

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **EAST HOATHLY CHURCH OF ENGLAND VC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Lewes

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114501

Acting Headteacher: Mrs C Noble

Lead inspector: Mr A P Baxter

Dates of inspection: 13 - 15 June 2005

Inspection number: 266768

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 5-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 118

School address: Church Marks Lane  
East Hoathly  
Lewes  
East Sussex  
Postcode: BN8 6EQ

Telephone number: 01825 840247  
Fax number: 01825 841055

Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of Mrs B Walker  
governors:

Date of previous 19-21 April 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

East Hoathly C of E VC Primary School is smaller than other schools and serves a generally above average socio-economic community. One pupil is eligible for free school meals and this is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is less than 2%, and none of these pupils need specialist support in English. 20% of the pupils have special educational needs, a broadly average proportion; these include specific learning and social, emotional and behavioural needs. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and this is about average. There is very little movement in and out of school other than the normal time of entry. Attainment on entry is broadly average, but it can vary within the small year groups. Most children enter with above average knowledge and understanding of the world. The school gained the 'Health Schools Award at Bronze Level', 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' in 2000, 'Investors in People' and 'Schools Achievement Award' in 2002 and an 'Awards for All in Physical Education' in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25217	Paul Baxter	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Science Physical education Religious education
9789	Leigh Barclay	Lay inspector	
31029	Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Information and communication technology

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA  
Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>13</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>36</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

East Hoathly C of E Primary School provides a **satisfactory level of effectiveness**. Even though much has been achieved this year under the acting headteacher after a period of continuing instability and uncertainty in staffing, serious weaknesses remain. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall by Year 6, but in Year R and by Year 2 it is unsatisfactory. Although leadership and management are currently satisfactory, a significant minority of parents lack confidence in both the quality of leadership and provision in the Year R and 1 class. The school does not provide satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Ongoing instability in leadership has weakened the effectiveness of the school. In particular, teaching and learning in the Year R and 1 class are unsatisfactory, pupils subsequently underachieve by Year 2, and the partnership between the school and parents is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' good achievement in Year 6 in English, mathematics, science and religious education stems mainly from good teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The acting headteacher, with close support from the chair of governors, has worked hard in very difficult circumstances and provides a good vision for the future development of the school.
- The pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall and often very good in Years 4, 5 and 6, where they lift achievement significantly.

**Although the school is doing some things well, it has serious weaknesses which affect the standard of education that the pupils receive. The issues identified will form the basis of the governors' action plan, a summary of which will be sent to all pupils' parents or guardians.**

Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory overall. Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved, as have standards in Year 6, especially in English, curriculum development, promoting team approaches to leadership and management and aspects of accommodation and resources for learning. However, many of the improvements have been put in place this year and have yet to impact to best effect.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	A	A	A
Mathematics	B	D	C	C
Science	C	E	C	B

*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.  
Note: Care should be taken in evaluating the table above, given the varying ability and small size of each year group.*

**Achievement** for most pupils, from a range of backgrounds and learning needs, is **satisfactory** overall. Children's attainment is broadly average on entry, but this can vary from year to year and is above average in knowledge and understanding of the world. Unsatisfactory teaching for children currently in the Reception (Year R and 1) class inhibits learning and results in unsatisfactory achievement in all areas of learning. Achievement, although improving, remains unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2, largely as a result of earlier weaknesses. Achievement improves through Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and is enriched by strong teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6 and by the pupils' enthusiasm. Children in Year R reach the expected early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children should do better though; they lack independence and do not reach the expected goals in their personal, social and emotional development. Standards in Year 2 are average in science, speaking and listening and religious education and are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in ICT are broadly average across the school. By Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics, science and religious education.

**Pupils' personal qualities**, including their spiritual, moral and social development, are **good**. Cultural development is satisfactory. Apart from in the Year R and 1 class, where relationships and behaviour too often lack consistent support, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good, reflecting their enjoyment of school and the care they receive. Attendance is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The **quality of education** provided is **satisfactory**. **Teaching** and learning are **satisfactory** overall. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in the Year R and 1 class, where children lack independence. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Year 1 and 2 class and in Year 3, but not good enough to make up for the lost ground in the earlier class. It is good and often very good, including in English, mathematics and science, in Years 4, 5 and 6, where pupils are keen to learn. Teachers assess the pupils' work and use the information satisfactorily to support learning. The curriculum is satisfactory overall; it is enriched by very good extra-curricular activities. Links with local schools and the community and provision for the pupils' health and welfare are good. The partnership with parents is unsatisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management** are **satisfactory**. The acting headteacher has a good sense of purpose and has set a clear vision for improvement that is increasingly shared by the staff and governors. New structures to support the leadership and management of the school have been created, but there has been insufficient time for them to impact to best effect. Several staff and governors are new to their leadership roles. Overall governance is satisfactory. Governors ensure that their statutory obligations are met.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Overall, parents' views of the school are unsatisfactory. Most are supportive and work well with the school. A significant proportion of parents has concerns about the ongoing uncertainty regarding the position of headteacher and lack confidence in the leadership of the school. Several parents expressed even more concern about the teaching in the Year R and 1 class. Inspectors share the concerns about provision in the Year R and 1 class, but

find that the current leadership and management are satisfactory and are promoting improvement more effectively than at other times in the past when staffing was more unstable. Pupils questioned are happy with the school; several younger children would like to choose more activities of their own. Inspectors endorse these views.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the Year R and 1 class by ensuring that the required Foundation Stage curriculum is taught in full accordance with the needs of children of this age.
- Raise pupils' achievement by the end of Year 2, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Strengthen leadership and management by securing the stability of the position of permanent headteacher, continuing the development of subject co-ordination and ensuring that planned actions achieve improvement in pupils' learning.
- Rebuild a more effective working partnership between the school and parents.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Children's achievement is unsatisfactory in Year R. Pupils' attainment is average in Year R, below average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Even though pupils achieve well in Years 4, 5 and 6, this inconsistent pattern across the school represents only satisfactory achievement for most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, higher attaining pupils and those who come from different backgrounds.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are well above average in reading in Year 6.
- Pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education by the time they leave the school.
- Most pupils are achieving well in Years 4, 5 and 6 in response to good and often very good teaching.
- Unsatisfactory achievement in Year R, especially in the children's personal, social and emotional development, weakens their progress in Years 1 and 2, which despite some improvement remains unsatisfactory.

#### **Commentary**

1. Most children enter the school with broadly average skills but with above average levels of knowledge and understanding and a good capacity to learn. Teaching and learning for children in this stage of their learning are unsatisfactory. Children's achievement is therefore unsatisfactory, especially in personal, social and emotional development but also in their communication, language and literacy, mathematics and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children lack independence in their learning and do not reach the expected early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development by the time they enter Year 1. Children mostly reach expected goals in communication, language and literacy, in mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Given their potential on entry and the additional support given at home, with some children receiving private tuition, these standards represent unsatisfactory achievement for too many children.
2. In order to accommodate the differing numbers of pupils in each year group, several pupils remain in the combined Year R and 1 class and others move into the Year 1 and 2 class at the end of Year R. Weaknesses in teaching in the Year R and 1 class, whereby too much time is spent teaching the whole class together as one group, mean that teaching is not sufficiently matched to the children's individual needs. As a result pupils in Year 1 in this class are not challenged sufficiently and their attitudes to learning and independence are under-developed. Other pupils in Year 1 and pupils in Year 2 are generally taught satisfactorily but gaps in previous learning and inconsistent challenge still restrict their achievement.
3. By Year 2, standards in English and mathematics are below average. Standards in speaking, listening, reading and science and in religious education and ICT are average. These standards show a rise in comparison with the pupils' performance in

National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments in recent years but not sufficiently to match standards found in similar schools or to demonstrate satisfactory achievement. Overall, except in ICT, these standards represent unsatisfactory improvement by Year 2, compared to the last inspection.

4. As a result of good and often very good teaching, especially in Years 4, 5 and 6, most pupils, including higher attainers and those from different backgrounds, progress more effectively in Years 3 to 6 and achieve satisfactorily overall by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve satisfactorily overall. In Reception and Years 1 and 2 their achievement is unsatisfactory. At times, insufficient account is taken of their particular learning needs and the work set is sometimes inappropriate. Where pupils have individual or withdrawal support, achievement is satisfactory as work is planned more carefully to help them meet their individual targets. As with other pupils' achievement improves in Years 3 to 6.
5. Standards are above average in Year 6 and in English, mathematics, science and religious education. Standards are average in ICT. These standards represent good improvement in Years 3 to 6 compared to the last inspection. Consistently effective teaching and the strengthening commitment and enthusiasm of the pupils to learning in Years 4, 5 and 6 are successful in bridging some of the gaps in pupils' prior skills. The improved emphasis on using the pupils' developing literacy and ICT skills across the curriculum is also enriching learning in this part of the school.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (14.8)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.2 (14.8)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.3 (16.8)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 23 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	31.3 (28.6)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.0 (25.7)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.1 (26.4)	28.6 (28.6)

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

6. The pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments should be considered carefully, for the number of the pupils in each year group and the effectiveness of their prior learning vary considerably. Standards in the National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 in recent years have been mostly below average and indicate inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and provision across the range of subjects. The current standards in Year 2 represent improvement in science and ICT, some improvement in mathematics, but ongoing weaknesses in writing in English and in mathematics.
7. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 have risen at a trend above that found nationally as a result of good teaching and learning, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6. The very good performance in last year's tests, when compared to the same

pupils' performance in Year 2, should be viewed with caution, however, due to the underachievement of those pupils in their Year 2 tests. Evidence shows that instability in staffing and leadership has constrained pupils' learning at various times in the past. Good learning in Years 4, 5 and 6 continues to bridge some of the gaps in pupils' skills and the good progress of pupils in Years 4 and 5 augurs well for the future. However, inconsistent provision in Years 1 and 2, weak provision in Year R and unsatisfactory links with parents are constraining achievement and improvement. The school now needs a period of stability in staffing and leadership to rectify these issues effectively.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

The pupils' attitudes to school and to learning are good overall, and better as they progress through the school. Similarly, their behaviour is good overall and better in the top classes. Attendance is good; punctuality is satisfactory. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In Years 3 to 6, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and this makes a significant contribution to their good achievement.
- Behaviour in Years 3 to 6 is very good.
- Throughout the school there is very little bullying or harassment
- Attitudes and behaviour in Year R are unsatisfactory, which means that the children do not achieve the expected goals for personal and social development.

## **Commentary**

8. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have very good attitudes to learning in lessons. They listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. This is largely the result of well-planned and paced teaching, especially in Years 4, 5 and 6. Teachers maintain a high level of interest and set appropriately challenging tasks.
9. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 mostly have good attitudes to their learning. They generally concentrate well, particularly when the teacher's expectations are high. Pupils in the Year R and 1 class, however, have unsatisfactory attitudes to learning. They are not sufficiently involved in the lessons because they are not invited, in a consistently warm and effective manner, to contribute fully and think for themselves. This results in loss of attention, boredom and distractive behaviour.
10. Similarly, standards of behaviour are very good in Years 3 to 6 classes, good in the Years 1 and 2 class but unsatisfactory on occasion in the Year R and 1 class. In the playground, the pupils play well together, sharing equipment and playing team games co-operatively. Around the school, pupils are fully aware of the standards expected and required by staff and know the school's 'Golden Rules'. These are reinforced by rewards and sanctions which the pupils respect. The Christian ethos of the school also contributes to the pupils' understanding of right and wrong. They treat each other with warmth and friendliness. There is very little bullying or harassment. There have been no exclusions.
11. The pupils have a strong sense of community and, when invited, are articulate and positive contributors. They treat their school and resources with respect. Where they are encouraged to develop independence and take responsibility, they respond well. They take full responsibility for the school council meetings, where representatives from each class meet to discuss issues, and are currently making imaginative suggestions for the redevelopment of the school playground.
12. The spiritual development of the pupils is good, enhanced by the close links with the church adjacent to the school. Collective worship provides opportunities for reflection and prayer. Pupils are socially aware. They play harmoniously together and readily help and support each other in the classroom. The many out-of-school activities and

trips also promote their social development. Most teachers provide a positive lead in engendering positive relationships by giving frequent praise and encouragement.

13. The pupils' cultural development is satisfactory with an increased emphasis in recent years on multi-cultural understanding. Once a year the school links with two other local primary schools for an Arts Week involving the pupils in projects on the cultures of distant countries, drawing on the creative and performing arts. There are also themed days where pupils have the opportunity to dress in national costume, taste food and handle artefacts from the country being studied. Last year the whole school participated in a themed week on Africa. A good collection of multi-cultural story-books has been purchased to be used in literacy sessions. Assemblies are held every week in the village church.
14. Attendance is good, following a period when it dropped because the school changed its policy on authorising holidays in term time. The school does its best to deter parents from taking holidays in term time by supporting them only in exceptional circumstances.

***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.3
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 school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching and learning and the planned and taught curriculum are satisfactory. The provision for the pupils' health and welfare and the school's links with other schools and the local community are good and contribute positively to the pupils' achievement, but the school's partnership with parents is unsatisfactory and this undermines achievement.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning and the teachers' assessment of pupils' work are satisfactory overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are strong in Years 4, 5 and 6 and promote good achievement.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in the Years R and 1 class, where relationships are insecure and weaken the children's self-confidence and expression.
- The quality of teaching in Years 1, 2 and 3 is mostly satisfactory but the challenge and expectations placed upon pupils are inconsistent and slow the learning on occasion.

### **Commentary**

***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 20 lessons***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
-----------	-----------	------	--------------	----------------	------	-----------

0	4	5	9	2	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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

15. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the school is satisfactory. The teaching observed in Years 4, 5 and 6 was good, and often it was very good. In these classes warm relationships and good challenge enthused the pupils and the pupils' own initiative and commitment strengthened their learning. For example, pupils responded very positively to the teacher's questioning in a science lesson on evaporation in Years 4 and 5. In Year 6, where mostly very good teaching was seen, pupils greeted the teachers' challenging problem solving approaches in mathematics and science with interest and energy.
16. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Years 1 and 2 and in the Year 3 class. Warm relationships also encouraged the pupils in the lessons seen, but inconsistent pace and expectations limited pupils' learning on occasion. For example, in a religious education lesson in Year 3 the pupils completed worksheets recording what they had already done rather than considering new learning. In Years 1 and 2 the match of work to pupils' prior skills varied. In English, for instance, higher attainers were sometimes challenged appropriately but too much was expected of lower attainers, and on occasions in mathematics not enough was expected of more able pupils.
17. Teaching and learning for pupils in the Year R and 1 class are unsatisfactory. The relationships between the teacher and the children were inconsistent and children too often lacked confidence in how to learn. Children in Year R have too few opportunities to learn by making choices and by using their own initiative. The teacher's plans show different activities for children in Year R and for pupils in Year 1 within the same class, but too much whole-class teaching means that pupils do not build effectively on their previous learning in these age groups. As a consequence, the pupils' ability to show independence in learning is not developed sufficiently to support future learning effectively.
18. The inconsistent pattern of teaching seen across the school undermined the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. Teaching in English and religious education is good and it is satisfactory in mathematics, science and ICT, reflecting these inconsistencies across the school. Evidence from discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their work also showed inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' work, especially their handwriting, and in pupils' progress in different parts of the school. The teaching seen in Years 2 to 6 reflects credible improvement and the hard work of staff over the past year after and during a period of uncertainty. Given the serious weakness in Year R and 1, however, it is not yet enough to reflect appropriate improvement since the last inspection. A period of stability in leadership and management is now needed for teachers to rectify weaknesses and to collaborate to best effect in promoting pupils' learning.
19. As with the quality of teaching, there is significant variation in the degree to which teachers use learning support assistants to best effect. Where teaching is good assistants are used well and make a valued contribution to pupils' learning; where teaching is less effective so too is the work of assistants. Where learning support assistants are assigned to pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with statements, their support is well focused although at times does not encourage sufficient independence. Lesson planning for pupils with special educational needs, especially in the lower part of the school, does not always take sufficient account of their particular learning needs and tasks are sometimes inappropriate and too difficult.

20. Staff have worked hard to develop tracking procedures to record pupils' work and progress through the school. These assessments are used effectively to inform planning and teaching in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but they are developed less effectively in other subjects. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly but do not indicate enough ways of improving to the pupils, limiting the value of recorded work. Overall assessment is satisfactory.

### **The curriculum**

Overall the curriculum is satisfactory. It is unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage (Year R) but satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. It is enriched very well by a very good range of extra-curricular activities and experiences. The accommodation is satisfactory with good features for the Foundation Stage. Resources overall are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are shortcomings in the planning and organisation for the Foundation Stage (Year R).
- Pupils have very good opportunities to participate in sport and the arts.
- Improvements have been made to the accommodation that further support pupils' learning.

- Provision for ICT is improving and is now satisfactory.
- By Year 6 pupils are well prepared for their next school.

## Commentary

21. The school allocates appropriate time to all subjects. Schemes of work are based on national strategies and guidelines and generally take sufficient account of mixed age classes. Links are starting to be made between different subjects so that learning becomes more purposeful and relevant. For example, in Year 6 work in literacy focused on the history theme of the Tudors, and in ICT in Year 1/2 pupils used their skills to find out science facts about mini-beasts. Whole-school themes are enjoyed, and draw teachers together in their planning and pupils in their learning. A greater emphasis on investigation in mathematics and science has helped to raise standards in these subjects and encourage greater independent learning, particularly at the top end of the school. A whole-school focus on ICT has recently improved provision in this subject and is also starting to raise standards. This was a weakness at the last inspection. There is a scheme of work for personal, social and health education that includes appropriate provision for sex and relationships education and drugs awareness; lessons are timetabled and planning in other subjects also contributes to this area of the schools' work.
22. The taught curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage (Year R) is unsatisfactory. Opportunities for children to learn by using their own initiative and following their own ideas and choices are restricted by too great an emphasis on the completion of tasks set and supervised by adults.
23. This curricular provision, along with the opportunities for enrichment and independence, prepares older pupils well for their next school. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, and generally provides them with the support and skills to access the full curriculum.
24. The school provides a very good range of visits, including a residential visit for Year 6 that is recognised as a strength by parents. This helps to provide first-hand experiences and enriches and enhances pupils' academic and social learning. A very good range of after-school clubs contributes to sport and the arts. For a small school, pupils have very good opportunities to take part in sports such as football, cricket, hockey and netball, involving both older and younger pupils. There are links with local clubs that provide coaching, for example in basketball. Pupils take part in sporting tournaments with local schools. A wide range of musical opportunities, including performances by the pupils, along with the annual arts week, with visiting artists, and the preparation for and participation in the village carnival, combine to give such strong opportunities to participate in the arts.
25. Overall accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Recent improvements to the outdoor area for Year R richly enhance the learning opportunities that could be planned for the children. Staff have worked hard on displays; these are informative, celebrate pupils' achievements, and greatly enrich the learning environment. A small conservatory, a new and improved library and a special needs room now provide good facilities for small group and individual tuition and research. The difficulties of restricted hall accommodation for physical education, identified at the last inspection, remain, although all issues relating to health and safety have been addressed and plans for a long term solution have been suggested.



## **Care, guidance and support**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Overall, provision for the pupils' care and welfare is good.
- At times the guidance to pupils is too general to be fully effective.

## **Commentary**

26. The school provides a friendly, happy environment that is conducive to learning. Due attention is paid to safety issues. Pupils' healthy living is promoted through the personal, social and health education programme. This includes sex and relationship awareness, as well as through provision such as the national Free Fruit initiative, milk through the 'cool milk scheme' and nourishing school dinners. Safety is also emphasised in the curriculum with classes on topics such as drugs awareness, fire risks, and cycling proficiency. The pupils cross the lane to the village hall very sensibly. There is adequate First Aid expertise amongst the staff and arrangements for looking after pupils who are unwell or suffer minor accidents are good. Child protection procedures meet all the requirements. There are effective links with educational and social services.
27. The school recognises the importance of identifying the personal development needs of every child. Teachers and support staff know the pupils and their families well, are sensitive to their needs and are able to provide good support and guidance. The generally good relationships between pupils and staff enable pupils to raise any concerns they may have, knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically. The assessment procedures include tracking the progress and personal development of every pupil. Targets are agreed for each pupil but some are too general to give the pupil and parents concrete examples of the way forward.
28. Induction arrangements are satisfactory and most children settle well into the reception class, many of them already familiar with the school because they progress from the playgroup on the school site. Throughout the school parents are encouraged to talk to the class teacher at the end of the school day, which consolidates the school/family links and provides opportunities to discuss any concerns.
29. The pupils' responsibilities on the school council have been successfully extended to better seek their views and involve them formally in the work of the school. When the pupils are given responsibility, such as monitoring duties in the classroom or participation in activities, they exercise it very competently and confidently.
30. Pupils with special educational needs are identified as soon as possible through pre-school and parental concerns and ongoing discussions with staff. Where necessary, informal observations are carried out and pupils' progress is generally monitored before individual education plans are written. Most of these plans are written by class teachers with any necessary support from the special educational needs co-ordinator. Some have well focused targets against which to assess progress being made; others are sometimes too general and suggest lower attainment rather than special educational needs. This indicates that some pupils may need to be a part of teachers' general class record keeping and assessment rather than being placed on the special needs register. Plans are regularly reviewed and targets are shared with pupils. Pupils with statements receive their full entitlement of support.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has good links with the community and other schools but the links with parents are unsatisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A significant minority of parents is very dissatisfied with the uncertainty and instability caused by the absence of the headteacher for two years following a serious road traffic accident and they have a number of serious concerns.
- The good links with the local community, and particularly the church, enrich the curriculum and promote the pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- The good links with other schools significantly enhance the curriculum and ensure that pupils transfer confidently on to their next stage of education.

## **Commentary**

31. Parents are informed satisfactorily about the school and school events through the regular newsletters. The school's open door policy means that there is an easy dialogue between parents and teachers. Parents are invited to discuss formally their child's progress through termly consultation evenings, when targets are jointly discussed, and full annual reports. However, many parents feel that the targets are very general and do not explain how they can help their child at home. They do not feel they are kept well informed about the progress their child is making. Several others were unclear about the school's advice about homework. Inspectors judge that the school provides a satisfactory standard of information to the parents about their children's progress.
32. Most parents are satisfied with the school. They feel comfortable about approaching it with concerns. They feel that teachers have high expectations and that their children are encouraged to be mature and responsible. They also raise significant funds for the school through the parent-teacher association and offer considerable support for trips and events. However, many parents feel that their views are not considered sufficiently by the school and that their complaints are not always dealt with satisfactorily. Inspectors find that the ongoing uncertainty stemming from instability in staffing and leadership has weakened these forms of communication with parents to an unsatisfactory degree, and this weakness is undermining pupils' progress. Several parents also expressed concerns about the quality of teaching and learning in the Year R and 1 class and in the Year 6 class. Inspection shows weakness in Years R and 1 but strengths in Year 6.
33. The parents of pupils with special educational needs have appropriate opportunities to discuss their children's progress at parents' evenings; the co-ordinator is available to discuss any more immediate concerns. Parents receive copies of individual education plans.
34. The good links with the community include a strong link with the local church, where the children attend regular assemblies and contribute to the major Christian festivals. The vicar is a regular visitor to the school and contributes to lessons. The school has developed good links with other primary schools in the area. This provides valuable staff development opportunities for the teachers and teaching assistants, and the children enjoy collaborative sports and arts events. The good links with the local comprehensive schools mean that the pupils who progress there have a smooth transition.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership of the acting headteacher, who has confidently and supportively stepped into the role, is satisfactory. The leadership role of other key staff is now being encouraged and developed and is satisfactory. The management and governance of the school are satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The lack of consistent senior management has been detrimental to the school and ongoing instability with regard to the position of permanent headteacher has constrained the decision-making processes and effectiveness of the school.
- The acting headteacher has a clear vision for improving the school.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage (Year R) are unsatisfactory.
- Financial management and control are satisfactory but are having an increasing influence on the future development of the school.
- Governors are led effectively by the chair of governors, and give close support to the staff of the school.
- Subject co-ordination is developing and is beginning to have a positive impact on standards.

### **Commentary**

35. The ongoing instability and uncertainty in senior management have constrained the ability of the school to make key decisions and to move forward. To an extent this has soured relationships with parents, a significant number of whom feel the school is not well led and managed despite the positive improvements now being put in place. Some concern has been expressed by them over the provision in the Foundation Stage; this does have serious weaknesses, due to unsatisfactory leadership and management in this stage, which contribute to underachievement in Years 1 and 2. Although considerable time and effort have gone into supporting and improving this area, the need to take firmer action is only just emerging.
36. The acting headteacher has moved quickly to identify key areas for improvement. The school development plan shows that action has been taken over the last year to support and develop governance and subject co-ordination, raise attainment in mathematics and ICT, and improve the provision in Year R. These moves have had some impact on standards, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The roles and responsibilities of subject leaders have now been made clearer so that co-ordinators, as a team, are far more aware of the processes involved in improving provision in their subjects. Immediate and tangible improvements have been made to the school's learning environment and resources, which demonstrates the more practical ways in which the acting headteacher has moved the school forward. For example, the school's book stock has been sorted, updated and replenished. The outside area for Year R has also been much improved. Unfortunately, this is not yet used effectively. Although some of the more recent improvements are beginning to bear some fruit, the lack of secure and permanent senior management, along with some considerable changes in staff in recent years, led to a significant decline in the effectiveness of the school. The school has not regained all of the ground lost and therefore improvement has been

unsatisfactory since the last inspection, when leadership and management were judged to be good.

37. A programme of monitoring is in place that involves the acting headteacher and key staff. This is starting to pinpoint where development has been successful and where further improvements are needed. For example, the special educational needs co-ordinator has identified that planning for lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, particularly in the lower school, does not take sufficient of their particular learning needs. Not all of the subject development plans focus sufficiently on raising attainment as one of the success criteria; monitoring has tended to focus on improving teaching and resources rather than on learning outcomes and full impact on pupils' learning has yet to be achieved. Despite some improvement in Years 2, achievement in Years R, 1 and 2 remains unsatisfactory.
38. The acting headteacher and chair of governors work closely to promote effective working relationships between the staff and governors. Relatively newly appointed governors have improved their committee structures over the past year and now fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily. These include effective strategies for ensuring racial harmony and promoting the Christian ethos of the school. They have worked hard in very difficult circumstances, with increasing impact this year, to rebuild the effectiveness of the school after an ongoing period of instability in staffing. Although not yet fully successful, their support of the current acting headteacher has been important, for example, in managing finances, to raise the momentum of improvement.

***Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	389,872	Balance from previous year	11,485
Total expenditure	403,194	Balance carried forward to the next	-1,837
Expenditure per pupil	3,332		

39. The acting headteacher, the chair of the governors' finance committee and administrative assistants manage the budget carefully and have worked hard during a difficult period to improve the link between priorities identified in the school development plan and the funds available. Overall financial control and management are satisfactory. Over the past year the school has invested significantly in the fabric of the accommodation and in equipment, both indoors and outdoors, and is better placed to move forward than at other times in its recent uncertain past. As yet best value has not been achieved in terms of pupils' achievement and serious weaknesses have developed, however, the school is not yet providing satisfactory value for money.

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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. Provision and children's achievement are unsatisfactory for children in the Foundation Stage (Year R). This represents unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Children enter school with a range of attainment that is broadly average, but their knowledge and understanding of the world is mostly above average, reflecting experiences at home. Attainment can vary significantly from year to year. Overall, however, most children come from homes where education is valued and have the potential to learn well.
41. Teaching and learning for children in this stage of their learning are unsatisfactory for the following reasons:
- There is insufficient regard to the philosophy of the required Foundation Stage Curriculum for children of this age. Opportunities for children to learn by using their own initiative, following their own ideas and choices, are restricted by too great an emphasis on the completion of tasks set and supervised by adults. As a consequence, the children's independence in learning is constrained.
  - The relationships between the teacher and the children are inconsistent and children too often lack confidence, are unsure when and how to respond and rarely ask their own questions.
42. These weaknesses have a detrimental effect on children's learning and self-esteem. Although the teacher's plans specify different activities for children in Year R and for pupils in Year 1 within the same class, too much time is spent teaching the whole class together as one group and this weakens the match of teaching to the children's individual needs. The current organisation of the class is not managed effectively and does not aid the learning of any of the pupils in these age groups.
43. The newly developed outdoor area is a significant improvement. It is providing children with a more stimulating environment, especially at playtimes. It represents an investment aiding the future development of provision by the current leadership of the school. It was not always used to best effect in lessons, however, during this inspection.
44. Most areas of learning are reported in detail below, but not enough teaching could be seen in physical development and creative development, so these areas were sampled. The children's **physical development** is promoted through regular lessons in the village hall. In a movement session observed during the inspection the children showed appropriate co-ordination when dancing and moving to music. Several children demonstrated very immature attitudes, lacked concentration and were reticent to respond appropriately to adult supervision and this constrained their learning. Fundamentally the children lacked stimulation and still needed support with their learning. The school has provided much improved and now very good outdoor equipment to support the children's physical development. This is used effectively at playtimes, where children were happy making their own choices, but, as yet, use is inconsistent during lessons.
45. In **creative development** the children have appropriate opportunities to paint, draw and make models. A useful range of construction toys and equipment are available to support group work. Several of the classroom displays include paintings of 'Rangoli'

patterns and the Diwali festival of light. These link well with other areas of learning and make useful connections with learning and experiences completed at home.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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



## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality and warmth of class relationships are inconsistent, and as a consequence, the children do not always feel secure, happy and valued; they are often uncertain how to respond, especially in whole-class discussions, and rarely feel confident enough to pose their own questions and this limits their learning.
- The children's independence in learning is underdeveloped.
- Teaching and learning and children's achievement are unsatisfactory.

## **Commentary**

46. Teaching lacks the consistency needed to build children's confidence and is unsatisfactory. The teacher's and assistant's emphasis on developing the children's independence is ineffective. Their expectations of the degree to which children should show and develop independence are insufficient and limit progress. During the inspection children were observed happily conducting a mini-beast hunt in the well-equipped and interesting outdoor area. On other occasions children were unsure what to do, lacked the confidence to ask and were unhappy. Children were not encouraged to choose and access their own equipment or to make choices about what forms of activity to undertake. This also limited their independent learning skills. Several parents expressed concerns about the quality of the relationships in this class and were not happy with the response from staff. Consequently, the partnership with parents does not have the supportive impact on the children's development that it should have. As a result, the children do not reach the expected skill levels for their age, especially in terms of independence, and their achievement is unsatisfactory.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Insufficient emphasis is placed upon drawing new learning from the children's own ideas and questions and as a result the children's self-esteem and confidence are underdeveloped.
- Adults working with the children invite them to answer questions and listen to their responses. Too often, however, questions are closed and encourage single word or brief replies and are not as successful as they might be in developing the children's skills.
- Children are encouraged to co-operate and to learn from and with each other in groups. This strategy has a positive influence on the children's speaking and listening skills.

## **Commentary**

47. Teaching and learning are not successful in promoting appropriate achievement for all children in this area of learning. The teacher and her assistant talk to the children at length and pose frequent questions to develop the children's speaking and listening skills. At times this is successful, especially when the children's interest is stimulated, as was the case when the children were undertaking their first mini-beast hunt. On

most occasions seen, however, the adults' questions were closed and encouraged only the briefest of children's responses. For example, even when the children were finding ants and woodlice, there was little attempt to extend the children's responses by asking why or by encouraging the children to pose their own questions. This limited the effectiveness of their learning, both in this area of learning and also in their personal, social and emotional development. When questioned by an inspector, however, most children can talk about what they do at home and after encouragement begin to offer ideas of their own, showing that they have skills that could be used and developed more. Overall speaking and listening skills meet those expected of children at the end of Year R.

48. Many of the reading sessions and discussions involve children in Year R being grouped with older pupils in Year 1. Pupils were mostly required to answer questions and this method tended to favour the more confident and often older pupils in responding, to the detriment of some of the younger children in the class. Observations of adults working with children, in reading, for example, showed that there is insufficient emphasis on teaching phonic skills. Displays and samples of children's work showed that children are taught initial letter sounds but little beyond this. There was little evidence of children choosing their own books or readily being encouraged to show initiative in their learning. Several children talked about the support they receive at home and as a result reach the early learning goals in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Observations suggest, however, that they could have achieved more had learning at school been more effective in building on previous skills and extending the children's independence.
49. Writing skills, including handwriting skills, are developed from an early stage. The children's fine motor skills are encouraged through cutting and modelling activities. There were few, if any, opportunities for the children to learn through role play during the inspection and children were not seen choosing to write independently or to experiment with their writing. Most of the early writing seen was in the form of children practising letter formation or recording tasks they had completed. Occasionally higher attaining children can write more descriptively, for example, about how spiders make their webs. As with reading, several children also talked about writing undertaken at home, but even so writing skills are underdeveloped by the time children enter Year 1.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is not effective. Too many of the planned activities do not challenge the children sufficiently.
- Much of the work involves the completion of tasks, many of which fail to interest or extend the children; consequently, they are not developing positive attitudes to learning, extending their ability to work independently or learning to concentrate sufficiently.

### **Commentary**

50. Achievement in school is unsatisfactory but many children still reach the early learning goals because of the support they receive at home or because they attend private

tuition away from school. Most children can count and order numbers to 20; some children can count up to 50. The children understand 'more than' and 'less than'. Some can record and count using a tally chart, but several were confused when attempting to group numbers in fives. During the inspection children were observed counting shells and counting steps along numbered footsteps outside. Neither of these activities challenged the children enough to extend their knowledge and understanding of number, nor did they encourage children to offer their own ideas or formulate their own questions. Other more effective sessions included counting mini-beasts and making tally charts. Too often the focus on developing the children's mathematical skills, for example, using tally charts, was diminished by the need to repeat the same mini-beast hunt completed the previous day and by the few creatures collected. Most of the teaching and learning seen was initiated and continued by adults instructing and questioning and there were few learning opportunities drawn from the children's ideas, consequently children developed little independence.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is unsatisfactory and fails to build sufficiently on children's prior learning.
- Adults do not develop or encourage the children to learn by raising their own questions or by following their own ideas with the necessary consistency and this limits their progress.

### **Commentary**

51. Most children enter school with above average levels of knowledge in this area of learning. At times they are encouraged to use their knowledge effectively by answering questions in whole-class sessions. On other occasions some children show appropriate skill when using computer programs. During the repeated mini-beast hunts several children showed interest and knowledge in where to find various creatures, for example, worms. There was value in this type of activity but more could have been achieved had the adults built upon the children's prior knowledge by inviting them to think more for themselves and to formulate their own questions. Children were also seen enjoying the festival of Diwali, dressing in Hindu costume, showing that at times learning is more successful. The newly created outdoor area represents a valuable teaching resource, especially in stimulating the children's interest in growing plants and creatures, and undoubtedly they derive benefit when using this area. However, it was not used to best effect during the inspection. Although most children reach the early learning goals in this area of learning, this represents unsatisfactory achievement given their prior experience.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils in Year 3 to 6 achieve well and standards in Year 6 are above average.
- Standards in Year 2 are not high enough; achievement in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 make rapid progress at times due to more effective teaching and learning.
- The unsatisfactory quality of handwriting is a barrier to the development of pupils' recording skills.

## Commentary

52. By Year 2 overall standards in English are below average. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are average, but in writing they are below average. In writing the work of too few pupils reflects higher standards. Although the skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation are taught, the expectation that these should be more fully applied to pupils' written work is not high enough. The development of handwriting, in particular, is weak throughout the school and to some extent restricts the fluency with which pupils can record and communicate their thoughts and ideas. Pupils' achievement by Year 2 is unsatisfactory; test results in recent years, when compared to schools with similar pupils, have remained below average. The quality of teaching and learning in Year R does not provide a good enough foundation on which to build and develop literacy skills, particularly of higher attaining children. Some further lack of expectation in Years 1 and 2 also adds to this underachievement. Planning in the mixed age Years R and 1 and Years 1 and 2 classes does not take sufficient account of the learning needs of pupils of different ages and ability. For example, past work shows that pupils are expected to plan writing in considerable detail whilst not having sufficient basic writing skills. To a much lesser extent, the work planned for the older Years 4 and 5 class does not always reflect the wider age and ability range in a mixed age class.
53. By Year 6 standards overall are above average. They are above average in speaking and listening, well above in reading and average in writing. This shows very good achievement for all pupils in this year group, and contributes to the school's overall good achievement. Good teaching in Year 6 is adding considerably to this level of achievement. The very mature attitudes of these pupils, in the past, have helped them to maintain this progress during times of considerable staff change and unrest. Lessons in Years 4 to 6, especially, are lively and encourage questioning and discussion that develop speaking and listening skills. The development and use of subject vocabulary are also well promoted.
54. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. In Years 1 to 3 it is satisfactory. A very good lesson was seen in Years 4 and 5. In this lesson a very clear, structured introduction, linked to rigorous questioning, enabled pupils to identify the main points for evaluating written instructions. They could then write their own instructions with precision and detail. Effective support for lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, made the lesson fully inclusive. The level of questioning and discussion during introductions was a strong feature of most lessons. Where introductions were not fully effective, however, although ideas were developed, not enough time was given to shared writing as a model for the pupils' own efforts. Classes are mostly managed well and older pupils, especially, are able to work independently, discussing amongst themselves, as a matter of course, what they are doing, so developing their understanding further.
55. Teachers' planning generally shows that learning is assessed day by day and any necessary changes made to future planning. Marking is consistent; at its best it relates

to clear success criteria, and provides comments that inform pupils how well they have done and any pointers for improvement. At times, however, some of the comments appear overgenerous and do not reflect the actual quality of the work. Pupils have recently been given personal targets for improvement; these are sometimes too general and do not provide clear enough goals to aim for.

56. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. Over the last year, especially, steps have been taken to improve the provision, but these have yet to have a full effect. Test results are now analysed for strengths and weaknesses and planning adapted accordingly. Many new books have been purchased for class libraries and guided reading, with a focus on a wider variety of styles and on content that appeals to boys, whose reading has generally been weaker; classroom reading corners have been encouraged and developed. This was seen in Year 3 where pupils' interest in reading has been raised by a display and work based on books by Dick King Smith. The school has looked closely at its curriculum and planned for a greater use of literacy in other subjects. Progress is now being monitored more carefully; pieces of writing are checked each half term so that more accurate levels can be set for teachers to plan for and pupils to work towards. However, despite these positive, ongoing improvements a level of underachievement still remains and the quality of teaching and learning is variable. Since the last inspection aspects of the provision have fluctuated; on balance improvement is satisfactory.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

57. Satisfactory use is made of language and literacy in other subjects. Within literacy lessons topics such as the Tudors are used as a focus for developing language and literacy skills. In other subjects the opportunities to use these skills are increasingly provided. Pupils wrote at length about their visit to Newhaven Fort and compiled entries for the diary of Anne Frank. Some use is made of word processing skills to present written work.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average in Year 6 and achievement is good in Years 4, 5 and 6 in response to good and often better teaching.
- Standards are below average in Year 2, showing unsatisfactory achievement in Years 1 and 2.
- The level of challenge offered to pupils in Years 1 and 2, and especially those pupils in the Year R and 1 class, limits their progress.

### **Commentary**

58. Teaching and learning strengthen as pupils move through the school. Evidence shows that most pupils attain above average standards by the end of Year 6 and below average standards at the end of Year 2. Overall achievement is satisfactory. These findings represent improved outcomes compared to the pupils' performance in National

Curriculum tests in recent years. Much of this improvement stems from more consistent staffing and improved teaching strategies over the past year.

59. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is still constrained by ineffective learning in Years R and 1 and pupils lack the independence and confidence in learning needed to reach expected standards by the end of Year 2. Whilst several pupils have appropriate knowledge of number, most lack skills in using and applying their knowledge in real life and problem solving situations. As a result of good and often very good learning in Years 4, 5 and 6, by Year 6 most pupils use their skills confidently and rise to the challenge of solving problems. They possess good mental facility in number and explain their strategies accurately. Most have an equally well-developed knowledge of shape and space, readily explaining, for example, the difference between regular and irregular pentagons.
60. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 to 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teaching strengthens in Years 4, 5 and 6, where the teachers' questioning and their expectations of what pupils should achieve increase. The responsibility offered to pupils in their learning and the degree to which pupils immerse themselves in their work are features of the successful learning in Years 4, 5 and 6. The teachers in these classes are very knowledgeable and skilful and encourage pupils to think and to formulate their own questions. Expectations and the pace of learning slow on occasion in Year 3. Teaching in Years 1 and 2, although improved, lacks the consistent challenge needed to bridge the gaps in pupils' skills that stem from previous ineffective teaching. Improved planning that identifies clearer learning objectives is helping teachers to build more systematically on pupils' knowledge, skill and understanding. The pupils' under-developed independence in learning also restricts their progress and their attainment remains below expectation in Year 2. When marking the pupils' work teachers acknowledge their efforts appropriately but do not offer enough ways of improving and this constrains the value of recorded work.
61. Co-ordination has been improved to a satisfactory level, especially over the past twelve months, and this has been instrumental in ensuring satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. In mathematics standards have been improved well in Year 6, but standards in Year 2, although improved this year, have fallen compared to the last inspection. The work of the co-ordinator is enabling the school to address weaknesses more effectively now than at other times in the past and provision is improving, but the full impact of development on pupils' learning across the school has yet to be achieved. Pupils' learning is assessed effectively and the results are now used appropriately to track pupils' progress and to inform future teaching and learning. Resources for learning are good and are being used with increasing effect to aid pupils' problem solving skills.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. The acting headteacher, with support from colleagues, has been instrumental in developing good cross-curricular links. The pupils' skills in numeracy are developed and used effectively in other subjects such as science, for example, when measuring how far differing liquids move down a ramp (viscosity) or when measuring how much water pieces of wood absorb when immersed in water. The improved use of ICT in data handling is also enriching the use and extension of the pupils' numeracy skills across the range of subjects.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 6, reflecting good achievement in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Mostly good teaching ensures good overall achievement by all pupils.
- There is an improving emphasis on pupils learning through practical investigation and this is aiding pupils' attitudes and understanding.
- Teachers question the pupils effectively but do not always encourage the pupils to raise their own questions.
- Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is weakened by the pupils' previously underdeveloped independence in learning.

### Commentary

63. Lesson observations and an examination of teachers' and pupils' work show that there has been an improved emphasis on learning through practical investigation this year, enabling satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum is now planned and taught effectively and the development of ICT is also beginning to have a supportive influence on pupils' learning.
64. Overall, most pupils develop their knowledge and understanding to an above average standard by Year 6. They understand and know how to undertake a fair test and predict outcomes with increasing accuracy. For example, the scrutiny of pupils' work showed that in Year 6 pupils accurately described balanced and unbalanced forces, predicted outcomes and explained their findings when investigating evaporation. Pupils show above average attainment in their use of technical language and in their writing skills, for example, when explaining why objects sink or float in water. Higher order learning skills such as setting up their own investigations or considering other ways of solving problems, however, are less well developed.
65. Observations of pupils' learning and of their recorded work in Years 1 and 2 showed that pupils in Year 2 are working at a higher standard than seen in the National Curriculum teachers' assessments in recent years. The pupils investigate the impact of exercise on their heartbeats. Increasingly pupils learn well by contrasting different lifestyles on health. The level of challenge is inconsistent and occasionally pupils' recorded work is not corrected sufficiently. As they grow older, the pupils are presented with more challenging investigations and there is an increasing emphasis on developing new learning by encouraging pupils to raise their own questions. These strategies raise the pupils' enthusiasm and enrich their understanding, for example, in Years 4, 5 and 6 when measuring the viscosity of liquids. The pupils enjoy very warm relationships in these classes that enrich their work and learning.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In general the match of challenge to pupils' prior learning improves in Years 3 to 6, enabling the pupils to build on previous knowledge and understanding and quickening the rate of progress, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6. Lessons are planned effectively and teachers share learning objectives with the pupils, involving them productively in their learning. At times, though, pupils spend too much time completing worksheets rather than

experimenting, and this limits progress. The teachers mark the pupils' work satisfactorily but do not identify enough ways forward to indicate how pupils might improve their work, and this limits the impact of teaching on learning.

67. The co-ordinator is very new to her role and leads the subject satisfactorily. She has formulated a well-focused development plan to promote ongoing improvement. As yet, she has had insufficient opportunity to consider provision across the whole school or to monitor standards in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum is planned effectively and teachers are using assessments of the pupils' work appropriately to inform future work, reflecting satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The subject is resourced well and the use of the improved accommodation and the newly established Year R outdoor environment is having a supportive impact on the pupils' learning. Overall the excitement generated when pupils are investigating is having a good impact on their attitudes and behaviour and is contributing well to their spiritual development.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection, and particularly during the last 12 months.

### **Commentary**

68. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards are average. Pupils achieve satisfactorily. Discussion with Year 6 pupils shows that they have been working at an appropriate level on PowerPoint presentations, data handling and spreadsheet modelling. This shows good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average and a limited curriculum was offered. It has been brought about by improved resources and the more recent focus on the subject in school improvement planning.
69. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In a Year 4 and 5 lesson, pupils clearly understood the term 'simulation' in relation to computer programs and games such as monopoly, knowing that control is a key element. This showed that previous learning had been effective. A simulation program on Ancient Egypt provided a relevant and purposeful link to history. This was well introduced, and over the coming week pupils would be able to work through the different levels of the program. However, in the course of this lesson, although patient and well behaved, too many pupils waited and watched while others accessed the program on the few computers available. This planned way of working over the week was demonstrated in Year 1/2 as a group of pupils used a previously introduced program to locate mini-beasts using an index. Other pupils researched using books. A teaching assistant gave good support to Year 1 pupils working at the computers. Work is planned using national guidelines and pupils mostly work at levels appropriate for their ages. The school has yet to assess and plan more fully so that more able pupils, especially, can be further challenged in their learning.
70. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. Much that has been covered in the current school development plan for the subject has yet to fully impact on standards and achievement. The school is now sufficiently resourced to deliver the full curriculum and planning is in place for this; interactive whiteboards are being installed in classrooms. A check has been made of teachers' skills and some further training provided. Staff



have been familiarised with age-related expectations for the subject to help in their planning. Cross-curricular links are being identified and relevant programs introduced. Fuller monitoring has yet to take place to check how classroom computers are being used to provide access for all pupils to practise and develop taught skills.

## **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

71. The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is satisfactory and steadily developing. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson pupils searched the internet for information on Tudor ships. From the lessons seen and discussions with pupils, the school works hard to link the teaching of ICT skills to topics being studied in other subjects.

## **HUMANITIES**

*Religious education was inspected and is reported below in full. Geography and history were not inspected.*

### **Religious education**

Provision of religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are varied and interesting and are pitched at a good level to match the pupils' skills.
- The school makes good use of links with the local church and visitors to the school to enrich pupils' learning.
- The teachers encourage the use of religious artefacts to stimulate the pupils' interest.

### **Commentary**

72. Standards of attainment seen in the inspection met the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and were above them in Year 6. These standards represent satisfactory achievement for most pupils, matching the achievement of pupils at the time of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers achieve as well as their peers. The best lessons observed included one in Years 1 and 2 on Judaism, led by the chair of governors, and another in Year 6 about the local church, led by the vicar who is also a governor. These were enriched by the use of religious artefacts that raised the pupils' interest. Children in Years R and 1 were also observed dressing up in traditional Hindu costume, enacting the festival of Diwali and learning effectively through practical experience.
73. Occasionally learning was less successful, especially for potentially higher attainers, when pupils were required to complete worksheets covering work already completed, limiting opportunities for further reflection. This was also evident at times in the pupils' written work in Years 1, 2 and 3, where there were restricted opportunities for pupils to express their ideas in writing.
74. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make useful connections between their own experiences and the religious customs celebrated in other world faiths such as Judaism. By Year 6, most pupils understand the notion of religious belief. Good links with provision for the

pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through school rules, and with the school's personal, social and health education through assembly themes, help pupils to exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

75. The quality of teaching observed was generally good, reflecting recent improvement. It was enriched by the teachers' careful preparation and by their invitations to members of local faith communities, including the vicar of the local church. The curriculum is planned satisfactorily. Opportunities for the pupils to express their ideas and to reflect as individuals through art, for example when pupils draw pictures of their special places, are being developed, but there is scope for pupils to consider how a religious faith can influence people's lives. The co-ordinator is very new to her post and has not yet had sufficient time to have an impact on provision. Other than the teachers' marking of pupils' work in books, there is insufficient use of assessment to inform teaching and planning. The scrutiny of pupils' work showed that in Year 6 pupils used a digital camera to record pictures of their 'Paschal Candles' but there were few examples of pupils using computers to research in this subject. There are sufficient resources and teachers are making good use of artefacts brought in by visiting speakers to enrich the pupils' learning.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

*Physical education was sampled and is reported below. Art and design, design and technology and music were not inspected.*

76. Provision in **physical education** has been systematically improved since the last inspection. A key aspect has been the development of a very good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs, including football, cricket, hockey, netball, summer games, competitive sports events and links with other schools. These provide significant enrichment to the pupils' learning experiences. The school still lacks a suitable hall, limiting the indoor gymnastics opportunities offered to the pupils. The school meets most of the requirements of the gymnastics element of the National Curriculum by using the nearby village hall and health and safety issues relating to the floor of the village hall have been fully addressed. Outdoor climbing equipment provides opportunities for pupils to complete the necessary balancing movements at a higher level off the ground. The subject co-ordinator gives good leadership and has been instrumental in strengthening the curriculum, improving assessment and raising the confidence and skills of staff. The acting headteacher has been effective in developing the outside areas of the school. As a result of involving pupils and listening to their views, relatively recent improvements to the fixed playground equipment and additions to the small equipment available to pupils are having a beneficial impact on the pupils' enjoyment of school.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

*This area of the curriculum was sampled.*

77. The school has worked hard to develop a curriculum that encourages the pupils' personal development and supports their personal health and well-being. Good links are made with the range of subjects across the curriculum and the pupils' understanding is enriched further through themed days and events. The degree to which the curriculum is taught varies considerably in different parts of the school. The pupils' awareness of others and their understanding of living in a society underpin their

very positive attitudes to learning in Years 4, 5 and 6. The programme to promote personal, social and health education helps pupils develop a safe and healthy lifestyle and gain belief in themselves. The successful teaching and learning evident in Year 6, for example, stem from the pupils' confidence and independence as learners. Most teachers value pupils and their contributions. The acting headteacher, in particular, sees pupils' views to be important and through the school council, whereby elected representatives from each class express their views, enables pupils to contribute to the improvement of the school, for example, by suggesting additional equipment for play times. The school meets all its statutory obligations, including appropriate sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. Work in this area of the curriculum also contributes well to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
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	2
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	5
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
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).*