

INSPECTION REPORT

HOGSTHORPE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Skegness

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120452

Headteacher: Mrs A Barber

Lead inspector: Mr M Thompson

Dates of inspection: 11th – 13th October 2004

Inspection number: 267034

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	76
School address:	Thames Street Hogsthorpe Skegness Lincolnshire
Postcode:	PE24 5PT
Telephone number:	01754 872323
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Welsh
Date of previous inspection:	1 st October 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hogsthorpe Community Primary School is a small village school about seven miles north of Skegness. All of its pupils are of white heritage, and almost all of them are British. About one in seven of its pupils is from a stable population of traveller families. The school's catchment is identified by the local authority as an area with high levels of social deprivation, and the home circumstances of pupils are well below average overall. As a result of the seasonal nature of employment in the nearby seaside resorts, a high number of pupils move into and out of the school during the course of each year.

More than a quarter of the pupils have special educational needs, a proportion which is above the national average. The nature of pupils' special needs includes social and emotional, behavioural, speech and communication, and physical difficulties. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school at the start of the Reception year varies because of year-on-year fluctuations within the small groups admitted. Overall, it is well below average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25372	Mike Thompson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Special Educational Needs; English; Information and Communication Technology; Art and Design; Design and Technology; Music; Physical Education.
12682	Jim Griffin	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
31319	Dorothy Hunter	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage Curriculum; Mathematics; Science; Geography; History; Personal, Social and Health Education And Citizenship; Religious Education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hogsthorpe Primary School is an improving school, previously judged to be underachieving, but which now provides a **satisfactory standard of education** for its pupils. This improvement has been brought about by the dynamic leadership of the headteacher. However, she is not given enough support by the governing body. One of the school's strengths is its work with its higher-than-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and with pupils from traveller families. These groups of pupils make good progress because of the quality of help that is provided. The school ensures that, in unfavourable circumstances, and despite a high number of pupils arriving or leaving during the course of each year, its pupils make satisfactory progress overall and achieve satisfactorily over time. It provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are below average in English and science.
- The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school, but governance is poor.
- Pupils with SEN, who comprise more than a quarter of the number on roll, are given good quality help in lessons and achieve well.
- The school is very good at developing pupils' social skills. Pupils are well behaved and relate very well to one another.
- The skills of the subject leaders for English and science need to be improved.
- The curriculum in most of the non-core subjects¹ fails to ensure that pupils' skills are developed progressively as they move through the school.
- Information from the assessment of pupils is not generally used well enough to raise standards.
- All the members of staff know the pupils very well and take good care of them.
- Parents are not involved enough in their children's education.
- Effective links with other local schools benefit pupils and help improve the quality of education.

The school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection and is improving its performance in national tests. Despite changes in personnel, the quality of teaching reported at the time of its last inspection in October 2002 has been sustained. Overall, the key issues for improvement from 2002 have been satisfactorily addressed. However, assessment systems and the curriculum in some of the non-core subjects need to be improved further. Attendance is much better than it was.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Owing to the small size of the school, few pupils are tested each year. The grades reported, therefore, need to be treated with some caution since variations in the performance of just one or two pupils can disproportionately affect the overall grading. In 2004, for example, the results for Year 6 relate to the performance of just 9 pupils. Nonetheless, the impact made by the headteacher in raising standards can be seen in the improvements made from 2003, when the school's performance was in the lowest five per cent nationally in mathematics and science.

¹ The non-core subjects are subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

From a low starting point, **pupils achieve satisfactorily overall**. In all year groups, pupils with SEN achieve well because they have clear targets for improvement and receive good quality help. All other pupils, including the higher-attainers, are satisfactorily challenged and make sound progress. Inspection findings show that, by the end of the Reception Year, standards are average in relation to the goals expected for the early stages of children's personal and social development and reflect the high priority placed on this area of learning by the school. However, standards in all other areas of children's learning, including their development in language and mathematics, are below average. Standards of work in Years 2 and 6 are average in mathematics and personal, social and health education, but below average in English and science. In religious education, standards are average in Year 2, but below average in Year 6. No judgements about standards could be made in other subjects. Overall, pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good**. Their attitudes towards learning and their behaviour are good. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Teaching is satisfactory in all year groups. Teachers are good at ensuring that all pupils are included in lessons; they manage pupils' behaviour well, and make good use of the skilled teaching assistants who work alongside them in class. As a result, pupils' learning is satisfactory. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall, because the marking of pupils' work in English is weak and, in science, information from periodic assessments is not used well enough to help pupils improve. In the non-core subjects, teachers do not have clear enough guidance about precisely what they are to assess because of weaknesses in the curriculum in these subjects. Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory. It has the required breadth and balance, and is enriched by a good range of additional activities. However, in many non-core subjects planning focuses on the activities to be taught rather than the skills to be developed, and so teachers do not always know precisely what their expectations should be for the different year groups within the mixed-age classes. The school provides well for the care, welfare and safety of its pupils. Relationships with parents are satisfactory, but the school has to work hard to try to overcome parents' lack of support for their children's education. Links with the community are satisfactory, and the school's partnership with local schools is good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the **leadership and management of the school are satisfactory**. The leadership provided by the headteacher is good, but key staff do not monitor the provision in their areas of responsibility rigorously enough. The governing body is supportive, but is over-reliant on the headteacher and does not contribute enough in providing strategic direction for the school. However, all legal requirements are properly met, with the exception of minor omissions in the information provided for parents in the school prospectus.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Few parents contributed to the pre-inspection surveys of their opinion, but the views of those who did were generally positive. Pupils' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards, particularly in English and science, by making better use of information from the assessment of pupils and ensuring that subject co-ordinators develop a clearer view of how to raise attainment;
- improve the quality of governance and involve governors and parents more in the life of the school;
- ensure that the curriculum in the non-core subjects provides a clear framework for the step-by-step development of pupils' skills from Year 1 to Year 6.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of pupils is satisfactory. Boys and girls generally achieve equally well, and pupils with SEN achieve well in all age groups. Taken as a whole, standards in Reception are below average in relation to the goals expected of children of this age. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are average in mathematics but below average in English and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Since the previous inspection, standards in Year 6 have risen in mathematics.
- From a low starting point, children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in developing personal and social skills.
- The vocabulary and general knowledge of a significant number of pupils are limited. They do not express themselves well enough when speaking or in their written work, and often read without fully understanding the text.
- The good achievement of pupils with SEN is due to good leadership, detailed assessment of these pupils' needs, and the good quality help provided by teaching assistants.

Commentary

1. No great reliance can be placed on the national test data as an indicator of the school's effectiveness. The number of pupils taking the tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 fluctuates considerably from year to year, and is often very small. For example, in 2004, only five pupils from Year 2 and nine from Year 6 were tested. Therefore, conclusions drawn from the results achieved in a single year may be unreliable because the performance of a single pupil can have a disproportionate effect of the school's overall performance. An alternative approach of looking at trends in the school's performance over the past few years is similarly unreliable because of the high numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school during the course of each year. For these reasons, the test data normally included in this section of the report have been omitted.

2. On entry to the Reception Year, children generally have low levels of basic literacy and numeracy, and under-developed social skills. Their satisfactory progress is underpinned by the high priority placed on social development, but children's general level of performance is affected by their restricted vocabulary and limited experiences outside school.

3. Following an inspection in October 2002, in which the school was judged to be underachieving, a number of improvements needed to be made in the curriculum and the assessment of pupils in order to address this weakness. A subsequent check on the school's progress in October 2003 acknowledged that reasonable gains had been made in raising pupils' attainment. Inspection judgements confirm this.

4. The school's recent success in addressing underachievement and improving attainment in Years 1 to 6 in English and mathematics has been due largely to the headteacher's strong focus on raising the expectations of staff, particularly in respect of the higher-attaining pupils. The impact of this focus was seen in the improved performance of these pupils in the 2004 national tests for Year 6 when, for the first time in a number of years, some pupils exceeded the nationally expected levels

for their age. Currently, the school has begun to implement an initiative designed to improve pupils' listening skills. However, some of underlying factors which adversely affect pupils' performance remain. These include:

- * the lack of consistent modelling of the correct use of language by teachers and teaching assistants;
- * the need for greater focus on developing pupils' skills in mathematical investigations;
- * the need to provide better opportunities for pupils to apply the skills learned in English and mathematics throughout the curriculum.

5. Improvements required in assessment and subject leadership, identified during the course of this inspection and which are likely to help raise attainment, have already been identified by the school as the next stage in its development.

6. In 2004, the school's targets for pupils' performance in Year 6 were exceeded in mathematics, but were not met in English. While to some extent these outcomes reflect the impact of the performance of a single pupil, they also give pointers towards the effectiveness of subject leadership. Weaknesses in subject leadership, and also in assessment, contribute to pupils' below average attainment in English and science. This occurs because the subject co-ordinators are not yet skilled enough in using information from assessment to inform their strategic planning and do not monitor the quality of teaching and learning rigorously. Consequently, they do not have a clear enough picture of the weaknesses that need to be remedied. In contrast, the good leadership in mathematics has brought about significant improvements in teaching and learning, which have raised standards. Similarly, good leadership of the school's provision for SEN has resulted in good achievement because good assessment means that these pupils' precise needs are well known, and are effectively met in lessons.

7. The good ratio of adults to pupils throughout the school enables regular, intensive help to be given to individual pupils and small groups of pupils with SEN, including those from traveller backgrounds. The effective help provided by the school's teaching assistants is a significant factor in the good achievement of these lower-attaining pupils. This valuable support helps pupils overcome difficulties in learning that stem from lack of life experience, limited general knowledge and, in many cases, lack of support at home. For instance, a number of the pupils who were heard reading had limited understanding of parts of their books, even though the text was at an appropriate level in terms of its technical difficulty. The advantageous adult to pupil ratio also helps the school to cope with the high turnover of pupils and to provide the quality of care needed to help newcomers to settle in quickly and fulfil their potential.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are good and they behave well. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is satisfactory, and pupils' punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's measures to promote positive attitudes, behaviour, and attendance, are effective.
- Pupils' attitudes towards school are very good, whilst their attitudes to work in lessons are good.
- Pupils are well behaved, and relationships among pupils and with adults are very good.
- The way in which the school promotes pupils' personal development has improved since the last inspection. Pupils' social development is very good, and their spiritual and moral development is good.

Commentary

8. Most pupils like their school and enjoy attending. They express positive views about the way teachers help and encourage them to learn and particularly appreciate the friendship of other pupils and the 'fun' activities on Friday afternoons. Pupils enjoy most of their lessons and the positive atmosphere during playtimes and at lunchtime. In class, pupils listen well and show good levels of interest, concentration and determination to complete the tasks set for them. Pupils respond particularly well when teachers' expectations are high, lesson tasks are demanding and they are able to engage in a variety of practical activities.

9. Behaviour in classrooms, during lunchtime and playtimes is good. Staff set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and most pupils are keen not to let down their teachers or themselves. The good and reliable behaviour of nearly all pupils is a key element in the positive atmosphere for learning and social development that prevails. Parents and pupils confirm that there is no racism within the school. There is some bullying, mostly comprising verbal teasing among a small number of pupils. Pupils know that such incidents, once reported, are thoroughly and fairly investigated. The school places a strong emphasis on prevention of all forms of anti-social behaviour, primarily through frequent recognition of pupils' good behaviour and attitudes. As usual, there were no exclusions during the past school year.

10. Harmonious relationships among pupils, irrespective of their background or gender, are a noteworthy feature of the school. Teachers generally appreciate pupils' efforts and effectively praise good achievement. However, the samples of worksheets provided from Years 1 and 2 for scrutiny by inspectors were poorly presented and appeared to place little value on pupils' work. Throughout the school pupils feel comfortable in asking teachers for help, and this helps them to learn.

11. Most children in the Reception Year are on course to achieve the goals expected in relation to their personal, social and emotional development, and a significant majority of pupils in all classes are calm, happy and consistently well mannered. As a result, teachers are able to rely on pupils to work sensibly in pairs and small groups. The school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons, including the use of 'circle time',² when pupils share their feelings and concerns, are an important factor in pupils' very good social development. Nearly all pupils show good levels of respect and care for others. For example, they hold doors open for adults and are kind to classmates who are feeling unwell or left out. Older pupils exercise responsibility for themselves and others in a sensible way. For instance, the Year 6 prefects effectively pick up playground issues, resolve minor disputes and befriend pupils who are feeling left out. When questioned in groups, pupils listen calmly and with respect to different views expressed by others. Nearly all pupils have a very well-developed sense of right and wrong and of what is fair. They hold the school's rewards system in high regard and fully support the school's sanctions, where needed.

12. Pupils' good opportunities for reflection in assemblies and the closing part of lessons make important contributions to their good spiritual development. The use of target setting and pupils' views through 'brainstorming' in lessons also contribute. Pupils' cultural development, including their understanding of their own culture is satisfactory. Older pupils say that they learn about respect for differences of all kinds as part of their PSHE and citizenship. This is an important part of pupils' preparation for life in a multicultural world. Whilst religious education and history lessons make satisfactory contributions to pupils' multi-cultural development, there is a lack of structured opportunities to develop pupils' skills in the appreciation of music and art.

² Circle Time is an activity in which pupils, seated in a circle, take turns to speak while others listen to what they have to say.

Attendance

13. For a number of years attendance has been consistently well below the national average. The table below provides data for the latest complete reporting year for which there are national comparisons available, and in which attendance was well below the national average.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (93.1%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.6	School data:	1.3
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year (2002/03).

14. However, data provided by the school, which relate to the 2003-4 academic year, show that the strong focus placed on monitoring absence and promoting high levels of attendance has had an impact. The attendance level has improved significantly and, at over 95 per cent, was above previous national averages. Sensitive 'first day absent' contact with parents has contributed to this improved attendance. As a result, parents now clearly understand that their children need to attend regularly and most now contact the school, in the event of absence. As a result, unauthorised absence rates have significantly reduced and are close to the national median. Nearly all pupils arrive routinely on time for school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The school provides good quality care for its pupils, but needs to improve the quality of teachers' assessments of their pupils' work.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Assessment is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers ensure that all their pupils take a full part in lessons; they are generally good at encouraging their pupils, and making their lessons interesting.
- Systems for assessing pupils' work need to be improved.
- Skilled teaching assistants provide good quality help for pupils in lessons.
- Teachers manage their pupils well and have high expectations of their behaviour.

Commentary

15. The school satisfactorily meets the needs of pupils through its teaching, which is similar in quality to that seen at the time of the previous inspection. Seven in every ten lessons seen during the inspection were good or better. However, evidence from a wide range of sources, including a detailed scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work, indicates that teaching is generally satisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 20 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	1	13	5	1	0	0

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

16. The quality of teaching provided for children in the Reception Year is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The small number of children in this year group benefit from the good amount of individual attention which can be given to them. For example, discussions during the course of activities help to improve their understanding and vocabulary. Particularly important is the good teaching provided in the important area of children's personal, social and emotional development, and this helps children to learn how to work with one another and take turns. The teacher and teaching assistant work very well together and satisfactorily assess the progress of children in order to guide their next steps in learning.

17. Throughout the school, teachers are generally good at including all pupils in lessons. They do this through clear and interesting explanations, and by targeting individual pupils with questions to keep them alert. However, teachers often miss opportunities to improve the grammatical content of pupils' answers during these dialogues. From time to time, teachers fail to make their learning objectives clear enough, and on these occasions the support provided for lower-attaining pupils by teaching assistants becomes crucial. Teachers manage their pupils well and relate very well to them. As a result, pupils behave well during lessons and have good attitudes towards their work. The good atmosphere for learning created enables teachers to work with individuals or groups without undue disturbance, while the pupils get on with their work. Pupils respond well to their teachers' high expectations of behaviour. For example, when teachers need to call pupils to attention to make a teaching point during the course of an activity, pupils react quickly and give the teacher their full attention.

18. The good quality help provided by teaching assistants is an important factor in the successful teaching and learning of pupils from traveller families and others identified as having SEN. Their support is essential in ensuring that these pupils cope in lessons in which whole-class teaching is pitched at a much higher level. In all lessons observed when a teaching assistant was present, the pupils working with them maintained concentration and learned successfully in whole-class, small-group and individual tasks. Teaching assistants know pupils well, are well aware of their own roles in the classroom, and help lessons to run smoothly. Pupils with SEN are very well taught when withdrawn from class for focused support by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO).

19. Learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils enjoy their learning; they are confident to ask questions and contribute to what is going on, and are keen to talk about what they are doing. Although pupils work well in lessons, a scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work shows that they are not always challenged sufficiently in the non-core subjects because of weaknesses in the curriculum.

20. Teaching in English is satisfactory overall and, within these lessons, the teaching of skills in literacy is of an acceptable standard. The teaching of skills in numeracy is generally good. Teaching is not making enough of an impact on standards in the core subjects of English, and science because of weaknesses in assessment in each of these subjects. In contrast to mathematics, where the marking of pupils' work is good and gives pupils clear information about how to improve, marking in English is generally weak. In science, information from assessment is not used well enough to check on pupils' progress. Assessment in the non-core subjects is satisfactory in that the requirement for teachers to make an annual 'best fit' judgement about pupils' attainment is met. However, assessment in some of these subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, focuses too much on coverage of topics rather than on how well pupils acquire skills. The weaknesses in assessment in the non-core subjects, which stem from weaknesses in the curriculum, make it difficult for teachers to provide different levels of challenge for pupils of different ages and abilities within their mixed-age classes. A scrutiny of pupils' work showed that this is generally the case.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school is well staffed and, on the whole, has adequate resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good range of activities to enrich the curriculum helps stimulate pupils' interest in learning.
- Curricular planning does not help pupils to improve their skills in literacy and numeracy through work in other subjects.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good.
- The curriculum in many of the non-core subjects needs to be improved.

Commentary

20. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to learn and, as a result, they make satisfactory progress. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education meet statutory requirements, and sex and relationships education is taught to older pupils by the teacher and the school nurse. Personal and social education is an important feature of the school, and 'circle time' is used to explore feelings and attitudes, reinforcing the school's values and beliefs about individual rights and responsibilities.

21. Since the last inspection, satisfactory progress has been made in implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy throughout the school. However, planning does not always set out the way in which the skills learned in these subjects are to be developed across the rest of the curriculum. An exception is an initiative designed to promote of pupils' listening skills as an integral part of work in other subjects. This plan had just been put into practice at the time of the inspection, and no judgement could be made about its impact. In Years 1 and 2, an over-reliance on worksheets inhibits the development of pupils' skills in thinking and writing.

22. Coverage of work in the non-core subjects follows national guidelines, and teachers draw on these as the basis for their lesson-planning. There has been no real progress in the development of the non-core curriculum since the last inspection, because the school has rightly needed to focus on raising standards in English and mathematics. Overall, planning follows an agreed two-year rolling programme so that pupils do not repeat or miss specific topics. However, this framework is largely based on activities and does not ensure that the necessary skills are taught systematically. The school has not yet mapped out the way in which pupils' skills are to be developed in a step-by-step way from year to year within a number of the non-core subjects. This leads to inconsistent assessment of pupils' progress in these subjects, because teachers do not have clear enough guidance from the curriculum as to precisely what to expect from their pupils.

23. The curriculum is enriched through a good range of activities designed to stimulate pupils' interest. Visits within the locality, linked to the curriculum, have included dance, drama, and art and design activities with other local schools as part of an initiative designed to extend pupils' aesthetic experiences. In addition there is a wide range of visitors to school, such as residents who have talked about village life in the past. Visits from theatre groups and musicians also contribute to pupils' satisfactory cultural development.

24. After-school and lunchtime activities are well supported by pupils. Throughout the year, depending upon the season, there are clubs for drama, art, chess, football, racquets, choir and recorder. There are good opportunities for pupils to be involved in competitive sport in mini rugby and rounders tournaments, athletics events, and football and cricket matches, as part of the East Coast Sports Association. These activities not only enhance pupils' learning but also help to increase the pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

25. The school's ethos and values promote equality of opportunity for all its pupils, and ensure that overall they are fully included in all aspects of school life. The curriculum for pupils with SEN is good. Procedures for the early identification of pupils' needs are sound and effective. Individual education plans for these pupils are clear and detailed. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to help address pupils' specific needs.

26. The accommodation is satisfactory. The premises are welcoming and generally well maintained, and staff make good use of the space available. Reception children have a secure outdoor area, but this needs to be significantly improved to provide a more stimulating environment for learning. Resources for delivering the curriculum are satisfactory overall. They are good in ICT, but shortcomings in the range of indoor apparatus for physical education restrict the range of activities available for pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares well for its pupils. Overall, pupils are given satisfactory support, advice and guidance. There are good measures to involve pupils in the school's work and development, through seeking and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel safe and secure at school.
- The school regards the views of pupils as important to its work.

Commentary

27. Levels of minor accidents are very low because first aid and health and safety arrangements are clear and effective. Good arrangements are in place for child protection. The few parents who took part in the pre-inspection consultations with inspectors are rightly positive about the good care provided for all pupils. Pupils confirm that they feel safe and secure throughout the school day.

28. Good induction arrangements support the significant number of pupils who are admitted during the course of each term. The arrangements for admitting children into Reception are satisfactory. Adults in the school know all pupils well and, where there are concerns, teachers and other staff work closely with pupils, parents and outside agencies to identify the issues which need to be addressed. As a result, nearly all pupils have a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults, as the inspection survey of pupils' opinions confirms. Good attitudes, work and achievements, both within and outside school, are very effectively recognised at weekly 'celebration' assemblies. Older pupils respond well to teachers' expectations that they behave in an increasingly mature way as they move through school. The headteacher has ensured that staff and pupils now have higher expectations of what can be achieved academically. However, she recognises that work needs to be done to refine the process of setting pupils' targets for improvement. These targets, which relate primarily to pupils' academic progress, are satisfactorily underpinned by regular assessment and tracking of their achievements in English and mathematics.

29. The very good relationships between pupils and staff create a positive atmosphere in which pupils' views are voiced. For example, pupils in all year groups discuss their class rules at the start of the school year and readily share their feelings and concerns with staff as part of their personal, social and health education lessons. The new school council, comprising two pupils elected from each year group from 2 to 6, is having a positive impact. For instance, pupils now have access to drinking water during lessons as a result of the council's discussions. Pupils not directly involved in the council's work speak positively about its influence. Not surprisingly, the great majority of pupils agree with the survey statement that school listens to their ideas.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and the local community are satisfactory overall. The school's partnership with other local schools and colleges is good and makes an effective contribution to the development of staff and pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality information is provided for parents, and individual concerns are handled well.
- Apathy towards school and their children's learning, among the majority of parents, is an important barrier to raising achievement.
- The work of the Coastal Partnership of schools is having a very positive impact on staff and pupils.

Commentary

30. Under the headteacher's good leadership, the school is now working hard to improve its links with parents. Individual parental concerns are dealt with promptly, thoroughly and fairly. As a result, the level of these concerns, primarily about homework levels and instances of teasing among pupils, has declined markedly.

31. The school works hard to keep parents informed about their children's progress and, more recently, about the activities planned in each class. However, some parents are not involved enough in their children's learning. For example, there are low levels of attendance at parents' evenings, and many parents do not take up the opportunity provided for them to comment on their children's annual reports. Meetings to review the progress of pupils with special educational needs are not well attended. An invitation for parents to 'drop-in' to an arts week during the summer term brought no response. Invitations to join a 'SHARE' group for parents to help support their children's learning and to find out more about what goes on in lessons drew a positive response from around ten parents. Early indications are that three wish to continue. The parent-teacher and friends association is no longer active and few adults help voluntarily in classes. Parents' response to the pre-inspection survey of opinion and the pre-inspection meeting was very low. Nonetheless, more parents are now sending their children to school regularly and contact the school in the event of absence. The school has not surveyed or otherwise sought parents' views on a range of whole-school issues. It rightly considers that further work on engaging most of its parents is needed in order to produce a significant response to such an exercise.

32. Pupils benefit from the planned use of the adjacent village hall and playing field for physical education lessons and games. The church is used for celebrations, such as Harvest Festival and Christmas events, to which parents are invited. Public services, such as the police and fire services, enrich the curriculum with contributions on personal safety and healthy living. A local minister takes assemblies, and a football coach takes after-school sessions on a regular basis. Pupils take part in a range of collections and sponsored events for charity. However, there is no community use of the school's facilities, such as the new computer suite. In practice, the number of class visits to places of educational interest is reduced by considerations such as transport costs. The school finds it difficult to recruit governors from the wider community.

33. The Coastal Partnership of 12 primary schools and local secondary schools, formed nearly two years ago, is of significant benefit to this small school. As a direct result, staff are taking part in a 'teaching for learning' course, and arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the local secondary school are well developed and consistent. For example, all the primary schools provide the same categories of information about pupils and ensure that 'bridging units' in numeracy are completed by pupils prior to transfer. More widely, the dialogue between staff from the different primary schools helps ensure that good practice is shared and common problems are discussed. The school accommodates student teachers for part of their teaching practice and provides work-experience places for pupils from a number of secondary schools. Links with nurseries and other pre-school providers are, however, limited.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher's leadership is good. Taken as a whole, the leadership provided by key members of staff is satisfactory because of the headteacher's involvement, as is the management of the school. Governance is poor.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's good leadership has brought about key improvements needed to help raise attainment.
- Governors are not rigorous enough in their monitoring of the school's work and are not involved enough in shaping the direction of the school.
- The leadership and management skills of the subject co-ordinators for English and science need to be improved.

Commentary

34. The headteacher has shown vision and determination in successfully addressing the underachievement reported at the time of the previous inspection and establishing a platform for the school's future progress. She is a very good role model for staff and has been the driving force behind the improvements made, despite lack of effective support from the governing body. Following her appointment in September 2003, she produced a sensible plan of action to raise achievement and standards. However, owing to instability in staffing during the past school year, there has been insufficient time for all elements of this plan to be fully implemented. The headteacher knows the pupils and their families very well, and is always available to parents. She has created a good staff team in which all members work well together for the benefit of the pupils. The staff team's clear commitment to the promotion of pupils' personal and social skills and the inclusion of all pupils contributes strongly to the school's good ethos. Through her careful monitoring, the headteacher has a very good understanding of the strengths to be shared and weaknesses that need to be addressed.

35. The headteacher is also the SENCO, and provides capable leadership and management in this area of the school's provision. Her good leadership and management in mathematics have been important factors in the significant improvement in standards in this subject over the past year. However, there are weaknesses yet to be addressed in the other core subjects. Owing to staff absence, the satisfactory leadership in English is to some extent due to the overall direction provided by the headteacher. In both English and science, the subject co-ordinators need to improve their skills in monitoring and evaluating provision to improve the quality of their subject leadership. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall.

36. Governance is poor because the governing body does not do enough to hold the school to account and does not have enough effect on the school's development. In general, governors rely too heavily on the headteacher. Minutes of meetings show that some governors do not attend regularly. On one occasion, attendance was so low that a meeting was inquorate and therefore no business could be conducted. Although governors know the challenges facing the school in terms of its context, most do not monitor the work of the school well enough. For example, the only written reports of formal, first-hand monitoring of provision during the past year have been submitted by staff who are also members of the governing body. Ongoing spending is adequately monitored by a committee which oversees matters concerning finance and personnel, but there are no other active committees. Nonetheless, legal requirements are properly met.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income*	237,460.00
Total expenditure	221,310.00
Expenditure per pupil	3,074.00

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	20,286.00
Balance carried forward to the next	16,149.00

**NB: the total income figure includes the balance from the previous year.*

37. The information above shows that the amount of funding brought forward into the 2003-4 financial year was in excess of the national 'benchmark' of five per cent. Although the size of the surplus has declined, the amount which has been carried forward into the current year is also too high.

38. The day-to-day administration of the school is efficient. It ensures that teachers are able to focus on their professional duties and are not diverted from their work by administrative tasks. The secretary deals competently with queries, and contributes strongly to the smooth running of the school.

39. Even though standards overall are below average, pupils make satisfactory progress from a low starting point and are now doing as well as could reasonably be expected. Although unit costs are higher than average, they are not untypical of small schools and therefore the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

39. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. This is a similar situation to that reported at the time of the last inspection. From the time they enter the Reception Year, children are prepared well for transfer into Year 1. They begin school in the year in which they reach the age of five, and attend full time. Attainment on entry varies from year to year, but is well below average overall when viewed over a number of years. A wide range of evidence indicates that the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, although good teaching was a feature of lessons seen during the inspection. Children learned well in these lessons because there was challenge and high expectation in most, with activities clearly differentiated to match the needs of individuals. The curriculum is satisfactorily based on the six recommended areas of learning. However, planning is sometimes separated out and does not always naturally link areas together to provide inter-woven learning activities for children. Too often there is a lack of balance between activities directed by the teacher and those initiated by the children, and so valuable opportunities for children to develop independence in their learning are missed.

40. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage works very closely with the teaching assistant, and both provide excellent role models for the children. During the inspection the teaching assistant did most of the teaching seen. The monitoring of children's progress is satisfactory, and more detailed recording of assessment across all areas of learning is being developed. The area for outdoor learning needs to be improved as it does little to enhance the quality of children's imaginative play.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of the high expectations of staff.
- Children develop well socially, but are not given enough opportunities to develop their independence in learning.
- Supportive relationships are being established so that the children's self esteem is raised and they feel confident and happy.

Commentary

41. This area of learning is generally taught well. Attainment is broadly average, and by the end of the Reception Year the majority of children are likely to reach the nationally expected standards. Most children are able to conform to the high expectations of the staff, and the very good role models provided by adults help children to learn what is expected of them. They understand the need for good manners, saying 'please' and 'thank-you', and will remind each other so that they are all partners in developing courtesy and respect. Class routines are clearly established. Children know these, behave sensibly and settle to tasks quickly, so that the atmosphere created is calm and purposeful. Children are interested and eager in their learning; many are able to stay on task for long periods of time and are motivated to succeed even when not directly supervised.

42. The adults constantly encourage children and praise their efforts so that all can feel successful. They intervene when necessary with good questioning to extend learning, and they encourage the children to take a pride in their work. There is consistency in routines so that children know, for example, that they need to put up their hands when ready to answer questions, have to take turns, and must listen to others. This was clearly seen during a 'circle time' session, when they

waited their turn to talk and were able to respond to others' comments. There are very supportive relationships so that all the children feel secure and are confident in seeking help when required. However, adults direct activities too much and opportunities to promote pupils' independence in learning, for instance through making choices, are missed.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff take every opportunity to develop children's speaking and listening skills.
- Links between home and school are too weak to promote children's learning.

Commentary

43. Teaching in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory. Although children achieve satisfactorily, attainment is below average because too few children are on course to reach the nationally expected standards in this area by the time they enter Year 1. The attention given to constant questioning, explanation, and activities designed to widen children's vocabulary is a strong feature of teachers' planning. Adults continually talk to children, and the provision of imaginative activities helps children to think and to choose appropriate language to describe what they are doing. Overall, children listen well. However, many find it difficult to express themselves clearly and often answer with single-word responses. This limits the quality of small group or independent activities such as role-play.

44. Books are readily available in class, and the children understand how to use and enjoy them. They listen avidly and are drawn into the imaginative world described, when teachers read to them. However, only reading books are taken home and these are not always shared with the adults there. The culture of reading is not strong and staff do not actively promote this by encouraging the use of the school or class library, or by constantly reminding parents about how they could help their children.

45. There is good emphasis on the teaching of initial letter sounds, and children are beginning to recognise these by learning through rhymes, and sound and picture games. Constant practice with adults helps children to correctly match sounds to letters. Children have satisfactory opportunities to write and colour. Staff ensure that pencils and crayons are held properly and that children form letters correctly. However, without direct supervision, children cannot be relied on to remember the strategies taught.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff plan a wide range of activities to promote children's mathematical development.

Commentary

46. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning. Although children achieve satisfactorily, standards are below average and reflect the low starting point of many children. Staff plan a good range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. For instance, children sing rhymes to help them count, and teachers use these to extend and develop children's understanding.

Children have regular opportunities to write numbers, and the higher-attainers are beginning to match objects to numbers correctly and can recognise and count numbers to 10 and beyond. Adults question children well and constantly use a variety of mathematical words relating to concepts such as place (*above, below, under, over, beside*), quantity (*one more than, one less than*), or time (*tomorrow, yesterday*) in many incidental ways to help develop vocabulary. Most pupils know the names of common colours, recognise shapes such as square, triangle and rectangle, and are beginning to develop an understanding of the properties of these shapes. The children have access to a 'problem-solving wall' in the classroom, and this encourages them to investigate numbers and sometimes consider the challenges set for older pupils who share the same classroom.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching extends children's learning.
- There is a wide range of activities available for children.
- Teachers question the children well to help develop their own self-awareness.

Commentary

47. Teaching is good and extends children's knowledge and understanding well so that they achieve well and make good progress from a very low starting point. This reflects children's general lack of life experience on entry to the Reception Year. Despite this good progress, standards are below average, and most children are unlikely to reach the levels expected of them by the time they move to Year 1. Staff stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding, for instance by using the school garden to discover and identify living and non-living things. When making bread, children are aware of the changes that occur as the ingredients react but do not have the language to describe what they feel and see. They are satisfactorily encouraged to develop self-awareness by using their senses to smell, touch and look closely at plants in the wild garden. Sensitive questioning by adults helps them as they attempt to express their feelings. Children are developing an awareness of festivals, such as harvest, and listen to Bible stories. They find out more about their families, learn about themselves as babies, and begin to understand how they change as they grow. Children have the opportunity to use a computer in the classrooms, and have regular group-learning sessions in the computer suite.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Physical activity is used to extend learning in other areas.
- The area for outdoor learning is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

48. Teaching is satisfactory. Children enjoy physical activities both indoors and out, but are unlikely to attain the expected standards despite satisfactory achievement. They have access to an outdoor learning area, but this space does little to provide interest and stimulus for their learning. The resources available within this area are barely satisfactory.

49. In physical education lessons, children pay good attention and are responsive to the teacher's expectations. They are able to balance, and are able to move and change direction with reasonable control. They explore different movements and act out stories such as the Three Billy Goat's Gruff, while taking notice of the positional vocabulary being reinforced from a previous mathematical activity. They have good understanding of health and safety matters and have been trained well in setting out and putting away equipment such as mats and cones. The children have good opportunities to develop fine motor skills through a variety of activities in the classroom. They confidently use scissors, thread beads, build with construction toys, and handle paint brushes, crayons and modelling material.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning gives many opportunities for children to develop their creativity in a variety of situations.
- Children are encouraged to express and communicate their ideas.

Commentary

50. Teaching is satisfactory in this area of learning. The activities planned allow for children to achieve satisfactorily as they develop their language and imagination. Nonetheless, standards are below average overall since only a few are on course to reach the expected goals in this area. Role-play is encouraged so that children can develop their imagination. For example, they can become builders, doctors, nurses or take washing to the laundrette. They use puppets to act out stories, such as The Little Red Hen, and this helps them develop their language skills. Children have regular opportunities to paint and to use crayons, as well as cutting and glueing to make models. They enjoy singing, which is often a feature of a range of activities not necessarily directly connected with music lessons, and are beginning to be aware of pitch and rhythm.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening and writing are below average in Years 2 and 6. Standards in reading are broadly average in Year 2, but below average in Year 6.
- The marking of pupils' work is weak.
- Provision is not monitored well enough.

Commentary

51. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily. The school has made satisfactory progress during the two years since its last inspection, but some of the areas for improvement identified in the previous report, particularly those related to the marking of pupils' work, still need to be addressed. As a result of the headteacher's drive for improvement, standards are beginning to rise in Year 6.

52. Achievement in speaking and listening is unsatisfactory. Pupils generally speak clearly in formal situations, such as when talking to visitors. However, adults working with the pupils do not generally place enough emphasis on the quality of pupils' speech, and are sometimes content to accept single-word answers or responses that are not properly constructed. In many cases, pupils are not encouraged to develop their answers. Teachers do not always encourage pupils to speak with clear diction and pronunciation, and to use the grammatical structures of Standard English. The under-development of speaking skills makes it harder to raise standards in pupils' written work. Pupils' listening skills also need to be improved. While pupils understand the 'rules of audience', they sometimes fail to listen carefully to what their classmates or their teachers have to say. The school recognises that pupils' skills in speaking and listening need to be improved and has begun to implement a clear plan of action to address some of the weaknesses above.

53. Achievement in reading is satisfactory. By Year 6, most pupils have achieved technical competence in the skills of reading, but in all year groups there are pupils who do not fully understand what they are reading because their range of vocabulary and levels of general knowledge are well below average. Younger and lower-attaining older pupils use their knowledge of initial letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words, but few regularly use other cues such as illustrations or the context of the passage as an aid. Only the higher-attaining pupils can read simple stories with expression, competently retell the plot, and predict what will happen next. Pupils' skills in using books for reference are satisfactory. Pupils in Year 6 know about the classification system for non-fiction books, and confidently use the contents and index pages to help them locate information. The progress made by a significant number of pupils appears to be solely due to the school's efforts, since pupils from all year groups commented that they do little or no reading at home.

54. Achievement in writing is satisfactory overall. However, standards are below average because:

- * older pupils do not consistently apply previously learned skills when producing independent writing;
- * teachers' marking is not used as a tool for improvement in Years 3 to 6;
- * weaknesses in the curriculum have not been identified by the subject co-ordinator.

55. Good features of provision in English are the regular teaching of handwriting skills, and the curricular structure based on the national strategy for literacy. However, correct letter formation learned in handwriting sessions and conventions of grammar and punctuation taught in literacy lessons, particularly in Years 3 to 6, are not always evident in written work produced in other contexts. In Year 6, pupils' work lacks the more complex sentence structure and adventurous choice of vocabulary normally expected of pupils of this age. In Years 3 to 6, teachers' marking of pupils' written work is weak. Incorrect answers are sometimes accepted and written comments do not generally provide pupils with enough information about precisely what they need to do to improve. Where helpful comments are made they are not followed up, and the same mistakes are sometimes repeated in later work.

56. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan their lessons satisfactorily, but their learning objectives are not always expressed clearly enough and later re-visited so that progress can be assessed. Good use is made of skilled teaching assistants to help pupils with SEN. For example teaching assistants successfully help to develop pupils' reading skills, oversee the use of computer software designed to improve spelling and knowledge of basic grammar, and implement national strategies to help these pupils to catch up. This good quality support is a particular feature of lessons in the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6. As a result, pupils with SEN achieve well.

57. The leadership of English is satisfactory. This is partly due to the overall drive and direction provided by the headteacher and the support provided for the co-ordinator by the local education authority, which has resulted in a reasonable plan of action for development in the subject. However, the management of English is unsatisfactory because of weaknesses in the monitoring of

provision and the lack of rigorous enough analysis of performance data. For example, a newly appointed teacher's implementation of the curriculum plan for Years 5 and 6 has not been monitored closely enough and the resulting lack of tasks to reflect the differences in ages and attainment of pupils had not been identified.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily in terms of the delivery of lessons. However, opportunities to develop pupils' skills in literacy through the non-core subjects are not given a high enough profile.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvements in teaching and leadership have resulted in better standards and good achievement.
- Teaching is good. Teachers provide achievable challenges for pupils of different ages and levels of attainment within the mixed-age classes.
- Good leadership of the subject ensures a clear focus on developing pupils' skills in numeracy.
- Investigative learning is weak in all classes.

Commentary

59. In Years 2 and 6, standards are in line with national expectations and pupils achieve well. Teaching and learning are good. Staff are very aware that within their classes there is an extremely wide range of ability and they work diligently to meet the needs of all pupils. Groupings of pupils are flexible so teachers can work with older or younger ones according to their ability, and consequently the needs of the most talented are properly met. Marking is good and helps pupils understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. Assessment activities follow those of the national strategy and are used well to inform future activity.

60. In Years 1 and 2, pupils investigate numbers and shapes with little formal recording so that by Year 2 they can, for instance, correctly describe features of symmetrical shapes and identify lines of symmetry. Work for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is well planned, but evidence of some gaps in previous learning among the oldest pupils reflects both the impact of the high turnover of pupils by Year 6, and the need for teachers to ensure that activities are reinforced well. For instance, when calculators were used in Years 5 and 6, pupils were unfamiliar with the use of the 'function buttons' and needed opportunities to practise this skill before learning could move on. Many number activities are supported by purpose-designed worksheets, which ensure an appropriate level of challenge. Because staff focus on developing pupils' reasoning during activities, pupils are able to explain the rationale behind their answers well enough, although the quality of their use of Standard English needs to be improved.

61. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils are motivated to learn. They are aware of teachers' expectations and are interested in their learning, having benefited from the school's focus on making maths fun. The national strategy is used well to teach the range of activities, but investigational learning is weak across the school and there is a lack of opportunity for pupils to use the skills they have learned in a variety of increasingly challenging situations.

62. The headteacher's good leadership and management of the subject have been instrumental in ensuring that standards have risen since the last inspection. She liaises closely with colleagues to

ensure that expectations are high, planning is secure, and resources are available. She monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching and pupils' work throughout the school on a regular basis. The introduction of systems to track pupil's progress and the regular assessment of pupils' attainment have helped staff to focus well on individual needs. Individual targets should be developed further so that pupils can regularly monitor and assess their own progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. Pupils use graphs, charts and calculations in science activities, but evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work and lesson observations showed little use of mathematical concepts in other subjects, and so opportunities for using skills in different contexts are missed.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils are well motivated and interested in their learning.
- Subject leadership is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

64. Although pupils achieve satisfactorily and make steady progress as they move through the school, standards are below national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. These findings mirror those of the previous inspection. The comparison of attainment between year groups and with schools nationally is difficult because of the small cohorts of pupils and the high turnover of pupils throughout the school.

65. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but good teaching was observed during the inspection in the classes for pupils in Years 3 to 6, where high expectations and good levels of challenge were strong features of the lessons. Pupils clearly enjoyed these lessons and showed that they could select and use the skills they had learned, for example when pupils in Years 5 and 6 produced a mini ecosystem to demonstrate the water cycle. In the class for pupils in Years 3 and 4, where pupils were learning about dental health, the teacher placed a good emphasis on pupils' self assessment of their learning. This added a spiritual dimension to the lesson by allowing them time for reflection and review.

66. Work is very carefully based on national guidance and on a rolling programme that takes account of the fact that pupils are in one class for two years. There is an increasing focus on investigative learning, with pupils undertaking research from the earliest age. This motivates them well and they clearly enjoy reporting their findings to their peers. There is generally a good level of challenge in tasks, and good use of scientific vocabulary. However, photocopied worksheets are used too much with pupils in Years 1 and 2. The consequence of this is that these pupils are not given enough opportunity to record their findings in their own words and to develop their thinking and writing skills. The use of assessment is weak, but staff are now attempting to develop more systematic tracking procedures to ensure that all pupils make better progress.

67. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The subject leader needs to develop his role further. He is insufficiently involved with the subject across the school and has very few opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Whilst there has been some evaluation of pupils' work, this has been infrequent and lacked evaluative rigour in identifying areas for further improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

No firm judgement can be made about provision in ICT because of the limited range of available evidence.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school benefits from its partnership with local schools.
- Resources are generally good, and are used well.

Commentary

68. Owing to the way in which the timetable was arranged, no lessons were seen. Furthermore, there was limited evidence of pupils' previously completed work because the inspection took place early in the school year. Consequently, no overall judgements can be made about the standards attained by pupils. However, there is some evidence of satisfactory levels of attainment in pupils' use of word-processors, databases, and the Internet. The only observations of ICT possible were of groups of pupils from Years 5 and 6 during the course of lessons. These oldest pupils are confident and enthusiastic about the subject and competently use ICT to gather and record information. They display good levels of skill in using the keyboard, and confidently use 'drop-down' menus and manipulate images on screen by using the mouse.

69. Resources have been greatly improved in recent years. There is a very good ratio of computers to pupils. The ICT suite is used well and the ready availability of additional computers in the classrooms means that pupils have easy access to practise what they have learned and to carry out research. A set of laptop computers, made available through the local Coastal Partnership of schools, is used effectively during lessons. For example, pupils with SEN achieved well when using these laptops to help consolidate their learning in English and mathematics, because of the good help provided by teaching assistants. Further benefits of the school's good links with the Coastal Partnership include regular access to technical and curricular support provided by a technician who is employed by the local schools, and a common format for the assessment of pupils' progress.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

70. The computer suite is used well to enable whole-class groups to apply their skills to support learning in other subjects. For instance, pupils successfully used an Internet 'search engine' to conduct research during an English lesson.

HUMANITIES

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils respond positively in lessons.
- Assessment needs to be improved.

Commentary

71. Only two lessons were observed during the time of the inspection, and because of its timing, a limited amount of pupils' previously completed work was available for scrutiny. In addition, the nature of the subject is such that teaching and learning are often based on discussions rather than written responses. Evidence from the lessons seen, teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils, indicates that standards are broadly average in Year 2, but below average in Year 6. Overall, achievement is satisfactory.

72. The school successfully combines elements of the local Agreed Syllabus for religious education with aspects of national guidance for the subject. In line with such guidance, staff focus not only upon aspects of Christianity but also upon a satisfactory range of other world faiths. Staff invite visitors to school from the local church, but older pupils have had few opportunities to talk to people of other faiths or to visit other places of worship, and therefore their knowledge and understanding of other faiths are sometimes a little narrow.

73. Teaching in the lessons seen was good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. The teaching of the youngest pupils is effective because they are encouraged to recognise what is important and special to them in order to identify what is important and special to others. Pupils learn how God cares, through stories such as the parable of the Lost Sheep, and teaching skilfully gives opportunities to reflect how the emotions demonstrated in the story affect us all. In Years 3 to 6 there is clear emphasis on broadening pupils' knowledge of different beliefs. For example, pupils learn about the leaders of other faiths, such as Mohammed and his views on nature and animals, as stated in the Qu'ran.

74. Tasks are well planned to match pupils' understanding and well linked to their own ideas, feelings and experiences, with carefully planned activities that lead on from each other. Good use is made of resources, including pictures and books, to extend learning. Pupils show good attitudes and are encouraged to reflect, and to articulate their feelings and views. Formal assessment activities are limited.

Geography and history

No judgement can be made about provision in either geography or history.

75. No lessons were observed in either of these subjects and, owing to the timing of the inspection, there was little evidence of pupils' previously completed work. Teachers use nationally recommended guidelines to plan an appropriate range of work in a two-year rolling programme. However, the school's planning mostly focuses on activities to be covered, and not enough emphasis is placed on the development of pupils' skills. Consequently, the clear progression of pupils' learning is not assured. Discussions with pupils during, for example, interviews about reading to elicit information about their skills in conducting research, showed that their often limited general knowledge adversely affects the depth of their understanding in these subjects. Pupils learn about important events, such as the Great Fire of London, but opportunities to link this learning with work in other subjects are sometimes missed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. No judgements can be made about standards or the quality of provision in art and design, design and technology, or music, because no teaching was seen in any of these subjects and there was little evidence of pupils' previously completed work.

78. The few samples of work available in **art and design** were of average quality in terms of their composition and use of colour, but showed that pupils are given experience in using a reasonable range of media. In **design and technology**, satisfactory emphasis is placed on the key elements of designing, making, and evaluating products such as bags and simple musical instruments. The only evidence of **music** was the satisfactory quality of pupils' singing in assemblies. There was no recorded evidence of pupils' previous work, such as composition. However, a scrutiny of planning, together with discussions with pupils, confirmed that the required breadth of the curriculum is covered. The school's provision for art and music is enriched through an after-school art club and a lunchtime recorder club. Peripatetic instrumental tuition is provided for some pupils.

79. The weaknesses in the curriculum for art and design and design and technology, reported as a result of the previous inspection, have not been fully addressed. In each of these subjects, planning tends to focus on the activities to be taught rather than the skills to be developed. This approach to the curriculum, combined with the mixed-age groupings in all classes, means that the school is unable to provide for the seamless development of pupils' skills. For example, evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work showed that pupils in Years 5 and 6 were given the same core task during a design and technology project on mask-making. This assignment was very similar to one completed during the previous school year by pupils in Year 4.

80. The school's provision in art and music does not make enough of a contribution to pupils' cultural development because there is no systematic approach to the development of pupils' skills in the appreciation of these subjects.

81. The school complies with requirements for assessment in both art and design and technology in that pupils' progress is identified through 'best fit' judgements made and recorded by teachers at the end of each year. However, these assessments are not securely based on records of pupils' progress in the development of key learning in these subjects. This situation occurs because the curriculum does not give teachers clear enough information about what is to be expected of pupils in terms of their acquisition of skills. In addition, there is no evidence to show that the teachers' 'best fit' assessments either help the pupils to know how they can improve, or feed into the teachers' planning.

82. No firm judgement can be made about the standards attained or pupils' achievement in **physical education** because of the narrow range of activities seen during the course of the inspection. Teaching was observed in all classes, but all of this took place indoors. In these lessons, the quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. Pupils' generally worked hard and showed levels of skill in movement, balance and control appropriate to their age. Where required, their satisfactory levels of co-ordination between hand and eye enabled them to control the movements of small apparatus with reasonable accuracy.

83. The on-site accommodation for physical education is unsatisfactory, since there is no suitable indoor space. However, the school has limited access to the adjacent village hall for lessons such as dance and gymnastics, and access to the village playing fields for outdoor activities. Overall, resources for these indoor lessons are inadequate, since the spacious village hall contains no large apparatus for gymnastics. The only equipment available for indoor lessons is a small amount of lightweight gymnastics equipment, such as mats and climbing frames, together with some small items, such as cones or hoops, which the school stores in the village hall.

84. Despite the difficulties encountered because of lack of parental support, the school does its best to ensure that its pupils experience a satisfactory range of activities. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils learn to swim during the course of each summer term. Discussion with the subject co-ordinator indicated that most achieve the nationally expected standard by the end of Year 6.

85. Although no overall judgement can be made, the quality of provision in the areas of physical education inspected is similar to that reported at the time of the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in PSHE is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring and inclusive nature of the school is an important factor in the personal and social development of the pupils.
- Assessment and target-setting need to be improved.

Commentary

86. The school focuses well on PSHE, and the adults' caring and very inclusive approach to all pupils makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Lesson planning is based on a commercially-produced scheme of work, and this helps ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress. However, assessment and record keeping need to be more consistent, as lack of assessment can sometimes result in insufficient challenge for the higher-attaining pupils. Overall, standards in Years 2 and 6 are average.

87. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is delivered mainly through 'circle time' activities. The lesson seen in Years 1 and 2 was well taught, and allowed pupils to consider their own and others' feelings and to develop supportive attitudes towards each other. Pupils learn that it is right to experience a range of emotions and they begin to understand how to manage them. They consider decision-making, and appreciate how talking to trusted people can help them make their choices.

88. The oldest pupils have targets, which help their personal development. However, these could be more closely focused so that pupils see them as being achievable within a relatively short time. Some teaching is covered in other subjects. For example, science lessons include the study of healthy eating and lifestyles, including drugs education.

89. Pupils are encouraged to become mature and responsible within the setting of the school community. They devise a class contract so that all are aware of their responsibilities, and older pupils have considered family life and traditions by focusing on respect for those in the community whose lifestyle maybe different from their own. Teachers use 'circle time' and collective worship sessions effectively to promote good attitudes. Older pupils undertake many responsibilities which help the school to function as a well-ordered community and promote good social attitudes. For example, monitors oversee the use of equipment at playtime and pupils befriend others in the playground and are ready to sort out any difficulties. Pupils are conscientious and clear about their duties. The school council meets regularly and passes its recommendations for improvement to the headteacher.

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	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	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	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	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	6
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).