

INSPECTION REPORT

**CROUGHTON ALL SAINTS CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Croughton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121967

Headteacher: Mrs Jan James

Lead inspector: Mrs Jayne Clemence

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 January 2005

Inspection number: 266701

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: 108

School address: High Street
Croughton
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Northamptonshire
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Rev Canon Peter Gompertz

Date of previous inspection: July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Croughton Primary School is a small village school serving a diverse community. The standards of attainment on entry to the foundation stage vary widely from year to year, but are average overall. The numbers of children are relatively small, and a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs join throughout the school. There is a high level of mobility, as approximately one quarter start at different times throughout the school, and particularly towards the beginning of Year 3. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above average, and a small minority has a statement of special educational needs. The range of special needs includes moderate, specific and emotional and behavioural needs. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The vast majority of pupils have a white ethnic background, with a very small minority from other heritages. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is very low, though this does not necessarily reflect accurately the overall picture. There are no facilities for cooked meals at the school and all pupils therefore bring their own packed lunches. Pupils' social backgrounds, though overall average, vary enormously from year to year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22629	Jayne Clemence	Lead inspector	English, foundation stage, religious education, music
9770	John Baker	Lay inspector	
1224	Graham Todd	Team inspector	Mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), physical education, special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Croughton Primary School provides a **satisfactory** standard of education, and satisfactory value for money. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, as are leadership and management. The school has been disrupted by problems with its accommodation for a sustained period of time.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, senior teacher and staff create a positive atmosphere for learning where pupils behave well, have good attitudes and develop good relationships between themselves and adults.
- Pupils' achievements in ICT are unsatisfactory; their skills are not developed systematically and there are missed opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum.
- Pupils achieve well in reading and spelling because their skills are developed rigorously, but speaking and listening skills are less well developed.
- Teaching in the foundation stage is of variable quality and the organisation, challenge and expectations are not always rigorous enough, particularly in children's creative development.
- Good leadership and management of special educational needs are helping to raise standards further, but the role of the senior teacher is underdeveloped and some subject leaders do not have an overview of their subjects across the school.
- Some higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged in mathematics and science in Years 3-6.
- Pupils' personal qualities are developed effectively, and they take a keen sense of responsibility for one another and their school.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory, and resources insufficient in ICT and the foundation stage.

The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection, though at times the pace of change has been slower than hoped for. The accommodation has caused wide-ranging problems whereby pupils and staff had to move from classrooms to temporary arrangements elsewhere in the village in order to deal with flood damage. The headteacher has had to prioritise the most pressing issues under these challenging circumstances. As a consequence, some aspects of the school's work have taken much longer to address than originally anticipated.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

It should be noted that the number of pupils in Year 6 varies, and is sometimes less than 10 pupils. Care should thus be taken when interpreting data because of small numbers and a high proportion of pupils in some year groups with special educational needs.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004

English	A	C	A	A
Mathematics	C	A	B	D
Science	D	B	C	E

*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 overall throughout the school. Most children reach the goals expected by the end of reception and achieve satisfactorily except in creative development, where unsatisfactory organisation and limited resources hinder learning, and in personal and social development, where they achieve well and exceed expectations. Standards in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are below average, and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory throughout the school as their ICT skills are not developed systematically. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in all years because they are supported effectively. Standards in science have been hindered by disruption with accommodation, and lack of proper facilities to carry out practical scientific investigations.

Pupils' personal qualities, attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils' attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall throughout the school. Teaching and learning, particularly in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4, have some good and very good features, but speaking and listening skills are not always systematically developed in lessons. The curriculum is satisfactory, but additional activities beyond lessons are good and varied. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, as they are supported systematically and effectively. Good links with the community and other schools help the school to extend its own resources and expertise. Care and guidance are satisfactory, as are links with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's leadership is satisfactory and there is a sound emphasis upon raising standards. The school's evaluation of its own strengths is realistic. Management is satisfactory, and strategies for monitoring standards, teaching and learning are systematic. Subject leadership in some instances is shared between staff, and in some subjects, subject leaders do not have a comprehensive overview of what is going on elsewhere in the school. The senior management role of the senior teacher is underdeveloped, and therefore the headteacher has retained more responsibilities than is realistic or sustainable. The work of the governing body is satisfactory and governors have a clear overview of the school and its relative strengths and weaknesses. They ensure that statutory requirements are met. Governors have taken an increasingly effective role in monitoring the school and challenging its work.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents express satisfaction with the school, and pupils are very satisfied with school life. Parents particularly like the arrangements for their children to settle when they come to school, but some feel they would like more information about their child's progress and advice on how to support them at home. Although the inspection team judged the quality of information to parents to be satisfactory, there is scope for clarifying what is realistic to

expect from parents and what the school can provide. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very few things they would like to see changed. They feel their views are taken seriously.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards and achievement in ICT.
- Improve teaching and learning in areas where they are weaker, especially in children's creative development in the foundation stage and in speaking and listening skills.
- Ensure higher attaining pupils are challenged systematically, particularly in mathematics and science in Years 3-6.
- Develop further the role of the senior teacher and subject leaders.
- Resolve the weaknesses in accommodation and resources.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Children in the foundation stage achieve satisfactorily overall, and pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are below average throughout the school. There are no significant variations in achievement among different groups of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school in reading and spelling, but their skills in speaking and listening are less advanced.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the effective and focused support.
- Standards in ICT are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory throughout the school.
- Children in the foundation stage achieve well in their personal and social development, but underachieve in their creative development.
- The higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not always challenged systematically in mathematics and science.
- The rate of pupils' progress has been hindered by disruption to accommodation.

Commentary

1. Standards vary widely between the year groups. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the relatively high mobility of pupils in Years 3-6 are reasons why any statistical analysis and comparisons of the school's results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are not reliable indicators of standards and pupils' achievements. In the most recent national test results in Year 2 for example, almost half the pupils were identified with special educational needs. This factor clearly impacted on the overall outcomes for pupils. Although standards vary between Years 2 and 6, the school is able to demonstrate that pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their starting points. Standards in English, mathematics and science are average by Year 6, and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. All classes are mixed in terms of ages and year groups, and there is a very wide range of attainment in any one class.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.9 (15.0)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.1 (13.4)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	14.5 (15.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.0 (27.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.3 (28.6)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.1 (28.6)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. The special educational needs coordinator tracks pupils' progress carefully, and they are well supported in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Pupils' needs are identified swiftly, and as they make progress, new targets are identified. They are reflected systematically in the day-to-day provision for pupils, thus ensuring they gain a good grasp in the basic skills of reading and number. There is a good emphasis upon including all pupils, regardless of their individual differences. Parents express appreciation of this atmosphere across the school.
3. Standards in ICT are below average and the pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory. This is because their ICT skills have not been developed systematically over time. Resources have been inadequate for the purpose of raising standards, and opportunities for pupils to use ICT across the curriculum underdeveloped. The school is making rigorous efforts to address this weakness, though progress has been slow overall. Many pupils by Year 6 do not have the necessary skills to be prepared sufficiently for secondary school, and there is much catching up required in order for them to be equipped appropriately.
4. Children in the foundation stage achieve satisfactorily overall, and are on course to meet the early learning goals expected for their age in most areas apart from their creative development. Children achieve well in the personal, social and emotional development due to the good teaching and learning in this aspect of the foundation stage. In this area they exceed expectations. In other early learning goals observed, they generally achieve satisfactorily except in creative development, where achievement is unsatisfactory. The children's creative skills are not developed systematically, and there are missed opportunities for them due to unsatisfactory organisation and limited resources.
5. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory rather than good overall because higher attainers are not always challenged with sufficient rigour. All classes are mixed in terms of ages and year groups, and there is a very wide range of attainment. Higher attainers do not always have work of a higher order, particularly in mathematics and science in Years 3-6.
6. Pupils achieve well in reading and spelling because these aspects of English are well taught, with work often well matched to pupils' needs. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are weaker because these skills are not developed consistently through lessons. Achievement in writing is satisfactory. The school is working hard to improve pupils' writing skills, but many pupils are starting from a low baseline.
7. There is a good atmosphere for learning where everyone is included, regardless of their differences or backgrounds. Parents say this is something they really like about the school and the teachers. There has been satisfactory improvement in standards and pupils' achievements since the last inspection, and the leadership itself has

already identified many of the areas highlighted during the inspection, with appropriate strategies for raising standards further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and their cultural development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in the classroom contribute positively to their learning.
- The school creates a caring environment where bullying is rare, and has effective procedures for dealing with any incidents should they arise.
- Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are good. This is the result of the caring ethos of the school and the good example set by the staff.
- Pupils are confident and keen to take responsibility. This is the result of their being given opportunities to become independent and take responsibility from an early age.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good because of the strong promotion of Christian beliefs and values throughout the school.
- Parents are very conscientious about ensuring that their children attend regularly and on time; this enables pupils to learn more effectively.

Commentary

8. In the vast majority of lessons pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Nearly all listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. Pupils are also keen to take part in extra activities beyond lessons, including sport and the school orchestra.
9. Standards of behaviour are good in the classroom and around the school. All pupils discuss and agree class rules and are fully aware of the high standards expected and insisted upon by all staff. The caring ethos of the school results in pupils knowing right from wrong and showing consideration for others. No signs of aggressive behaviour were seen and parents confirmed that bullying is a rarity. Relationships between pupils are good; they work well together in the classroom and play harmoniously together in the playground. Relationships between pupils and staff are good and are the result of staff giving a very positive lead in building good relationships and acting as good role models. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
10. From the day they start school, children are encouraged to become independent and take on a range of responsibilities appropriate to their age. These range from tidying up after themselves in the reception class, acting as buddies in Year 2, to carrying out a wide range of whole school responsibilities for older pupils. These include "playground squad" duties for Year 4-6 pupils, receiving calls and welcoming people in the office by Year 5 and 6 pupils, special duties for the head boy and girl, and showing visitors around the school. Pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 represent their peers on the school council and this has a positive impact on their personal development, particularly their awareness of citizenship.

11. Pupils' spiritual awareness is developed well through assemblies, where there are good opportunities for reflection, and through other subjects such as religious education. Moral and social development is promoted strongly through assemblies, discussing school and class rules and through "circle time" and "nurture sessions", where staff and pupils pay particular attention to pupils' personal and social development, including how they feel about aspects of their learning and school life.
12. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. In some instances, good examples were seen to raise pupils' awareness of other cultures. In a Year 1-2 literacy lesson, which focused on a traditional Indian story, pupils' learning was developed further by the staff wearing Indian costume, displaying good quality artefacts and listening to Indian music.
13. The school promotes regular attendance well through the prospectus, reminders to parents and rewarding pupils for full attendance. Parents respond very positively, which results in very good attendance and good punctuality.
14. Children make good gains in their personal and social development in the foundation stage, and many are on course to exceed expectations in this early learning goal by the end of reception. This is because of the systematic emphasis on developing their skills in this area.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.6	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education for pupils is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The curriculum is satisfactory, and the headteacher and staff ensure satisfactory care and guidance for the parents. Links with parents are satisfactory, and the links with other school and the community are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall throughout the school, including the foundation stage. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and improving.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in aspects of English, including reading and spelling, is helping pupils learn more effectively in other subjects; pupils' speaking and listening skills are less well developed.
- Foundation stage teaching is uneven and variable across the areas of learning; it is good for children's personal, social and emotional development, and unsatisfactory for developing their creative skills.
- Good teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to learn and achieve well; teaching assistants are very effective in supporting the pupils' learning and achievements.
- Teaching for higher attainers in Years 3-6 is not always sufficiently challenging, particularly in mathematics and science.
- The use of ICT in teaching and learning is underdeveloped.
- Teaching and learning have been disrupted significantly over the last year due to continued problems with the accommodation.

Commentary

15. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Assessment information about the pupils is being gathered and collated more formally than previously, and although teachers have always known the pupils very well, there is a growing rigour and formality to assessment procedures and analysis of assessment information.
16. Teaching in reading and spelling is good throughout the school and ensures pupils learn more effectively in other subjects across the curriculum. They are able to read more readily and gain information more independently because of their reading skills. Many have a range of good strategies to attempt new words, and know certain rules and patterns for spelling that assist them further. There are, however, missed opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills in lessons. Although

there were some exceptions to this in Years 1,2, 3 and 4, pupils' speaking and listening skills could be developed even further.

17. Satisfactory teaching in the foundation stage is enabling children to reach most of the goals expected for their age. They achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development, and develop positive attitudes to learning from an early age. Teaching and learning in children's creative development are unsatisfactory due to unsatisfactory organisation of activities and limited resources. Although the leadership and management monitor teaching regularly, this area has not had sufficient attention in recent times as the headteacher's time and attention has been taken up with managing the accommodation crisis.
18. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. The teaching assistants have clearly identified roles and responsibilities. They provide very good support for individuals and groups of pupils, and liaise closely with the teachers. The identification and assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are good, having clear targets against which progress can be measured. They are reviewed regularly and parents and pupils are involved in the process. The pupils are carefully monitored and the assessment records and information gathered by the special educational needs coordinator indicate that the majority are making good progress. Records of pupils' achievements are kept and maintained efficiently. These positive features of teaching enable pupils to learn more effectively.
19. Teachers' use of ICT in lessons is underdeveloped, and there are missed opportunities for pupils to learn new ICT skills as a result. The quality of teaching and learning in ICT is variable as pupils move through the school. In the best examples, teaching is secure and knowledgeable. In many instances, ICT is not an integral part of teaching and learning in subjects across the curriculum. There are insufficient resources in ICT for staff and pupils. Classrooms do not have adequate ICT facilities. This unsatisfactory feature is a barrier to teaching and learning in ICT.
20. Teaching and learning have been disrupted over a prolonged period of time due to problems with the accommodation. Pupils in Years 3-6 had no permanent classrooms due to flooding, and temporary arrangements had to be made in a nearby village hall facility. Pupils and teachers spent much time walking to and from the hall with the necessary equipment, and did their best under the circumstances.
21. There is a positive atmosphere for learning, where everyone is included, regardless of their differences or backgrounds. Parents and pupils comment that they really like this aspect of the school.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 19 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	8	8	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

Pupils have access to a satisfactory range of learning opportunities overall. There is a good range of additional activities beyond lessons. Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory in key areas of the school's work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is enriched by good learning opportunities for music.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory and restricts learning opportunities for pupils; resources are unsatisfactory in ICT and for children in the foundation stage.

Commentary

22. Planning for literacy, numeracy and science is satisfactory and these subjects are now firmly established in the curriculum. Planning for ICT in the different subjects of the curriculum is unsatisfactory and the resources for ICT are unsatisfactory, and those that are available are underused. As a result, achievement in ICT is unsatisfactory throughout the school. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection.
23. The curriculum is enriched by the good opportunities provided for music. There is a school orchestra, and pupils participate in concerts and school productions. During the inspection, pupils were observed receiving good quality tuition on stringed and brass musical instruments. There is a satisfactory range of sporting activities including rugby, football, netball, tennis and cricket. Last term a parent taught tag rugby sessions. The environment is well used and there are very strong links with the church.
24. Educational visits are satisfactorily used to support the curriculum. In science, for example, pupils have been to the Shire Horse Centre at Stratford and the Butterfly Farm. There are good links with Magdalen College School; they are helping the school with the development of the ICT provision.
25. The curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers ensure that work is adapted and modified to meet the wide range of needs in each class. All identified pupils have good individual education plans and are fully included in lessons. The school is implementing the Code of Practice well. The school has not yet formally identified any gifted and talented pupils.
26. The curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. The nurturing and Life Bus initiatives help to supplement the work done in circle time, science and PSHE lessons. The regular sessions for "circle time" - where pupils discuss their views and feelings - add to their understanding of themselves and others, and form an integral part of school life.
27. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. There are long-standing problems with the old school building, which is prone to flooding. Considerable constraints were placed upon the accommodation when the cottage part of the school was being re-thatched. This temporarily affected the teaching of ICT as the suite was used to accommodate a class. The hall is very small and obstacles around the sides such as the piano and benches mean that great care has to be taken over safety when teaching PE. Changing facilities for PE are inadequate, especially for the older pupils. Some of the classrooms are very cramped. The office and staffroom accommodation is also inadequate. Resources for children in the foundation stage are unsatisfactory for example in the provision for creative development. This in turn restricts their learning and achievement. Leadership and management followed guidance concerning ICT resources in good faith, but now recognise the inadequacies of their decisions, as requirements for the subject have moved on significantly. Many of the facilities are unsuitable for wheelchair access.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes satisfactory provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides pupils with satisfactory support and guidance overall and involves them well in the work of the school and its development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Health and safety procedures are good; pupils learn in an atmosphere that creates a sense of well being for everyone.
- Support, advice and guidance for pupils' personal development are good; pupils have good and trusting relationships with adults.
- Good induction arrangements for pupils ensure that they settle down happily into school.
- Good involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views enables them to have a growing sense of responsibility for their school.
- The child protection policy needs to be finalised and distributed to all staff as soon as possible.

Commentary

28. Health and safety procedures are good. The premises are inspected termly and any issues reported to the governing body for appropriate action. The headteacher and the senior lunchtime supervisor check the premises daily and the caretaker is very diligent in her duties. Risk assessments have been carried out on most areas of the school on a wide range of activities including fire evacuation procedures, and indoor and outdoor physical education. Implementation of the risk assessment procedures for indoor physical education was witnessed at the start of a Year 4 dance lesson. The health and safety policy, which is currently under revision, is supported by a range of related policies including asthma, educational visits and swimming. Pupils' healthy and safe living is well promoted through the PSHE programme, which is enhanced by talks by the school nurse, visits by the Life Education Bus and presentations by "Captain Cholesterol".
29. Teachers and support staff know the pupils and their families extremely well, are sensitive to their needs and are thus able to provide very good support and guidance. The good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically. This close relationship was endorsed by the pupils' questionnaire where nearly all confirmed that they would go to an adult if they had any worries. Also pupils can raise concerns anonymously through "worry boxes" and "worry bags" and issues are discussed in "circle time" when staff make good use of their Nurturing Programme training. Behavioural problems are carefully recorded and parents involved as necessary.
30. There are good and effective induction arrangements for children when they first start school, including home visits and a half day in the school. All parents confirm that they are happy with the arrangements for helping their child to settle into school. This approach ensures that children settle more readily and make the most of school life from the very beginning, and develop positive attitudes.
31. Pupils' views are taken into account effectively through the school council and all members, particularly the youngest, are encouraged to contribute to discussion. The school council have initiated the introduction of the "playground squad" and provision of more playground equipment. They are currently discussing setting up a "walking bus". All pupils are involved in discussing and agreeing class rules.

32. There has been some improvement in child protection procedures since the last inspection but the policy has not yet been finalised or issued to staff. The leadership has been slow to address this matter.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good contribution parents make to their children's learning makes a positive contribution to their achievement.
- Parents willingly support the school in any way they can.
- The good links with the community help to enrich the curriculum.
- The good links with the secondary school ensure that pupils transfer happily on to their next stage of education.

Commentary

33. Parents are satisfactorily informed about the school through the prospectus, the governors' annual report, regular newsletters and frequent other correspondence. Information on the curriculum is provided through curriculum summaries issued termly. These clearly define the work to be covered in all subjects and make reference to the PSHE programme, citizenship and "nurturing time". Parents receive comprehensive information about their children's progress through progress reports issued in the autumn and spring terms, which are followed up by consultation evenings. However, pupils' annual reports, although giving good information on what pupils can do, do not give much information on progress and couch targets in such general terms that they are not always very helpful to parents or pupils.
34. Parents are keen to help the school in any way they can. Some provide weekly help in the classroom, others provide help in specific subjects as needed, for example, in cookery, art, history, geography and religious education. They also provide very good help on trips and visits and particularly with swimming. Parents help in many practical ways including decorating the school, constructing the computer suite benches, specifying and negotiating good deals for hi-fi equipment and walking pupils to the village hall when their class was flooded. In addition, the Friends' Association organise frequent social events and raise substantial funds for the school.
35. Good links with the community include strong links with the church, which is used regularly to celebrate Christian festivals and as an educational resource. The church also runs a summer holiday scheme for all local children and the after-school "X-stream" club for older pupils. Good links with RAF Croughton include providing help with the maintenance of the grounds. Good use is made of the locality as an educational resource, for example Year 5/6 pupils visited Victorian houses when studying that period.
36. There are close links with the local secondary school staff and pupils undertake transition projects in English, mathematics and science. Also Saturday activity days are provided for higher attaining pupils, and a science day was delivered to the Year 5/6

class by a member of the secondary school staff. There are good links with other primary schools through sport and music and there is good liaison with the village nursery and playgroup.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school has satisfactory leadership, and management strategies for raising standards are sound. The senior teacher and subject leaders make a sound contribution to school life. The governance of the school is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's leadership ensures that pupils develop good attitudes and behaviour, creating a positive atmosphere for learning where everyone is valued and respected.
- Good management of special educational needs ensures that those pupils are identified effectively and supported well.
- The role of the senior teacher in senior management is underdeveloped, and the headteacher has an unsustainable range of responsibilities; some subject leaders do not always have a complete overview of standards, teaching and learning across the school.
- Governors take an active role in school life; they show tenacity and determination in their quest to improve the school's facilities and accommodation.
- Leadership and management have been hindered by continued crises with the accommodation over an extended period of time.

Commentary

37. The headteacher and senior teacher are committed to ensuring that pupils achieve their best at Croughton Primary School. They have created a positive atmosphere where pupils are encouraged and valued for their individual contributions. There is much tolerance and respect shown by adults for the pupils based on kindness and consideration, and everyone is included as a matter of course. The staff work hard to cooperate and strive to do their best for all the pupils.
38. The good management of special educational needs ensures that pupils' individual needs are identified swiftly. Resources are used efficiently, and additional support for those pupils is targeted strategically. The special educational needs coordinator is very knowledgeable in providing for those pupils, and has wide ranging strategies to assist their learning.
39. The headteacher currently has responsibility for many subject areas as well as the day-to-day leadership and management responsibilities, and a significant teaching commitment for half the week. Whilst in a small school this is inevitable in some respects, the senior teacher's role is not sufficiently developed in terms of leading and managing the school. The senior teacher provides a strong role model in her own teaching, though her expertise is not used sufficiently across the school. Subject leadership has developed since the previous inspection, though some subject leaders do not have a comprehensive overview of their subjects across the school. In the core subjects of English and mathematics, subject leadership is shared between the headteacher and senior teacher. The senior teacher's knowledge of what is happening

in Years 3-6 is underdeveloped as there are too few opportunities for her to monitor standards, teaching and learning in those years.

40. Leadership of the foundation stage is satisfactory overall. The headteacher and senior teacher understand the relative strengths and weaknesses in the foundation stage, though the difficulties posed by accommodation and demands on senior management to deal with the immediate crises have meant valuable time taken from monitoring and managing the provision as systematically as required.
41. The role of the governing body has improved from the time of the last inspection. They are more fully involved in monitoring the school, and holding people accountable for their work. Governors are ably led, and they continue with tenacity and determination through uncertainties regarding the school building. There remain outstanding questions about when they can expect decisions regarding improvements and what they can do in the meantime to manage some of the unsatisfactory features in the school's accommodation. The headteacher's leadership and management of the school have been hindered by continued problems and crisis management of the accommodation. Valuable management time has been taken in responding to urgent issues, such as parts of the building being out of action, rather than important priorities.

Financial information for the year April 03 to March 04

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	304,600
Total expenditure	341,200
Expenditure per pupil	3,160

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	61,970
Balance carried forward to the next	25,370

All finances carried forward are allocated appropriately for specific purposes linked to staffing and accommodation needs.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. The provision for children in the foundation stage is satisfactory. Improvements since the last inspection in this area have been unsatisfactory as previous judgements were better than they are now. Leadership and management of the foundation stage are satisfactory and there is a clear agenda for improvement underway.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged from an early age to take responsibility, work together and understand the impact of their actions.
- There are good opportunities for children to express their ideas and opinions.
- Everyone is valued and children's confidence and self esteem grows rapidly.
- The teacher's home visits to children and their families, before they start school, make a good contribution to their personal, social and emotional development from the start.

Commentary

43. Children achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development, and the teaching is good overall. They are on course to exceed the goals expected for their age by the end of the reception. Children arrive eagerly at school and they are interested and keen to learn. The good relationships between children and adults means they are prepared to have a go, try new activities and are not fearful about making mistakes. They are increasingly willing to join in with group work, and realise the importance of thinking about others' needs as well as their own.
44. There are regular opportunities where children can talk about the things they like, and express more about their thoughts and feelings. Teaching emphasises the importance of showing respect for one another regardless of individual differences, and children learn quickly that they are valued and important members of the class. In a group discussion, where everyone brought a special toy to school, children showed respect for each other's property and listened carefully as to why certain things had a special meaning for them. They recognised that even small and well worn toys could have a special place.
45. All children and their families are visited by the teacher before they start school. This provides a good opportunity for children to meet the teacher in their own surroundings, and in turn they settle more quickly when they first arrive. The teacher gathers useful and relevant information about the children's individual personal and social needs that ensures their individual circumstances are taken into account fully in the early days of their school life.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for children to use their writing skills spontaneously are underdeveloped and books are not displayed with sufficient thought.
- The good relationships established between the teacher and children from an early age ensure they are more confident to communicate with adults and one another.

Commentary

46. Children achieve satisfactorily in their communication, language and literacy skills, and the teaching is satisfactory overall. Children are on course to meet the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception. Children have regular opportunities during the day to speak and listen to one another. In a satisfactory lesson for developing literacy skills, children used their teddies to begin using language associated with old and new. They talked about the toys they received at Christmas, and those toys from further back, for example when they were babies. Children were encouraged successfully to take turns, listen to others and speak clearly, giving detail and some accurate descriptions in the process of referring to their toys. The teacher builds systematically on the children's previous literacy skills, for example as they learn to read, learning the initial sounds of new words, and recognising different letters of the alphabet.
47. The writing table, where children might use their writing skills, is underdeveloped and lacking in resources and organisation to encourage writing skills. Although the table is labelled as a writing table, in practice it has few resources for the children to use, and at times is simply another work surface for storage. There is an absence of different pens and pencils, paper, jotters, diaries and other items that could encourage children to start making marks for different purposes. The books for children to read are suitable and well matched to their level of interest. The books are not displayed to the best advantage, however, and the book corner could be made more comfortable and inviting for children to use and explore.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are missed opportunities to make links with other areas of learning in the classroom for counting purposes.
- There are some good uses of number in everyday practical situations.

Commentary

48. Children achieve satisfactorily in mathematical development and teaching is satisfactory. Children are on course to reach the goals expected by the end of the reception. The classroom has specific areas where children can count and use numbers. Children are helped to use their number skills in many practical contexts, for example, noting how many children are at school, and the number who are absent, and ensuring working groups are the correct size. There are useful references to

numbers around the room that help children use and apply their number skills. Adults help children systematically to understand numbers, and use a variety of activities to maintain their interest.

49. Mathematical resources are readily available to children and help the children in their learning. Teaching makes satisfactory use of the resources and children are helped to make sense of number in the process. There are some missed opportunities to make useful links with other areas of learning. In a corner where bulbs are growing, there could be more made of the number of bulbs in evidence, counting days since they were planted, and helping children notice the growth and size of the shoots.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

50. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on provision or standards, though the planning for this area is detailed and comprehensive for the children's wide ranging needs.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

51. It was not possible to make a judgement on provision or standards in this area, though the outside area provides ready access for children to develop their physical skills at all times throughout the year.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for children to use their creative skills, including imaginative play, are underdeveloped.
- The organisation and quality of resources are unsatisfactory and this hinders the children's learning.

Commentary

52. Teaching and learning for children's creative development are unsatisfactory overall. Children are not on course to reach the expected goals in this area by the end of reception because of weaknesses in the overall quality of the provision. Their achievement is currently unsatisfactory as a result. The area for children to use their imagination is underdeveloped, and there are few resources to encourage their creative skills. The resources, such as dolls, equipment for laying tables, seats and other items are either absent, or in need of replacement.
53. The development of a cave during the inspection, whereby children helped to make an area using wallpaper for the walls of the cave, was a satisfactory idea, but in practice not sufficiently substantial for its purpose. There are insufficient resources for children to use, and there is an absence of some basic equipment such as clothes for dressing up. The organisation of the area is unsatisfactory, and there are missed opportunities for learning as a result.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in reading and spelling, though achievement in speaking and listening is not as good.
- There are examples of good teaching, particularly in Years 1-2 and 3-4, whereby pupils achieve well and make good gains in their learning.

- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well; targets are focused and support is systematic.
- The arrangements for sharing subject leadership assist the headteacher in her workload, but do not ensure that the senior teacher has a sufficiently comprehensive overview of standards, teaching and learning across the school.

Commentary

54. Pupils' achievements in English are satisfactory overall, and they achieve well in reading and spelling. In Year 2, standards are average compared to those found nationally. In Year 6, standards are average, though in Years 3-6 there are significant variations. In Year 3 for example, almost half the pupils have special educational needs and so standards are lower; nonetheless, good teaching and learning in this year group ensure the children achieve well in relation to their starting points.
55. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall throughout the school, with some good and very good features in Years 1-2, and 3-4. The most effective teaching is characterised by good pace, high expectations for the higher attainers and good use of time at the end of lessons to summarise learning. In examples of very good teaching in Years 1-2, the activity for spelling was very carefully matched to the pupils' wide ranging needs, all adults were working purposefully with small groups, and everyone was making rapid gains in their spelling skills. In very good teaching in Years 3-4, the teaching used a painting "Boredom Boys" as a starting point to the lesson, and through skilled and creative planning ensured all pupils, from the lower attainers in Year 3 to the highest attainers in Year 4, were able to work at their own level, make very good gains in their learning and achieve very well during the lesson. Higher attainers were developing figurative language, whilst pupils with special educational needs worked purposefully with other adults, using a more structured and supportive approach. Those pupils were helped to name the place and time of day, and to identify what could be seen and what might be heard. They produced a coherent piece of writing collectively to share with the whole class, and were justifiably proud of their achievements. Where teaching and learning are satisfactory and not good, the pace of lessons is at times too slow, and higher attainers could be challenged more rigorously.
56. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are a relative weakness because there are missed opportunities in lessons to develop those skills. There were only a few occasions when pupils were required to think of ideas, share their thought with a partner and report back to the whole class. Although there are handwriting sessions as part of the timetable, the quality and presentation of some English work is not as good as it could be. The school is working hard to improve pupils' writing skills, though many pupils are starting from a low baseline.
57. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are supported effectively, and targets for their literacy work are reflected systematically in daily lessons.
58. The subject is led satisfactorily by the headteacher, who has a comprehensive overview of the relative strengths and weaknesses in English across the school. The senior teacher, who shares some of the responsibility with the headteacher, however, does not have a sufficiently broad overview of what is going on across the school, and this limits her strategic contribution to the subject. There have been satisfactory improvements since the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across other subjects of the curriculum. There are useful links to science, whereby pupils read, write and record their findings, and in religious education, where pupils write about their understanding of different faiths and customs. Pupils are encouraged to use their speaking and listening skills, though in some lessons, there are missed opportunities to extend those skills further.

MATHEMATICS

The provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good planning and very good support from teaching assistants.
- Standards are average, but could be improved if average and higher attaining pupils reached their full potential.
- The use of ICT is unsatisfactory – little evidence was found of its use in mathematics.

Commentary

60. Standards in mathematics are average throughout the school. The scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations found that the majority of pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are making good progress; this is because they are very well supported and the work they receive is adapted and modified well to meet their specific needs. However, some of the higher attaining pupils are not attaining the standards they could; the work is often too easy for them and lacks challenge. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
61. Teaching is satisfactory overall throughout the school, and some good teaching was observed. The teachers are satisfactorily using the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy to plan their lessons. The main problem they face is planning for the wide ability and age range within each class, particularly for higher attaining pupils. The school has recognised this and made it a focus in the school development plan this year. In most lessons, teachers clearly establish learning objectives and reinforce these in plenary sessions, along with key mathematical vocabulary. The best teaching is characterised by high expectations, ensuring that pupils settle quickly to work. A brisk pace and time limits are set for completion of work. The result of the good teaching is that in these lessons the pupils are attentive and work hard. The weakest aspects of the work in mathematics are problem solving and the handling and interpretation of data. Assessment is satisfactory. The school has amassed a good deal of data about current standards and this is being used for target setting and the tracking of pupils' progress. However, a much closer analysis of this data on an individual basis would help teachers to understand precisely what is required to raise standards further for the average and higher attaining pupils. Teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to pupils' learning, they liaise closely with the teachers and are confident enough to teach small groups of pupils.

62. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The main challenges for the school are to embrace the use of ICT to support pupils' learning, ensure the work for higher attaining pupils is challenging enough and raise the quality of teaching so it becomes consistently good or very good. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Mathematics is used satisfactorily in other subjects. Pupils were observed in music counting the beat when playing in the brass orchestra. Pupils' science books show that simple tables are used to record the results of investigations. Registrations are used regularly to count the number of pupils in attendance and those absent, thus helping to sharpen pupils' mental mathematical skills.

SCIENCE

The provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good emphasis on investigative work is developing pupils' key scientific skills.
- Teaching assistants are very effective; their support helps pupils with special educational needs to make good progress.
- The use of ICT is unsatisfactory – opportunities are missed for research, data logging and recording.

Commentary

64. Standards in science are average throughout the school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and find them fun. They particularly like the investigative work and overall, their achievement is satisfactory. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well, primarily because of good curriculum planning and very good support from teaching assistants. Inspection evidence found there was no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.
65. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some very good and good teaching being observed. In these lessons the key elements of the science curriculum – predicting, investigating and recording - were well taught. In one lesson about the senses the teacher drew upon pupils' knowledge of their families. Very good, thought-provoking questioning about their eyes helped them to understand how family genes are passed on. In most classes recording is done in a simple form, leaving more time for experimental work. However, ICT is not used enough in science. Opportunities are being missed for research, measuring and data logging, and for older pupils, recording results of investigations in a tabular or graphical form. The teachers are careful to teach and to reinforce scientific understanding and vocabulary. For example, one teacher's lesson evaluation showed there was some confusion by some pupils over the words 'repel' and 'attract' and these needed to be reinforced in the next lesson. The scrutiny of pupils' books and lesson observations show how teachers are adapting the curriculum satisfactorily for most pupils. However, in some classes the higher attaining pupils need more challenge. Overall, assessment is satisfactory, and pupils are aware of their targets.

66. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has a high level of expertise and is keen to raise standards, however, there is no time allocated for her to monitor standards and the quality of teaching. She is very aware of the need to address curriculum planning to include more opportunities for using ICT. The disruption caused by problems with the accommodation has hindered pupils' achievements in practical and investigative science. This is being rectified now pupils have returned to their permanent classrooms. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average, and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory.
- Resources are inadequate and restrict the quality of teaching and learning.
- Subject leadership has not brought about the necessary changes or improvements over time, though recent work by the subject leaders has helped to establish a better curriculum and a clearer plan of action.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory; there is a limited overview of the pupils' ICT skills.

Comments

67. Throughout the school standards in ICT are below average, although a few higher attaining pupils, with computers at home, display good skills. There are indications that attainment is improving as evidenced by the work seen in Years 2 and 6. However, the majority of pupils in Year 6 do not have the basic skills needed for their programme of study. The scrutiny of pupils' work and conversations with teachers confirmed that aspects of the curriculum such as control, monitoring and the use of spreadsheets have not been taught in any depth. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a great deal to do if they are to catch up on work that should have been covered in previous years.
68. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory over time. There was evidence of good ICT teaching observed during the inspection. Teachers are making good use of the digital camera and there are some good examples of work where pupils had copied images from the Internet and pasted them into text. However, teaching since the last inspection has not been of this quality or consistent enough to raise standards. Until recently ICT has not been taught in a planned and systematic way as pupils move through the school. Problems with accommodation and the recent flooding of one building have meant the computer suite was taken out of use for some time. These things have clearly had an impact on standards. However, the computer suite has been fully operational since September 2004, but currently is an underused resource. Part of the reason for the reluctance of staff to use the computer suite is the age of some of the older computers. They have limited processing power and memory to run today's applications. Nevertheless, many opportunities are being missed to use this facility.
69. The leadership and management of ICT are unsatisfactory. Sound progress has recently been made. There is now a scheme of work in place, a portfolio of work has been started, digital whiteboards have been ordered and a realistic plan for improving the provision is in place. However, much remains to be done, including staff training

and developing assessment procedures; currently the system of assessment cannot confirm standards of attainment.

70. There has been unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Without funding for staff training and resources, standards are unlikely to rise.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Planning for the use of ICT in different subjects of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The school has identified this as an area for improvement and included it as a focus in the school development plan.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was sampled because no religious education lessons took place during the inspection. History and geography were not inspected.

72. In **religious education**, pupils reach standards expected in relation to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by Year 6, and overall achievement is satisfactory. The pupils are able to discuss key themes of major world faiths, and there is an appropriate range of artefacts and resources that help them in their understanding. There are very close links with the local church that help pupils understand the central principles and beliefs of Christianity. The subject leadership is satisfactory. There is a comprehensive overview of the subject and a clear understanding of its future direction. The use of ICT as an integral part of the subject is underdeveloped.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Music and physical education were sampled. Art and design and design and technology were not inspected.

73. The school has a strong **musical** tradition, where many pupils learn to play a musical instrument by the time they leave. There is good and very good teaching for instruments, and the brass band is an impressive indication of the pupils' good achievements in music.
74. Good teaching and learning in **physical education** were characterised by good planning, very clear instructions, and useful demonstrations set within a context of high expectations. The school has a strong tradition of participating in a range of sporting and associated activities, and useful links with the community to assist in the process.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

75. The school has a positive and caring atmosphere where pupils' personal, social and health education is considered carefully. PSHE is planned for regularly, and the school council enables pupils to contribute their thoughts and opinions in plans for the school. Pupils learn from an early age that they are respected and valued, regardless of their differences or backgrounds. They learn to look out for one another in school and around the playground. The school has a good atmosphere with a sense of family, where every individual matters.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	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	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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