training, to focus the play more closely. These procedures are having a beneficial effect and have eliminated some boisterous behaviour. In history, religious education, geography and through assemblies, the pupils learn about their own society, beliefs and cultures and those of others. Personal development has a high profile within the school and is effective in ensuring that pupils feel safe and secure.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
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	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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	5
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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