

INSPECTION REPORT

HODNET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hodnet, Market Drayton

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123373

Headteacher: Mrs J M Siddons

Lead inspector: Anne Elizabeth Kounnou

Dates of inspection: 8th – 11th November 2004

Inspection number: 267032

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	156
School address:	Shrewsbury Street Hodnet Market Drayton Shropshire
Postcode:	TF9 3NS
Telephone number:	01630 685300
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Derek Orton
Date of previous inspection:	16 th November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hodnet Primary is a smaller than average primary school set in a rural village community. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average at around eight per cent. The national census data indicates that many pupils are from advantaged backgrounds. There are 156 pupils on roll aged from four to eleven years, including around three per cent of pupils who are from Travelling families. These pupils regularly return to the school during the school year as their families travel around the country. About seven per cent of pupils are from families serving in the armed forces. There are six classes, some of which have pupils of mixed ages due to the small size of the school. Attainment when children start school is above average; however, in some years this varies. When children start school there is a spread of ability but most reach levels that are above those expected for their age. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average at around 16 per cent; no pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Less than two per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and none are learning to speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school during the school year is about the same as in most primary schools. In 2002, the school worked closely with a group of other local schools to gain a Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Only two teachers remain on the staff since the last inspection in 1998. In addition, the school has undergone four changes of headteacher since then, with two periods when the school was led by an acting headteacher. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2003. The school is involved in the national 'Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools' initiative.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
30810	Liz Kounnou	Lead inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Personal, social and health education Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education
19342	Tom Heavey	Lay inspector	
32180	David Sleightholme	Team inspector	English Religious education History Geography
17681	Roger Sharples	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Provision for special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hodnet Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall so that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In Year 6 standards are above average in the national tests for English. In the national tests for mathematics and science standards are average in Year 6 and Year 2. In reading, Year 2 pupils reach above average standards in the national tests. Most children will reach the goals expected for children at the end of the reception year, with a considerable proportion exceeding these. Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils in Year 6 achieve well due to good teaching and learning in this year group.
- Staff work together as a team, but co-ordinators are still not leading their subjects effectively and governors and senior staff are not fully aware of what is and is not working, which limits their ability to bring about improvements more rapidly; this is because school systems for checking the quality of education in the school are not effective.
- There are sound procedures for gathering information about pupils' achievement in English and mathematics tests, but assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in lessons and in other subjects is ineffective; as a result teachers still do not tailor their lessons well enough to meet the needs of pupils with different ability.
- Pupils behave well throughout the school, because most teachers insist on high standards of behaviour in lessons.
- The school has developed good links with Travelling families that help the pupils achieve well.

The rate of improvement since the last inspection in 1998 has been insufficient. The high standards achieved at that time in English, mathematics and science, have not been maintained. However, since 1998 there have been four changes of headteacher, many changes of teaching staff, and changes within the governing body. This lack of continuity in school leadership has impeded the rate of improvement. There has been an improvement in the resources for science, and in provision for children in the Foundation Stage. However, throughout the school lessons are still not planned to provide an appropriate level of challenge for pupils of different ability, particularly the most able. Co-ordinators have been appointed, but they do not have an effective role in checking the standards achieved and quality of education in their subjects.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. By the end of the reception year most children achieve satisfactorily to reach the goals expected nationally, and a considerable proportion exceed them. In the 2004 national tests in Year 2, pupils' achievement was variable when compared to national standards and those achieved by pupils in similar schools. In reading, standards were above the national average and in line with similar schools. However, Year 2 pupils did not achieve well enough in mathematics and writing. In mathematics, standards were in line with the national average but below those achieved in similar schools. In writing, the average standards were well below those achieved by pupils in similar schools. In Year 6, pupils did well in the 2004 national tests for English, mathematics and science due to effective teaching and good support. Except in Year 6, the most able pupils throughout the school do not achieve as well as they could. This is partly because teachers do not use assessment effectively and their expectations of pupils are too low. Pupils with special educational needs and those of average ability make broadly satisfactory progress. Throughout the school standards seen are above average in English and average in science. In mathematics standards vary. In art, pupils achieve well due to teachers' higher expectations in this subject. Pupils from Travelling families achieve well due to the good links the school has developed with them and with support staff from the local education authority.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall; some lessons are taught well, especially in Year 6 where lessons are challenging. However, assessment is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not routinely make and record assessments of pupils' achievements, and as a result they do not plan lessons that will help pupils of all abilities reach the next steps in learning successfully. Pupils do not receive sufficient guidance to help them achieve as well as they could. For example, the individual learning targets that have recently been set for them are not always appropriate. The curriculum meets national requirements but could be planned more precisely to meet pupils' differing needs, particularly for those in mixed age classes.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The recently appointed headteacher provides satisfactory leadership and is improving the school. Other key staff are not yet leading the development of their subjects well enough. Governance is satisfactory and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Governors do not have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, because their systems for checking the quality of education are ineffective.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents and pupils are satisfied with the school. Parents are right to be concerned about the progress pupils make, many lessons are not tailored well enough to help the most able pupils in particular make sufficient progress. They are also justifiably concerned about the high number of changes in teaching staff and school leadership since the last inspection, which has slowed the rate of improvement. Parents appreciate the open door policy of the new headteacher, and feel that the school deals with their concerns well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Introduce formal systems for checking the quality of education provided in the school, so that governors and senior staff have sufficient evidence to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and know what to do to improve things.
- Ensure that co-ordinators for all subjects regularly check the standards pupils achieve in their subjects, and the quality of education provided.
- Introduce effective and manageable systems for assessment in all subjects, and ensure that the information gained is used to plan lessons that are sufficiently challenging for all pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement overall is **satisfactory**. In Year 6, results in the national tests were average in mathematics and science, and above average in English. Pupils in Year 6 achieved well in the tests. Standards achieved in the national tests at the end of Year 2 are variable but satisfactory overall. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve satisfactorily so that by the time they leave the reception year most have reached the goals expected at that age and a considerable proportion have exceeded these goals.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 6 pupils achieve well due to effective teaching and good support for learning in that year group.
- In other year groups there is not enough challenge for the most able pupils, including those with particular gifts and talents; the progress they make in many lessons is limited because assessment is not used well enough to plan lessons that match their capabilities.
- Pupils from Travelling families achieve well throughout the school due to the good support they receive.

Commentary

1. Although there is a spread of ability a high proportion of children starting school in the reception class are already reaching levels that are above those expected, reflecting the above average attainment on entry. The majority of children make satisfactory progress because teachers focus appropriately on improving their basic skills in language and mathematical development. However, too few activities provide a good level of challenge, particularly for the most able children. This is because many activities have limited opportunities for children to use their imagination and develop independence in learning. These activities are usually directed by adults and are not sufficiently challenging for all groups of children.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.9 (15.2)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.6 (13.5)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.5 (16.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Results in the national tests for writing, mathematics and science were average in Year 2 in 2004, and above average in reading. By the end of Year 2 most pupils achieve satisfactory standards, and the trend in rising standards has been broadly in line with the national trend over the last few years. However, pupils with the potential to reach higher standards are not achieving as well as they could in English and mathematics. In writing and mathematics, pupils in Year 2 did not achieve as well as they should

have done in the national tests. In reading tests pupils' achievement was satisfactory. Standards were above the national average, and in line with those achieved by pupils in similar schools. Standards achieved in writing tests were much lower, and well below those achieved by pupils in similar schools even though they are about the same as the national average. In mathematics, standards were in line with the national average but below those achieved in similar schools. Science standards were better, because the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above that achieved by pupils in similar schools. Standards in science were enhanced by skilled teaching that enabled pupils to achieve well in science investigations. This was reflected in the work seen during the inspection. In writing and mathematics standards are not as high because lessons are not tailored well enough to meet pupils' needs. Consequently, the most able pupils do not make progress at the rate they are capable of doing. Recently teachers have begun setting individual learning targets for pupils to address this. As yet this strategy is not successful because the procedures for checking pupils' progress towards the targets are ineffective.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.3 (26.5)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.6 (28.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.1 (29.2)	28.6 (28.6)

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

3. By the end of Year 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Although the trend of rising standards has been below the national trend over the last few years, there was an improvement in standards in the 2004 national tests. Consequently, pupils in Year 6 achieved well in mathematics and science, and very well in English. They made better progress than most pupils achieving similar results in 2000 when the pupils were in Year 2. This was due to a combination of mainly good teaching in Year 6, and good support for pupils in small groups to help them focus on aspects of their work that needed to improve. As a result, standards were above the national average in English, and average in mathematics and science. However, throughout Years 3 to 5, potentially higher attaining pupils are not reaching levels that match their capabilities, because lessons are not planned well enough to challenge them and help them make good progress. The school is aware of this and has now introduced individual learning targets to improve pupils' progress. This strategy is having limited success because it is not yet fully embedded and pupils are not always sure what they need to do to reach the next level, and the targets set are not always sufficiently challenging, particularly for the most able. The school has recently revised the targets set for pupils to achieve at the end of this year in the 2005 national tests, so that the proportions expected to reach or exceed the national average more accurately reflect pupils' prior attainment. Nonetheless, the targets set still lack challenge, particularly in mathematics.

4. Throughout the school pupils from Travelling families achieve well. They receive good support from teachers from the local education authority who visit the school each week. Teachers throughout the school are careful to provide work that is well matched to the needs of the Travelling pupils, because it is based on the assessments made by specialist teachers. Good relationships with pupils' families mean that there is a good

working partnership that helps pupils do well. Families say they look forward to returning to the school, because the provision for their children is better than they find elsewhere on their travels. Nonetheless, there are differences in the learning of different groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support and make satisfactory progress. Boys' and girls' achievement is broadly satisfactory, but sometimes fluctuates from year to year due to the small size of the cohorts. However, the most able pupils are not achieving as well as they could because work is not sufficiently challenging for them in most classes. To address this the school has recently drawn up lists of the most able in each class, based on school assessment information. Weaknesses in the way the school checks how effectively it provides for different groups of pupils means that this strategy has not yet had an impact on raising achievement. Pupils throughout the school achieve consistently well in art. This is because teachers' expectations in art are higher so that the quality of work on display and in pupils' sketchbooks shows a good level of skill.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Standards of behaviour are **good**. Pupils' attitudes to learning are **satisfactory**. The provision for pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave well throughout the school, because most teachers insist on high standards of behaviour.
- The school works hard to ensure there are good relationships between all.
- Pupils' attitudes to school and to learning are variable.
- Although provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, it is not rigorously planned, and the school does not check the impact of its policies and practices.

Commentary

5. Pupils behave well and there have been no exclusions in the last two years. This is because teachers' expectations of behaviour are clear. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work together sensibly, whilst, at the same time, promoting opportunities that contribute to their personal development and independence. In a good Year 6 ICT and history lesson, for example, the high degree of co-operation of pupils enabled them to achieve well as they used computers to create multi-media presentations about Britain since 1940. Pupils moved sensibly between the classroom and the shared area computers in the course of undertaking independent and small group work. Pupils also achieved well in lessons in Year 1, and in the Year 2 and 3 class, when teachers planned enjoyable activities that captured their interest and motivated them to succeed.
6. Pupils have mixed views of the school, which are reflected in their variable attitudes to learning, and consequently in how well they achieve. For example, in questionnaires completed prior to the inspection, a significant proportion of pupils (one third) felt that lessons were not always interesting and fun. During the inspection, in lessons when the teaching was stimulating, pupils enjoyed lessons and achieved well. For example, in Years 1 and 2 pupils' interest was captured when they followed instructions to make a milkshake, and, as a result, they made good progress in a lesson that linked literacy and science skills well. However, too many lessons seen were not particularly interesting for the most able.
7. The school has given pupils in Year 6 additional responsibility by ensuring each one has a job. Older pupils have a keen sense of responsibility for younger ones, particularly the Year 6 playground buddies who are keen to ensure younger pupils have somebody to talk to, or play with. The school successfully promotes good relationships between all. Traveller pupils feel welcome in the school. As a result, they attend regularly and make good progress in learning.
8. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is developed satisfactorily. In art, Western European culture is promoted well, and in collective worship pupils think deeply about a range of issues affecting their lives. For example, in the whole-school assembly on Remembrance Day, those who gave their lives in wars were

remembered. At 11 o' clock pupils observed one minute's silence to show respect for all those who have fought in wars, and to those who continue to do so. This was especially important for pupils with a family member on active service, and an important time of reflection for all. However, activities such as this are not planned for in the curriculum, and the school does not check the effectiveness of its policies and practices so that some good opportunities are missed.

Attendance

9. Attendance is satisfactory overall. Although the proportion of pupils taking authorised absence is higher than is typical, this is partly due to the movement of Travelling families, and the local authority procedures for registering these pupils after they have moved on to other schools. Most parents ensure that their children arrive at school on time, resulting in satisfactory punctuality and a brisk start to the school day. Registration at both morning and afternoon takes place without undue delay in all but one or two classes.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.1	School data	0.1
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 is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory, and is enriched appropriately, but is not tailored well enough to meet pupils' needs in all subjects. Care for pupils is satisfactory, and pupils are involved well in the work and development of the school. The lack of assessment limits the quality of support and guidance pupils receive for learning. There are satisfactory links with parents, the local community and local schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** overall. Assessment is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 6 teachers' lessons are planned well so that work is matched to pupils' ability and they make good progress.
- Assessment is not used effectively to guide teacher's planning so that lessons are not tailored well enough to meet the needs of all groups of pupils, particularly the most able pupils.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
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0	1 (3%)	12 (36%)	19 (58%)	1 (3%)	0	0
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The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

10. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in all stages of the school, but not as effective as at the time of the last inspection. This is partly due to the many changes of headteacher, which have slowed the rate of improvement in teaching and learning. Teaching and learning seen in Year 6 was consistently good or better, and the quality of work seen in pupils' books shows that they have made good progress this year. Teaching in this class is good because it provides pupils with a good level of challenge. There are a significant proportion of pupils in Year 6 with the capability to reach above average levels. The style of learning in this class helps them to make decisions about their work, and to learn how to work together successfully, providing a good level of challenge. The teacher reminds pupils of the characteristics of their work that will enable them to reach the higher level. For example, in history pupils were reminded to consider cause and effect when researching a topic together. This focus on what pupils need to do to reach the higher level is not typical of teaching in other year groups. Improving behaviour has been a high priority for the school recently and teachers throughout the school have responded well to this initiative. Because they insist on high standards of behaviour positively and calmly, pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils from Travelling families, and they have good relationships with these pupils who return to the school periodically. The good model they provide means that pupils are welcomed back into the school by other pupils. There is good liaison with the support teacher for Travelling pupils who visits the school regularly, so that pupils are working at the right level to improve their skills. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress; the individual plans drawn up to meet their needs are not always used well enough to plan lessons that will help them to make the best progress. When pupils work in small groups they are often supported well. However, when pupils are withdrawn from lessons in other subjects to work at developing English skills, this disrupts the progress they make in other areas of the curriculum.
11. At the time of the last inspection a key issue was to improve the quality of teachers' planning for lessons, so that lessons provided appropriate tasks and challenges for pupils of all abilities. This has not been achieved because assessment of pupils' progress is not in place for subjects other than English and mathematics. This is unsatisfactory and means that teachers do not have enough information about pupils' prior attainment when they plan their lessons, so that many lessons are still not challenging enough for the most able. Although teachers are aware of pupils' prior attainment in English and mathematics due to recently introduced tracking procedures, they do not use this information well to plan lessons. Instead they rely on the national guidance for each year group, which is not always appropriate as many classes have mixed ages and many pupils are capable of reaching higher levels. This is seen from the reception class to Year 5 and limits the rate of pupils' progress. The school is aware of this and has introduced individual learning targets from Year 1 to Year 6 as a means of improving pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. However, teachers do not regularly review targets with pupils, and pupils have little idea of what they need to do to reach the next level. Teachers' marking does not provide them with a clear view of what they have done well, and what they need to improve. In lessons, although most teachers share the aim of the lesson with pupils,

most aims are not broken down into language that pupils can easily understand, and the aims are rarely reviewed at the end of the lesson. This limits the information that teachers can gain about pupils' success in lessons. The school urgently needs to introduce effective procedures for assessment in all subjects, as this remains an issue for improvement.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum, which is enriched by a **satisfactory** range of opportunities that enable pupils to participate in learning activities outside of lessons. Overall, the quality of the accommodation and resources is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 6 the planning of curriculum activities is good and this ensures that all the pupils achieve well.
- In other classes curriculum planning does not always meet the needs of the pupils and this has a detrimental effect on their achievement.

Commentary

12. The satisfactory curriculum meets national requirements. Throughout the school a suitable range of visits out of school provides additional and stimulating learning opportunities for pupils. In addition pupils benefit from a pleasing range of after-school clubs; many take place on the same evening after school in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. The accommodation and range of learning resources are satisfactory. Pupils were fully involved in planning for the development of a purpose-built outdoor area that has enhanced their play opportunities. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in the range of science resources. However, the resources and accommodation for ICT are unsatisfactory and limit the skills that pupils learn in ICT lessons.
13. In Year 6, the curriculum is planned well, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Pupils achieve well in this class because activities take account of their abilities. For example, in a very good science lesson a practical investigation ensured that all pupils were suitably challenged. As a result, they worked with enthusiasm in groups devising the investigation and predicting the outcome. One of the best features of the curriculum in Year 6 is the way that links are made between subjects, and the way that pupils are encouraged to work together co-operatively. This style of learning provides pupils with plenty of opportunities to make choices about their work. This is particularly effective for the most able, who form a substantial proportion of the class. For example, a lesson that linked history, literacy and ICT challenged pupils to decide how to present their work using a multi-media presentation.
14. In the mixed age classes there are examples of pupils in different year groups repeating the same learning activities. This happens because teachers do not know how well pupils are doing since there are no assessment procedures in place for subjects other than English and mathematics. The school wisely uses national guidance as a basis for planning most subjects, but does not tailor the guidance to suit pupils' needs. For example, teachers do not plan what pupils of all abilities could reasonably be expected to learn in each of the units of work. Most classes include a

wide spread of ability as they contain pupils from different year groups, and because there are substantial numbers of pupils with the potential to achieve higher than average levels in each class. Too often the most able work at activities that are not sufficiently challenging. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Suitable plans are drawn up to show which skills pupils need to improve. Although the targets are reviewed twice a year not all teachers and teaching assistants work together well. They do not routinely use ongoing assessment information to check if the current targets are applicable, and this limits pupils' overall achievement. Pupils from Travelling families are well integrated into each class; nonetheless, the curriculum does not adequately reflect the culture of this small group of pupils, and this limits other pupils' understanding of a Travelling lifestyle.

Care guidance and support

The school's procedures for the welfare, health, safety and personal security of its pupils are **satisfactory** as they were at the previous inspection. The support, advice and guidance for pupils are **unsatisfactory**. There are **good** arrangements to involve pupils in the work of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The active involvement of pupils in the work of the school through the school council helps them to develop mature and responsible attitudes.
- Good relationships between pupils and adults in the school mean that pupils work in a calm and orderly environment.
- Pupils do not receive sufficient advice about how to improve their work because of the lack of robust assessment systems.

Commentary

15. Though still at an early stage of development the school council has already emerged as an effective vehicle of communication between pupils and staff. Its success is solidly based on the mutual trust and respect that characterises good relationships across the school, making pupils feel that they are listened to and are taken seriously. Their peers democratically elect councillors, and the class representatives in turn elect their executive committee. Recent successes include the provision of playground equipment for the school after extensive consultation, research visits to other schools, and discussions with their own school managers. Another project involved securing funding from the Parent Teacher Association, managing a budget and negotiating a discount with a garden centre for the purchase of plants to beautify the school premises. Involvement in such processes prepares pupils well for their future role as responsible members of their community.
16. The good relationships between adults and pupils, noted by parents in their comments to the inspectors, make pupils feel secure and well cared for. Travelling families in particular describe how welcome they are made to feel in the school, and how they and their children benefit from the support of the county's traveller support worker. Teachers know their charges well as individuals; they treat pupils fairly and with a positive attitude that secures pupils' good behaviour and co-operation both in the classroom and throughout the school. Pupils speak openly and freely with adults. Health and safety, first aid and child protection meet legal requirements, and the

school is taking part in a healthy eating initiative. The arrangements for helping reception children and their parents acclimatise to school life are appropriate, as are the arrangements for pupils to move on to the next stage of their education.

17. The support and guidance that pupils receive to help them with their learning is unsatisfactory. This is mainly because school assessment systems are not sufficiently robust or accurate. This means that teachers are not secure in their understanding of how pupils need to progress. To address this issue, English and mathematics co-ordinators have introduced a system of setting targets for all the pupils. Special target sheets have recently been pasted into the front of pupils' English and mathematics books so that teachers and pupils can see which level they are working towards. The procedures for deciding which level pupils should be achieving are not secure, and throughout the school there are examples of higher attaining pupils exceeding the targets they have been set. As this is a new system it is not fully embedded into school practice. This means that whilst some pupils know the level they are working towards they cannot explain what they need to improve to get there. Teachers' marking does not yet refer to the targets and lessons are not yet designed to help pupils achieve them. Although this is a potentially good strategy to help teachers raise achievement, currently it is at a very early stage of development and is not yet effective.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents, other schools and the community are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has established good links with Travelling families that help their children achieve well.
- Parents are right to say that the school is approachable and deals well with their concerns and any complaints.
- Annual reports to parents, about the progress their children make, do not explain what the children need to do to improve.
- Although there are informal methods for seeking the views of parents, the lack of a regular formal system for canvassing parents' views means that the school is not fully aware of their concerns.

Commentary

18. The school's links with parents are satisfactory overall, and the links with Travelling families are good. These families appreciate the welcome they receive from school staff when they return to the school after some time out of the area, and the way that the school fosters a good partnership between them. This good level of communication is valuable to Travelling pupils who also feel at ease in the school. Other parents have more mixed views about the school. The response to the questionnaire and the meeting held before the inspection was not very high, with only a small proportion of parents making their views known. Their views are not as positive as they were at the last inspection. Parents' primary concern is about the organisation of pupils into mixed age classes, and the high staff turnover, which they feel is detrimental to their children's achievement. Since the last inspection there have been four headteachers and a high proportion of teaching staff have left the school.

However, staff changes in the last two years are mainly temporary due to maternity cover and the number of changes is typical of most primary schools. It is inevitable that some pupils will work in mixed age classes, as the number of pupils on roll is not sufficient to support one class for each year group. Nonetheless, inspectors agree that pupils do not make as much progress as they could in mixed age classes due to the lack of assessment; and that the many changes in school staff and the leadership team have hampered the rate of school improvement since the last inspection.

19. Parents are positive about the changes introduced by the new headteacher. The school is more approachable and deals well with any concerns they raise. One of the methods of gaining parents' trust has been to seek their views; for example, through informal canvassing of their opinions in the school playground. This has given senior managers some idea of the concerns that parents raise. Nevertheless, there is not a regular means of seeking the views of all parents. This means that governors and the leadership team are not fully aware of all the concerns that parents raise. This prevents them from explaining or reviewing the effectiveness of school policies that parents are uncomfortable with. The information that parents receive is typical of most primary schools, but pupils' annual reports do not explain to parents what their children need to do to improve their achievement. A large number of parents give their time generously to support the school; for example, the Parent Teacher Association raises considerable funds for school projects and equipment.
20. The school maintains satisfactory links with the diverse community it serves, including the armed forces community. Local businesses support the school's activities and pupils develop a sense of citizenship through their educational visits in the community. These included a visit to the local war memorial just before Remembrance Day. Pupils demonstrate their care and concern for the disadvantaged people in the community beyond the school by raising money for charities such as the local hospice, Children in Need and Operation Christmas Child. The school makes appropriate arrangements for the transfer of its pupils to the next phase of their education, and is part of a school development group. This association has been particularly effective as the group won the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2002 for its work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The recently appointed headteacher provides **satisfactory** leadership, but the leadership of other key staff is **unsatisfactory** and has not improved since the last inspection. Management is **satisfactory**. Governance is **satisfactory** and ensures that all statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and the leadership team are developing suitable strategies to raise standards in English and mathematics.
- Governors are dedicated to supporting the school, but do not have access to good quality information about the strengths and weaknesses of the school, because systems for checking the quality of education are ineffective.
- Subject co-ordinators are not effective in raising standards because they do not check the standards pupils achieve, or the quality of teaching and learning.

Commentary

21. The new headteacher has wisely sought the support of the local education authority to help her check the quality of teaching and learning in the school. As a result, she has an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. To help raise standards in the school, the leadership team is involved in a national initiative that provides training to develop leadership skills in primary schools. Soon after the headteacher was appointed in September 2003, senior staff became more involved in tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics. Recently, this has extended to setting pupils, throughout the school, individual learning targets to reach by the end of the year in these subjects. However, this has not been effective as the practices required to ensure that teachers use targets successfully to help pupils make better progress are not embedded throughout the school. The involvement of senior staff in supporting pupils in Year 6 in small groups throughout 2004 led pupils to achieve higher standards than they were expected to achieve in the national tests, given their previous attainment. Together senior staff have reviewed the school targets that set out the proportion of pupils likely to reach or exceed the expected levels in English and mathematics tests at the end of the Year 6 in 2005. These targets have been radically revised, and are now much more suitable, but they still do not provide a good level of challenge based on pupils' prior attainment. This is because pupils have not made sufficient progress from Year 3 to Year 5 to enable them to reach more challenging levels.

22. Dedicated governors provided much needed support to staff through a very changeable period after the last inspection in 1998. Since that time the school has been led by four headteachers, two of whom were acting headteachers, who led the school until a permanent appointment was made. This lack of continuity in school leadership has had a significant impact on the school's ability to improve and maintain standards. Actions were taken to address all of the key issues after the last inspection, but a clear system of gathering information about the impact of those changes has not been put into place. As a result, governors have not had access to sufficient information for them to make an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school development plan is drawn up using a framework recommended by the local education authority, and includes a brief evaluation of the previous year's successes and failures. However, it lacks a clear focus on raising pupils' achievement so that governors do not have enough information about how well different groups of pupils are doing. Financial management is satisfactory overall; the funds available are lower than those typically allocated to primary schools. However, governors do not use the principles of best value well enough when planning how to use the school's limited budget.

23. Governors do not have sufficient information partly due to the fact that the role of subject leaders has not improved since the last inspection. After that inspection, governors ensured that co-ordinators were appointed to lead all of the subjects of the National Curriculum, but co-ordinators' roles still do not include regularly checking the standards pupils achieve and the quality of education in their subjects. Co-ordinators' ability to check the standards that pupils achieve is severely hampered by the lack of assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics. Nonetheless, they do not routinely check the quality of pupils' work and teachers' planning. There is much informal communication between staff working together in this small school, but the lack of formal procedures, for checking the impact of teaching on pupils'

achievement in all subjects, means that co-ordinators are largely unaware of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. This is unsatisfactory and means that they cannot accurately report these to governors. Recent improvements have been introduced in English and mathematics. In these subjects staff have been introduced to the idea of tracking pupils' achievement, and information from a number of different tests and assessments is used to check pupils' progress throughout the school. As this process is at an early stage of development and the significance of the information is not fully understood by all staff, this has not yet had a major impact on raising standards.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	430,992	Balance from previous year	16,021
Total expenditure	438,225	Balance carried forward to the next	8,788
Expenditure per pupil	2,518		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

24. Currently there are 11 children in the reception class, a very small number when compared with most primary schools. More children will start school in January when the class size will more than double. Two part-time teachers share responsibility for the class, supported by two teaching assistants. At present, there is no provision for the staff to meet formally to exchange information about children's achievement. The procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory overall. Teachers use the expected national system to check children's attainment. However, ongoing assessments are not used well enough to provide teachers with a clear picture of what each child already knows and needs to learn next. A significant number of children already achieve the goals expected by the end of the reception year soon after they start school. Weaknesses in assessment lead to there being no clear plan to show how these children will be challenged to extend their skills in a way that is suitable for children in the reception class. Nevertheless, provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection. The curriculum provided for children is now based on the areas of learning outlined in the national guidance. A new classroom has been built with a secure outdoor area that provides a suitable environment for children to learn in. The outdoor area is not covered and is mainly grass. This limits the number of opportunities for children to use the area, as when it is damp outside children are restricted to a very small area of hard paving. As a result teachers have not developed the area well, and there is a lack of stimulation in many of the activities planned outside. Teachers try to address this by using the main school playground, but the need to limit resources in this area means that there are few opportunities for children to use their imagination as they play. Currently too many of the indoor activities are more suited to older pupils and provide limited opportunities for the most able children to learn from their curiosity and imagination. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are not effective because there is not a clear system in place for the manager to check the quality of education and ensure that it is appropriate for children who reach higher levels than expected.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have good opportunities to plan and review their own learning in some lessons.
- There are not enough opportunities for children to work together co-operatively as they play.

Commentary

25. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most children achieve satisfactorily and exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the reception year. Many start with good levels of personal development that help them to access learning across all areas of learning. For example, many are good at sharing and they follow instructions well. Some lessons build on these skills well by expecting children to organise their own

learning and to co-operate together. In some lessons children complete a plan showing which activity they are going to select from the range on offer. They then review the activity showing on the sheet whether or not they completed the activity and whether they enjoyed it. These opportunities for children to take responsibility for their own learning are valuable and help them to develop maturity as they play.

26. A large number of activities are highly directed by adults, and limit these opportunities. This is because adults give children very little opportunity to work things out for themselves. This particularly limits the development of the substantial group of children who achieve higher than expected levels when they start school. For example, children often work and play together in groups that are formed according to their ability. This limits the number of opportunities for children to develop their social skills further because they become comfortable working in the same group for most of the time.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning basic literacy skills has a high priority so that children make sound progress.
- There are not enough opportunities for children to develop literacy skills as they play.

Commentary

27. Children's achievement is satisfactory; many are likely to exceed the goals expected at the end of the reception year. A substantial proportion of children reach these goals soon after they start school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons there are plenty of opportunities for children to be actively involved in the learning. For example, they thoroughly enjoyed reading *Dear Zoo* together, and concentrated hard on putting lots of expression and actions into the reading. There is a strong focus on teaching children early literacy skills, and a lot of time is spent in practising writing letters and completing activities related to books from the school reading scheme. Not all these activities are planned appropriately to help children make progress towards the next goal for learning; some are routine and not well tailored to the ability of all the children. For example, some worksheets provided in a reading session did not hold the attention of all the children, or help them to improve their reading skills.
28. There are not many activities designed for children to develop spoken language skills as they play. Sometimes children enjoy using the puppet theatre in small groups to act out stories, but the number of opportunities for children to use their imagination to develop a story in activities such as this is limited.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy using the interactive whiteboard to learn mathematical skills.
- The range of opportunities for children to learn mathematics as they play is limited.

Commentary

29. Many children are likely to exceed the goals expected at the end of the reception year. Their progress and achievement are satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers use the interactive whiteboard well to motivate children who are delighted to play mathematical games on the board, for example matching numbers and objects hidden behind a row of doors on the screen. Children are encouraged to learn about mathematics in a variety of ways; for example, the teacher pretends she is holding a party and more and more people ring her on the telephone to say they are coming. This shows the children how to add one more, as the number of cups needed on the table increases. Puppets are also used appropriately to motivate children when they are learning to count to 20 together. However, most lessons do not provide enough activities for children to learn about mathematics as they play. Many of the activities organised are more suited to older pupils and do not extend the skills of the most able children because they have few opportunities to play with numbers in a meaningful context. This limits their mathematical development because they do not fully understand how numbers work. The outdoor area is used for games such as searching for objects to match the number cards, but activities such as these do not provide much opportunity for children to take control of the game and develop the mathematics used. This limits their overall development.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident in using computers because they have plenty of opportunities to develop their skills.
- The outdoor area is not used effectively to promote learning about the world through play.

Commentary

30. Many children have a good understanding and will exceed the goals expected at the end of the reception year. Satisfactory teaching and learning mean that children build on their prior attainment at a satisfactory rate, so that their achievement is satisfactory. Children have opportunities to take part in activities such as interviewing the cook as they follow a theme of looking at people who help us. They have plenty of opportunities to use computers in mathematics and language sessions, so that their skills in manipulating the electronic mouse and controlling familiar programs are good. Outdoor activities regularly include building with large blocks, and opportunities to play with sand and water. However, the range of activities available for children to investigate outdoors is limited and does not provide a good level of stimulation for the children. Many activities are limited in their design, and prevent children from using their imagination to develop the games further. This was also seen indoors when children made sandwiches following the hygiene instructions that the cook had given them. They were delighted to dress up in the special hygienic hats and aprons, but the

opportunities for them to experiment with making sandwiches were limited because they had to follow precise instructions.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

This area of learning was not a focus of the inspection, and there is too little evidence to make an overall judgment about the quality of provision.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

This area of learning was not a focus of the inspection, and there is too little evidence to make an overall judgment about the quality of provision.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in national tests in Year 6 due to good support and effective teaching in this class.
- There is not enough challenge for the most able pupils because assessment and marking are not used effectively to guide teachers' planning, and this limits progress.
- The recently introduced individual learning targets have had little impact on achievement because pupils do not always understand them, and teachers do not usually remind pupils to focus on them during lessons.
- Literacy skills are developed well in Year 2 and Year 6, in work across the curriculum.

Commentary

31. Standards seen are good in Year 2 and Year 6 in speaking and listening and reading, and satisfactory in writing. The school successfully boosted pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 in 2004 and pupils achieved well in the national tests. This was due to good support in small groups to help pupils achieve as well as they could. Standards are not as high as those reported at the last inspection. This is partly due to the many changes in school leadership that have slowed the rate of improvement. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall and there are no significant differences in the attainment of girls and boys. The school provides well for pupils from Travelling families by ensuring they enjoy continuity in learning and by offering parents good advice about ways they can support their children. This is due to the good partnership between the school and the local education authority support service for Travelling pupils. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in most year groups; however, in Year 6 pupils achieve well because the teacher plans work effectively.
32. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In Year 6 consistently high expectations mean that pupils of all abilities improve their skills at a good rate. The best lessons are planned to match the needs of all groups of pupils. For example, in a group reading session in Year 1, the teacher constantly checked pupils' understanding of the text through probing questions, and developed their reading skills by checking and reminding them of strategies that would help them to read unfamiliar words. A reading session in Years 3 and 4 was less successful because the teacher concentrated on listening to pupils read, but asked few questions to extend their learning, and did not focus on strategies to help them become more capable and confident readers.
33. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory, overall. Nonetheless, there is still a need to increase the pace of learning and extend the more able in most classes, and this was highlighted in the previous inspection report. Teachers' use of assessment, overall, is unsatisfactory because most do not use it to guide the next steps in learning when planning future activities. As a result, too many lessons are not sufficiently challenging for the most able. In order to improve the procedures for assessment in English the school has recently introduced a 'tracking' system that enables teachers to set targets for pupils' achievement.
34. Pupils in Year 6 find their teacher's marking helpful because it helps them understand what they need to do to improve their work. However, most pupils in the school are not familiar with the longer-term targets that have recently been pasted into the front of their books. They are not sure what some of the statements mean, and they are not usually reminded to keep them in mind when starting new activities. Discussions with pupils and an analysis of their work in books confirm that marking is mostly used to celebrate pupils' work, but they are given little guidance on how to improve it.
35. Leadership and management are satisfactory because the school has recently developed strategies to raise attainment, such as tracking pupils' achievements in school tests, and setting individual targets for pupils to reach at the end of each year. The development of literacy skills is a priority since the arrival of the new headteacher. Involvement in the National Primary Strategy has increased opportunities for leadership training. As a result the co-ordinator and senior staff have a greater awareness of the importance of checking the quality of education so that the subject's

strengths and weaknesses are identified. Writing has rightly been identified as an area for development, as pupils reached average standards in national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 and their achievement was lower than expected. The senior leadership team is committed to raising standards and the school is implementing a good action plan to address this, which is beginning to raise standards in writing.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

36. In Year 2 and Year 6 teachers are providing good opportunities for pupils to use and develop literacy skills through other subjects. For example, in a good lesson in Years 2 and 3, the teacher drew upon work in science by using pupils' experience of food groups when they were asked to follow instructions to make a strawberry milk shake. In a good Year 6 lesson, the teacher linked work to *Goodnight Mr Tom*, which pupils have studied in the history of World War 2. Some pupils used ICT skills to support their learning as they skilfully listed the most important information from the teacher's chosen texts.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Year 6 achieve well because of the good teaching and the additional support they receive; as a result, Year 6 achieved higher standards than expected, given their previous attainment, in the national tests for mathematics.
- Individual learning targets have been introduced to help raise standards.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information to plan pupils' learning activities and this means that more able pupils are not always working at a suitably challenging level.
- There is a lack of planning to ensure that mathematical skills are used in other subjects so that the development of mathematical skills across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

37. Standards are not as high as they were at the last inspection but pupils' achievement in mathematics is satisfactory. The many changes of headteacher since the last inspection have slowed the rate of improvement in standards. Standards seen in Year 2 are average, and those seen in Year 6 are above average. Whilst achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 5, in Year 6 pupils' achievement is good because there is a clear focus on their learning needs and their capabilities. This led pupils to achieve better than expected results in the national mathematics tests in 2004. The current Year 6 pupils continue to achieve well. This is because staff plan an appropriate range of activities that help pupils improve their skills steadily. In 2004 these activities were reinforced by senior staff working with smaller groups of Year 6 pupils throughout the year. In Year 6 lessons, more able pupils are expected to work independently for longer periods and they obviously relish the challenge presented by the activities. These factors lead pupils to achieve well and make good progress. In a good Year 6 lesson the effective organisation of groups ensured that pupils of all abilities were provided with relevant and challenging activities.

38. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall because teachers use the guidance of the National Numeracy Strategy appropriately to guide learning in mathematics. However, systems for tracking pupils' achievements over time and checking the standards they reach in lessons are unsatisfactory. Although there is a whole-school system in place for checking the amount of progress that pupils make, this is not being used effectively to ensure that teaching builds effectively on pupils' earlier achievements. Examples of work in some pupils' books illustrates that they have repeated exactly the same activity at different ages. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with some good new initiatives being used to raise standards, such as setting individual targets for learning. The school is aware that standards are not high enough and the knowledgeable subject co-ordinator is keen to improve matters. For example, the recently introduced individual learning targets are helping to raise staff awareness of the level that pupils should be working at. However, there are limited opportunities for the co-ordinator to check the quality of education in mathematics across the school so this initiative has not yet been successful. This is mainly because pupils are largely unaware of what they need to do to reach their target. Recent national tests have shown an improvement in standards but indicate that pupils are not achieving as well in mathematics as they do in English and science. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall due to the recent focus on raising standards, but has been hampered by the many changes to school leadership since the last inspection. For instance, the school development plan does not highlight achievement in mathematics as a priority for improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

39. This is unsatisfactory because the development of mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding through other subjects is not given enough emphasis. For example, no use of computers by pupils was seen in any of the mathematics lessons during the inspection. Some use of mathematics was seen in art and design, such as when pupils used tessellation and pattern to create pieces of artwork. However, pupils rarely use mathematical skills in design and technology, because teachers have not planned how pupils will be able to apply the mathematical skills they have learned to their design work.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 6 good use is made of practical investigations that increase pupils' achievement; as a result they achieved well in the national science tests.
- The assessment procedures are unsatisfactory so that too many lessons are not sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils.

Commentary

40. Pupils' achievement in science is satisfactory throughout the school even though standards are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection. Standards seen are average in Year 2 and Year 6. However, in Year 6, pupils achieve well due to good teaching of investigative science. For example, in a very good lesson Year 6 pupils investigated the effects of increasing the mass on a rubber band. They were given the opportunity to predict the outcome of the investigation and were completely involved in the activity. It was particularly effective because pupils worked well together in groups to devise their own range of tests. Good teaching such as this, and effective support in small groups, led pupils to achieve well in the national tests for science in 2004. Pupils' work indicates that the current Year 6 are on course to achieve well in tests at the end of this year, because the good quality of science investigations means that they understand the scientific principles they are learning.
41. Teaching and learning across the school are satisfactory overall. Staff training, from a local education authority adviser working with the subject co-ordinator to increase and improve the quality of practical investigations, is beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of lessons in all classes throughout the school. Nevertheless, there are no procedures in place for the assessment of the pupils' attainment in the subject, and of their achievement in lessons. This means that teachers are not fully aware of the capabilities of pupils in their classes or of their prior attainment in science. Consequently there is a lack of continuity in the way that learning activities are planned as pupils move from class to class. Higher attaining pupils are not challenged well enough in too many lessons.
42. Since the last inspection the resources for science have improved and been reorganised so that they are accessible to all staff. The subject co-ordinator is aware of the need for the development of assessment procedures, but leadership and

management are not effective. Currently there is not a system in place for the coordinator to check the standards achieved and the quality of education in the subject. At present there is not a clear plan of action to bring about the improvements that are needed to raise standards further. This is partly due to the many changes of headteacher that have hampered school development; as a result improvement in science since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good links with literacy and history that enable pupils to use the skills they learn in ICT lessons.
- The accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory and have not kept pace with national developments; this limits the progress that pupils make in ICT lessons.

Commentary

43. Standards seen during the inspection are as expected in Year 2 and Year 6 and similar to those seen at the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Many lessons across the curriculum are enhanced by teachers' use of the interactive whiteboards that have been installed in every classroom. The level of teachers' confidence in using these varies. Some are enthusiastic and are improving their skills very well; others lack confidence and use the interactive whiteboards more routinely. In the best lessons teachers encourage pupils to make use of the whiteboards to improve their skills. For example, Year 2 pupils show the class how to edit the teacher's writing by clicking on the whiteboard in the right place.

44. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers have designed good routines to overcome the disadvantages of the resources in the ICT area. These disadvantages are:

- the area is too small for a whole class to work together;
- the shape of the area means that teachers cannot see all the pupils at the same time;
- the shape of the area prevents teachers from drawing the class together to make a teaching point during lessons, which means that teachers can only supervise groups and not teach specific skills to the class;
- the computers are not all fully compatible so that different versions of the same software are running on some machines, and this sometimes confuses pupils;
- teachers are unable to prepare work for pupils by uploading from one machine; they have to place work for pupils separately onto each machine, which is very time-consuming and not the best use of their time.

Teachers overcome some of these difficulties by taking only half the class to the ICT area, whilst other children work at a different activity with a teaching assistant. They use the interactive whiteboards in their classrooms well to prepare pupils for lessons so that pupils can work independently. Older pupils, with classrooms close to the ICT area, are trusted to move backwards and forwards and make good use of the laptop computers in their classrooms. Nonetheless, the facilities hamper rather than help teachers to improve pupils' ICT skills. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory overall. Since then the school has not kept pace with the significant investment in ICT resources that has taken place nationally. As a result resources that were good at that time are now unsatisfactory. This is because there has not been sufficient checking of the development of ICT in the school.

45. As with most other subjects there are no procedures for assessment in place for ICT, and this means that lessons are not always tailored well enough to enable the most

able to improve their skills. Leadership and management of ICT are currently unsatisfactory because the co-ordinator has not been able to gather evidence about the quality of education and the standards achieved in the subject. The lack of assessment procedures makes it extremely difficult to gather evidence about pupils' achievement in ICT so that the most able pupils are not making enough progress. .

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

46. This is satisfactory overall, but varies across the subjects. For example, teachers are good at planning ICT projects that draw on pupils' ICT, literacy and history skills. Pupils work well together to research information for history topics to put into a multi-media presentation. However, the use of ICT in mathematics is unsatisfactory. For instance, there are very few examples of pupils using ICT to develop mathematical skills in activities such as data handling.

HUMANITIES

47. No lessons were seen in history and geography during the inspection. Evidence was drawn from pupils' work, teachers' planning, and discussion with pupils. This indicates that an appropriate curriculum is taught. However, as all pupils mainly complete the same activities in both subjects there is insufficient challenge for the most able pupils, who are capable of completing more demanding work. Furthermore, there are no procedures in either subject to assess pupils' progress, and this is unsatisfactory. The last inspection raised a key issue to improve the role of co-ordinators in checking the quality of education in the subjects. Co-ordinators have been appointed for history and geography, but as yet their role does not include checking standards, or the quality of teaching and learning.

History

48. Pupils in Year 2 particularly enjoyed their work on 'The Great Fire of London' and have a good recall of the events, including the effects of the spread of disease. Pupils in Year 1 enjoyed a visit to Hodnet War Memorial, which has enabled them to develop a good understanding of the significance of the memorial, and why poppies are sold in school. Year 6 pupils talked enthusiastically about research into Tudor life and times – work on Tudor projects and the fun they had when they designed a Tudor board game – and work on Vikings, especially making a Viking Longboat. To support work in history pupils have used computers for multi-media presentations and research.

Geography

49. Pupils in Year 2 have enjoyed work about the Isle of Struay, which the teacher has linked to the *Katie Morag* stories in literacy lessons. Through this work, pupils are developing an understanding of contrasting localities, and say geography helps them to find out about places they have not visited. They particularly enjoy finding out about the travels of Barnaby Bear, who occasionally sends back information to the class from different parts of the world. Pupils in Year 6 are developing an awareness of the features of rivers, and talk confidently about features, such as meanders and deltas. They have used ICT to support work in geography, particularly when they have searched the Internet for information, or created multi-media presentations.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy lessons that involve role-play and dressing up.
- The slow pace of learning and balance of time in lessons limit pupils' achievement.

Commentary

50. Pupils achieve standards broadly in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus throughout the school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils enjoy lessons that are planned to gain their interest, for instance in Years 2 and 3, when the teacher dressed in Sikh costumes to get into the role of a Sikh Guru who was flung into jail with 52 Hindu Princes. Pupils were fascinated by the teacher's dress and the content of the story. In Year 1 pupils enjoyed talking about occasions when they had shared a special meal. Good opportunities such as these are often not built upon because the pace of lessons is too slow and pupils do not always have sufficient time to complete the tasks that are set for them in lessons. This limits their achievement. Pupils' books show that they have recorded very little work over time. Nonetheless, pupils talk confidently about religious education work they have studied; for example, Year 6 pupils explain how they made cards for important celebrations in the major world faiths.
51. Pupils' religious education experiences are largely confined to the school because there are few opportunities for them to develop their understanding of major faiths through work beyond the school as there are no planned visits to places of worship, other than a Christian church; similarly, pupils' learning opportunities within school are limited because there are no visitors who come in to talk about their faiths, or lead worship, other than the local vicar. The work in pupils' books emphasises learning about religions, but less attention is given to the equally important aspect of what they can learn from religions. Improvement since the previous inspection is broadly satisfactory as the quality of teaching and standards are much the same as previously. However, there is still no assessment system and the role of the co-ordinator remains underdeveloped so that leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

52. Not enough lessons were seen in these subjects to make a secure judgement about the overall provision and the quality of teaching and learning, except in **music** in Years 3 to 6. No lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology, or physical education. There were examples of pupils' work to see in design and technology; in addition there were many samples of pupils' art and design work on display around the school. Pupils spoke about these subjects, so that standards can be judged. It was not possible to observe pupils' work in physical education so that there was not enough evidence to make a secure judgment about the standards they achieve. In all of the subjects there has not been enough improvement in the role of

the co-ordinator; this was a key issue at the last inspection and now needs to be addressed urgently.

Art and design

53. The work on display throughout the school, and the standards achieved in pupils' sketchbooks for art and design, indicate that standards are above those expected and that pupils achieve well. This is partly due to teachers' high expectations in art and design. Pupils in Year 2 have produced inspired pieces of work at the end of a series of lessons looking at the work of Vincent Van Gogh. In Year 6 pupils compose their landscape paintings well, making good use of colour and tone so that the finished result is very effective. Visitors who supported pupils during a dedicated art week further enhanced art. Pupils are extremely enthusiastic about the three-dimensional work they produced in groups during this week, and the eye-catching results are displayed around the school. When talking to pupils it is clear that they have little experience of studying work from world cultures, although Year 6 pupils remember looking at African paintings of trees. Nonetheless, the majority of work on display around the school and in pupils' books reflects Western European cultures well.

Design and technology

54. The limited amount of work available indicates that pupils are not achieving as well as they could in design and technology. Standards are lower than expected because pupils have too few opportunities to complete and record the process of designing and making objects. In Year 2, for example, pupils have drawn and coloured pictures of a wheeled vehicle, but these are not labelled to show the materials and joins that will be used to make the vehicle, or to show how the wheels will move. Throughout the school pupils' workbooks rarely include an evaluation of their work so that pupils are not learning how to improve their designs as they move through the school. The quality of work seen in Year 4 design and technology books is higher, but overall standards are below those expected. This is mainly because planning for design and technology has not been adapted from the national guidance to match the time allocation for the subject or the ability of the pupils. As there are no procedures for assessing pupils' design and technology skills the co-ordinator is unable to make an accurate judgement of pupils' achievements in the subject.

Music

Provision in music from Years 3 to 6 is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching assistants provide good support for learning.
- Talented pupils receive good individual support to improve their skills.
- There are no assessment procedures for music so that lessons are not designed to help pupils build on their skills.

Commentary

55. Two music lessons were seen in mixed age classes in Years 3 to 6, and pupils in these year groups spoke about their musical experiences. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory. There is no evidence to judge teaching and learning or the standards achieved in other year groups. However, pupils in Year 2 spoke enthusiastically about the work they do with a musically talented teaching assistant. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve satisfactory standards in line with those expected. In some mixed age classes teaching assistants lead music lessons, as the class is split for ICT and music. Resources are used well in these lessons to help pupils develop their skills, for example in reading and responding to simple notation. Some teachers lack confidence in teaching music, so that pupils work at levels that are below their capabilities, for example when they learn simple rhythms in Year 3 and Year 4. This is mainly due to the absence of any assessment in music, so that teachers are unaware of the capabilities and prior attainment of the pupils in their classes. Throughout the school a commercial scheme is used to plan lessons and this supports non-specialist teachers well. Special music tuition is provided for some pupils who are particularly talented in their musical ability, and this helps them achieve well.

Physical education

56. Teachers' planning shows that pupils have suitable opportunities to take part in physical education lessons in each of the aspects required in the National Curriculum. Pupils speak enthusiastically about physical education lessons, explaining that they have to work and try hard, for example when climbing ropes in gymnastics lessons. Swimming was not seen but is taught regularly from Year 2 through to Year 6, so that the majority of pupils achieve the expected 25-metre certificate. A number of older pupils exceed this standard, gaining certificates in life-saving. Many of the school clubs encourage pupils to take part in team games, and a particularly good aspect is the provision of organised games at lunchtimes. A teaching assistant leads these sessions, enthusiastically coaching pupils in skills such as those needed to succeed at hockey.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- School guidelines for personal, social and health education are comprehensive.
- Personal, social and health education does not have a high priority in the school's timetable.

Commentary

57. The headteacher has placed a high priority on developing pupils' personal, social and health education, and has used this successfully as a means to improve the behaviour of pupils in lessons and at lunchtimes. Regular awards to motivate pupils have been introduced such as the headteacher's award, which is given to one pupil in each class during assembly once a week. The comprehensive school guidelines provide a sound framework for teaching pupils all aspects of personal, social and health education throughout the school. There is a good focus in the policy on developing pupils' understanding of human relationships, and safety awareness such as the dangers associated with drugs. Pupils in Year 6 clearly value these opportunities; girls in particular spoke highly of the opportunity to visualise throwing away their troubles into the river. They were taken with the idea of imagining themselves walking along a golden path to do this. In Year 2, pupils were observed discussing what characteristics would make a good class monitor, and as a result they began to understand the responsibilities involved. However, opportunities such as this are not secured regularly for pupils throughout the school. This is because the timetabled allocation for the subject is too often used to complete work in other subjects. The co-ordinator for the subject has provided guidance to the staff but has not undertaken any checking of the impact of teaching and learning in personal, social and health education throughout the school. This is a result of ineffective management systems for checking the quality of education in the school. Consequently, even though this is a high priority, the lack of time actually given to the subject has not been identified as an area for development and there are no plans in place to ensure that pupils receive regular teaching of these key skills.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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