

INSPECTION REPORT

HOVINGHAM C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hovingham

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121500

Acting headteacher: Carol Edleston

Lead inspector: Ian Nelson

Dates of inspection: 5th – 6th June 2005

Inspection number: 267080

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	44
School address:	Main Street Hovingham York North Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO62 4LF
Telephone number:	01653 628358
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Wharton
Date of previous inspection:	July 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a very small school with only 44 pupils, aged 4 to 11 years. One class has Reception and Years 1 and 2, while the other has Years 3 to 6. The year groups range in size from three to nine pupils. Currently, there are 20 girls and 24 boys on roll, with an imbalance between each gender in most year groups. The school serves the village of Hovingham and several neighbouring rural communities. Most pupils come from advantaged homes and none qualify for free school meals. All the pupils have English as their home language and no pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. A quarter of the pupils are on the register of special educational need but none have a statement of educational need. Few pupils enter or leave the school other than at the start of a school year. Children start school with skills and knowledge above that expected of their age. After a period of great stability, the school is currently undergoing a period of change. There is an acting headteacher seconded from a neighbouring school for two days a week, and two temporary teachers, one unqualified and working part-time, having completed the required training. One teacher was on long term sick leave, so the only permanent teacher in school at the time of the inspection was a part-time teacher. Although interviews have been held for the headship, no appointment has been made, and a new acting headteacher will take over from September. The school was reorganised from three classes to two in September 2004. The chair and vice chair of governors took over their positions in February 2005. The school is involved in the Primary Strategy Leadership Programme.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2220	Ian Nelson	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Mathematics Science Art and design Design and technology Physical education Religious education
11041	Marvyn Moore	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
31319	Anna Coyle	<i>Team inspector</i>	English Information and communication technology History Geography French Music Foundation Stage Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory overall. Pupils generally attain high standards in the national tests for 11 year olds but some do not achieve as well as they might, particularly in writing. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, so that pupils make satisfactory progress, except in the Foundation Stage (Reception), where progress is unsatisfactory. The good leadership of the acting head has enabled her to identify the school's strengths and areas for development. She has begun to put into place effective management systems to improve the school but most of the teachers at the time of the inspection are temporary, so the school lacks a stable staff. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils usually attain high standards in the national tests for 11 year olds.
- Good support for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils leads to their having positive attitudes to their work, well above average attendance and good behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The acting headteacher provides strong leadership and has tackled difficult issues.
- The school places a strong emphasis on the care and welfare of pupils, so that they are very well looked after.
- Most of the teachers are temporary, and the school lacks the stability which a permanent staff would bring, to enable it to build on the management structures being established.
- Reception children are not provided with activities that are appropriate for their age, in line with national requirements, and their progress is unsatisfactory.
- The standard of pupils' writing is not good enough.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall. The school has gone some way to addressing the key improvement issues from the previous report, but on others progress has not been good enough. History and geography have been reorganised and there are signs of some improvement in the way teachers mark pupils' work, although this is recent and is inconsistent still. There are clear responsibilities for subjects but this has not led to effective checking by subject leaders of how well these subjects are taught. Recent improvements to the way the school checks how well pupils are doing are beginning to be used to plan work at the right level. There have been some improvements to the building.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED*

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	A*	C	E
mathematics	A	A*	A	B
science	C	A	A	A

*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.*

**The information in this table needs to be treated with caution because of the small numbers of pupils in each year group. In the 2003 national tests for 11 year olds, the school was in the top five per cent of all schools for English and mathematics.*

Pupils' achievement is broadly satisfactory overall, except in the Foundation Stage, where it is unsatisfactory because children do not engage in appropriate activities. Children enter the school with skills and knowledge beyond what is expected for their ages, and current standards by the age

of 7 and 11 are above average in mathematics and science. Standards at Year 6 are average in information and communication technology (ICT) and in English, where pupils' writing is not good enough. Not enough lessons were seen in other subjects to be able to make firm judgements on standards or achievement, although the artwork on display was of good quality. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make satisfactory progress. The results of the national tests at age 11 have been mainly well above average over recent years, although in 2004 they dipped to average in English. At age seven, results have fluctuated from year to year, which is not unusual in such a small school. Over recent years they have ranged from well above average in mathematics and reading to well below in writing,. In the tests, girls generally do better than boys, although in the work seen during the inspection this difference was not obvious.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good, with the result that they have good attitudes to their lessons, behave well and have very good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them. Attendance is above average and punctuality is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is satisfactory, except in the Foundation Stage, where it is unsatisfactory and is not meeting statutory requirements. **Teaching and learning are satisfactory** overall. Some of the marking is good but this quality is not consistent. The school has satisfactory systems for checking how well pupils are doing but these are fairly recent. The activities that the school provides cover the whole National Curriculum and religious education and are satisfactory overall, except in the Foundation Stage, where they are unsatisfactory. The quality of care is very good and the school has good links with parents, other schools and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are satisfactory. The recently appointed, part-time acting headteacher provides good leadership and has begun to establish some secure management systems to improve the school, but these have not been in place long enough to make a significant impact. The work of the governors is satisfactory overall and improving. They have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing and a commitment to improvement. They ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements, except for provision for the Foundation Stage. The number of temporary teachers means that the school lacks the stability to build effectively on the good work of the acting headteacher.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have positive views of the school. A small number of parents expressed some concerns over the information provided for them and the way the school consults them, but the inspection found these concerns to be unjustified. Some pupils expressed concerns in their questionnaire responses about behaviour, but these concerns were not evident in observations and discussion with pupils during the inspection.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Appoint, as soon as possible, a permanent headteacher and staff to build on the good work of the current acting headteacher.
- Improve the quality of writing across the school.

And to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that children in Foundation Stage are given activities and resources appropriate to their age in line with statutory requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall, and pupils attain above average standards in mathematics and science by the age of eleven. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attained well above average standards in mathematics and science in the national tests for 11 year olds in 2004.
- More able pupils did not do as well as they might in the teacher assessments in science at Year 2.
- The activities provided for children in the Foundation Stage do not enable them to reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Standards in writing are not high enough across the school.

Commentary

1. Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge beyond those of typical four year olds. However, during their time in the Foundation Stage they do not make enough progress, because the activities they are given are not based on the national requirements. Their activities tend to be either too structured, with little room for them to make choices, or not structured enough, so that their play is not focused and does not support learning as well as it might. At the time of the last inspection the standards achieved by children in the Foundation Stage were judged to be above average in nearly all areas of learning. Currently, they are above average in personal, social and emotional development and in creative development, and average in all other areas, which represents unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

2. Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly in line with national expectations. In reading, writing and ICT they are average and in mathematics they are above average. Not enough work was seen in other subjects to be able to make secure judgements. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2004, standards were well above average in English, above average in writing and in the top five per cent of schools in mathematics. Standards compared with those of similar schools were below average in reading, in the bottom five per cent of schools in writing and above average in mathematics. In the teacher assessments in science, all pupils gained the expected Level 2 but none gained the higher Level 3. No pupils reached the higher Level 3 in writing, whilst most pupils gained that level in mathematics and an above average number did so in reading.

3. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average overall. They are average in ICT and in English, where writing remains a weakness. In mathematics and science, standards are above average. In the national tests in 2004, standards were average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Compared to those of similar schools, standards were well below average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. In the national tests in recent years, girls have consistently done better than boys, but this difference was not apparent in the work observed during the inspection. The school achieved its targets in English and narrowly missed them in mathematics. It has set realistic targets for the 2005 tests. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, although in writing it is unsatisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory in mathematics and science but unsatisfactory in English.

4. Pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress overall. Their individual education plans (IEPs) do not set precise enough targets, and little use was made of them in the lessons and small-group work observed during the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are **good**. Pupils have very good relationships with each other. Attendance is very good and pupils are very punctual for lessons.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils are very willing to be enterprising and take responsibility.

Commentary

5. Pupils' spiritual awareness is promoted through regular assemblies, many of these conducted by the local vicar, and through lessons on a range of religions. Pupils also visit other churches, mosques, temples and synagogues. For example, a group of children recently visited York Minster and a further group welcomed the new Bishop of Selby in St Peter's Church. Pupils also have the opportunity to reflect on great works of art, music and literature. They enjoy their learning, are punctual to lessons and display good attitudes to their life at school. Pupils are keen to achieve well and to receive 'well done' stickers and praise from their teachers for trying hard. The inspection team was greatly impressed by the manner and enthusiasm of the pupils, who were keen to talk of their pride in the school.

6. Pupils' moral welfare is well developed through topic work in personal, social and health education (PSHE), and their behaviour is good and at times very good. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and know the kind of behaviour expected of them. Staff have high expectations and pupils respond positively to them. The school has very little bullying, and relationships between pupils, and with staff, are very good. They have a good respect for their own belongings, other people's belongings and school property. The school community is happy, contented and secure and there is a marked absence of graffiti or litter. Pupils in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Pupils with SEN behave well and have positive attitudes to their lessons.

7. Social development is encouraged through activities arranged by the school. These include a pantomime visit, visits to the Ryedale Folk Museum, Eden Camp War Museum and other places of interest, and a residential visit to Great Fryupdale. The school participates in many inter-school sports activities, and these opportunities enable pupils to develop their social skills beyond the school. They willingly undertake tasks given to them by teachers, such as acting as monitors and looking after younger pupils at playtimes and lunch times. Consequently, these times are pleasant social occasions where pupils of all ages mix well together and enjoy talking to each other about the events of the day. The school's mission statement and rules are known by all pupils and respected by them. They are actively encouraged to engage in charitable work and have raised money for numerous local and national charities, including the Tsunami Appeal. As a result of all these activities, pupils' confidence and self-esteem are well developed.

8. Pupils' cultural development is good. In music and art, pupils study the work of prominent artists and musicians, including Picasso and Grieg. In geography, they learn about the culture of other countries. The school has formed valuable links with a Kenyan health centre with which pupils regularly correspond and has work linked to an Indonesian school. Pupils have visited Hovingham Hall to investigate local culture, and the school makes great use of the local environment to give pupils an opportunity to study their own heritage. Through religious education lessons they learn about other religions and cultures.

Attendance

9. Attendance, at 96.4 per cent, is above average and is very good. The school has very good procedures to promote good attendance and contacts the home on the first day of any unexplained absence.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

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

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

Exclusions

10. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is satisfactory except in the Foundation Stage, where it is unsatisfactory and is not in line with national requirements. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The school has satisfactory systems for checking how well pupils are doing. The activities the school provides cover the whole National Curriculum and religious education and are satisfactory overall, except in the Foundation Stage, where they are unsatisfactory. The quality of care is very good and the school has good links with parents, other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

Overall, teaching, learning and assessment are **satisfactory**, as they were at the time of the last inspection; teaching quality has been maintained but has not improved since then. At the time of the inspection there was only one permanent teacher in school, working on a part-time basis. The rest were all temporary, to cover vacancies and absence. The school has satisfactory systems for checking how well pupils are doing but these are fairly recent and have not yet had time to make an impact. In the past, assessment has not been used well enough to plan work for the various ages and abilities in each class.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standard of marking of pupils' work is sometimes good but this is not always the case.
- Whilst teaching assistants make a good contribution to lessons, at times they are not actively involved early enough.
- Staff have a good rapport with their pupils and relationships are very good.
- The work does not always stretch the most able.
- Activities for Foundation Stage children are not based on national requirements for that age group.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 10 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	0	4	6	0	0	0

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

11. At the time of the inspection, Foundation Stage children were taught by a temporary teacher in the absence of their normal one, and all lessons seen were at least satisfactory. However, the evidence from children's past work and teachers' planning indicates that teaching over time is unsatisfactory because of a lack of understanding of the learning needs of these children and of the kind of classroom environment they require to learn effectively. The temporary teacher makes the best of the situation but the temporary nature of her appointment means that she is limited in how much she can alter the classroom to create a better learning space for the Reception children. For much of the time, children work with the teaching assistant under the guidance of the teacher but the tasks are often either too closely directed, leaving children little room to make choices, or not structured enough, so that play becomes aimless. As the tasks they are given are not planned and organised well enough to build upon previous learning, children do not make enough progress. The systems for checking how well children are doing are not good enough to ensure that activities are well planned to match their ages and abilities and to take learning forward. The acting headteacher has identified the problems and has taken firm steps to address them through trying to improve staff knowledge of the needs of Foundation Stage children and how to meet them. These weaknesses were identified in the last inspection report and not enough has been done to overcome them since then.

12. Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 are satisfactory overall, so that pupils make satisfactory progress except in writing, where it is unsatisfactory. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes and their books show that earlier in the school year the whole class completed the same work in some subjects, regardless of age and ability. This was particularly noticeable in science in Years 3 to 6. Consequently, pupils did not make as much progress as they might have done. More recently, different work has been planned for the different ages and abilities within the class, so that pupils are given tasks that meet their needs and they make better progress.

13. Teaching assistants work well alongside teachers to support groups of pupils with their work. They are well briefed, with the result that they work confidently and help pupils to understand what is to be done. This means that pupils receive good levels of attention to help to keep them busy and learning effectively once the teacher sets them tasks to do. Through the work of the teaching assistants, pupils with SEN receive satisfactory levels of support and make satisfactory progress in their learning. At times, however, overlong introductions to lessons mean that teaching assistants are expected to sit for too long at the start of lessons without being actively involved, and this is an inefficient use of this valuable teaching resource.

14. All staff have a good manner with the pupils, and this ensures very good relationships. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and to please their teachers and teaching assistants. They work hard and do their best, and behaviour is generally good, so that little time is wasted in maintaining discipline.

15. Systems for checking how well pupils are doing have improved recently. The school now keeps records of the progress pupils are making in each subject, and teachers are increasingly using that information to plan work that more closely matches their needs. However, these systems are relatively new and need to be built upon to become fully effective. The marking of pupils' work has improved since earlier in the school year. It now includes helpful comments that tell pupils what was good about their work and how to make it better. Clear targets are set for them to work towards. However, not all marking is yet of this high quality.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6, but that for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. A satisfactory range of clubs and after-school activities enriches pupils' learning. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' PSHE permeates the curriculum.
- The curriculum and resources for the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory.
- Staff make good use of the accommodation.

Commentary

16. Pupils follow the National Curriculum from Years 1 to 6 and the school has developed its curriculum satisfactorily since the last inspection, when there were significant shortcomings. In particular, there are now suitable schemes of work for all subjects and the time allocations have been reviewed and revised for geography and history to ensure that there is a balance between subjects. French is taught as a regular lesson each week as part of the normal curriculum. In addition, pupils are given sound opportunities to enrich their learning by joining after-school activities. These include musical tuition for instruments such as clarinet. Further opportunities are created by the school's active participation in projects and events, as well as by clubs for netball, tennis and football, all of which are well attended by pupils and staff. Pupils have access to a good range of learning opportunities that extend their personal skills well and increase their understanding of how to be good citizens and lead a healthy life.

17. Children in the Foundation Stage do not have an appropriate curriculum for their age and capabilities. It is unsatisfactory because it is not planned specifically to the Early Learning Goals¹ and it does not take enough account of children's standards on entry to school. In addition, there is a lack of balance between formal class work that is directed by staff and opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves. The lack of structured play activities inhibits children's linguistic, mathematical and imaginative development and leads to the underachievement of children who are capable of higher standards.

18. The accommodation and resources are sound overall. The school buildings and the attractive site are clean and well maintained. Classrooms are of a sufficient size for the number of pupils on roll, and staff make good use of all the space available, including the hard play and grassed areas and the nearby village hall. The high turnover of staff has been dealt with appropriately, although most of the teachers are currently temporary and this is causing uncertainty for the future. Nevertheless, all staff work productively together, and the teaching assistants guide pupils with SEN appropriately in small groups to ensure that they make satisfactory progress. The school has a suitable range of resources for pupils in the infant and junior classes, and they are easily accessible. However, the resources for the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory because there are not enough toys for imaginative play, small world construction and outdoor play, or dressing up. The acting headteacher has recently purchased items for climbing and balancing to begin to rectify the situation as quickly as possible.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, health and safety is **very good**. The school involves pupils effectively through seeking, valuing and acting on their views. Very good procedures are in place to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school offers a very good standard of care and safety for its pupils.
- Child protection procedures are securely in place.
- Relationships between pupils and adults at the school are very good.

¹ The Early Learning Goals are the standards children are expected to reach before they enter Year 1.

Commentary

19. Procedures to ensure pupils' care, health and safety are very good. Child protection procedures are very comprehensive and the child protection policy is relevant, up to date and fully complies with Area Child Protection Committee standards. The child protection co-ordinator has received recent training and has ensured that training is disseminated to all other members of staff. A health and safety survey has been carried out recently and all outstanding items from the previous survey have been addressed. Health and safety and child protection are regular items on the agenda of the governing body.

20. Relationships at the school are very good. All pupils are known to staff and relate to them extremely well. Pupils interviewed during the inspection week confirmed that they felt that staff cared for them, and they know who to go to if they have problems or concerns.

21. The school has an adequate number of fully trained first aid staff, and all accidents are correctly recorded. The fire alarm is tested weekly and regular fire drills take place.

22. Pupils are proud to be elected members of the school council, which meets on a regular basis to discuss matters of interest. In addition, through PSHE lessons, pupils are able to develop their speaking and listening skills and are articulate and confident in giving their opinions to staff, who listen with care and respect.

23. Induction arrangements for pupils are good. A useful brochure is provided to parents of Reception children giving helpful information on the curriculum and settling-in process. The Reception teacher visits children at the Nursery and at their homes prior to their admittance. She meets parents, and the school has five induction afternoons to which prospective pupils and their parents are invited. Parents are allowed to stay with their children during their first few days at school. Because of the sensitive induction procedures, children settle quickly into school routines.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community, other schools and colleges are **good**. The school now involves parents through seeking, valuing and acting on their views. The provision of information about the school and about pupils' standards and progress is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has good procedures to ensure satisfaction and to deal with any complaints.
- Parents contribute well to pupils' learning.
- Some school reports do not give sufficient information on how well children are doing, or what is being studied.

Commentary

24. Links with parents and information provided for them have been improved recently. Parents spoken to during the inspection week confirmed that they now receive good information regarding their children's progress and that their views are now sought and acted upon. The school has arranged for three evenings each year for parents to visit the school to discuss their children's progress. Annual reports to parents on how well their children are doing in each subject are satisfactory. Parents are able to contact the acting headteacher or staff at any time if they wish to obtain information or advice on their children's progress. The school has arranged for an annual survey of parents' views and has acted upon their comments. As a result, a weekly newsletter has been introduced, giving up-to-date news and views of school activities. The school prospectus is a well produced document, devised in a parent-friendly fashion format, and it gives useful information about the school's ethos and policies. A separate prospectus has been produced for parents of

Reception children. The annual report of the governing body to parents is well constructed and concise and contains all necessary statutory information. The acting headteacher is very accessible to parents and deals immediately with any concerns that they may have.

25. Links with the community are good. The school led the harvest, Mothering Sunday and Christmas services in Hovingham Church. Pupils made harvest gift parcels for senior citizens in the village. Community visits to the school include the Malton fire brigade, and a team from the Howardian Hills drew the attention of pupils to the surrounding area and facilities. Pupils from the school sent entries to the Malton & Ryedale agricultural shows, and pupils help to run the scholastic book fund to raise funds for local village use. Pupils from the school have contributed to the local Radio Ryedale service, giving their views and news of local events.

26. The school has good links with other schools. The current acting headteacher is also headteacher of another primary school and has brought the benefits of her experience and expertise to Hovingham. The school regularly liaises with two feeder secondary schools on curriculum matters, and pupils from Hovingham attend Ryedale secondary school for music lessons taught jointly by Hovingham and Ryedale staff. The school has good arrangements for the transfer of pupils between the school and the two receiving secondary schools, and secondary school teachers come in to Hovingham to take lessons. Pupils go to both receiving secondary schools for 'taster days' where they regularly study music, mathematics, science and languages. Consequently, they transfer to secondary school with confidence. The school plays a part in helping to train new teachers and receives students from Ripon and York College for their final teaching practice.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting head provides good leadership and has begun to establish some secure management systems to improve the school, but these have not been in place long enough to make a significant impact. The work of the governors is satisfactory overall and is improving. They ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements, except for provision for the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors have an improving understanding of their roles and responsibilities and of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The acting headteacher has a clear idea of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and has introduced some useful management systems, although they are too recent to have made a significant impact on pupils' learning.
- Most of the teaching staff are temporary, so the school lacks the stability needed to build on the management systems being established and to share management responsibilities equitably.

Commentary

27. The governors have always been supportive of the school, as the previous inspection reported. Since the appointment of the acting head they have re-evaluated their roles and responsibilities and are becoming much more effective. They have restructured the governing body, with a new chair and vice-chair, and with the support and guidance of the acting headteacher they are establishing secure systems to ensure they are fully effective in their roles. They have taken an active part in preparing the school development plan and show a good understanding of the statistical information provided on national test results. Consequently, they have a secure understanding of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve. Governors are full of enthusiasm and energy and relish their increasing responsibilities. They are fully committed to school improvement. They have managed the school finances effectively, turning a deficit from one year into a surplus the following year, partly due to the restructuring of the school to two classes

from three. The surplus has been earmarked for improvements to the outbuildings. The governors have a clear understanding of the need to get the best value they can from the funds at their disposal, and they ensure that the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	203,859.00	Balance from previous year	11,818.00
Total expenditure	191,923.00	Balance carried forward to the next	23,754.00
Expenditure per pupil	4,361.00		

28. Leadership is satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher has quickly identified the school's strengths and areas for improvement, so that the school's view of how well it is doing is largely accurate. This is no mean feat, as she has been allocated only two days a week since April to head the school. Despite being part time the acting headteacher is fully committed to school improvement, and parents are pleased with the fresh ideas she has brought to the school. She has been forthright in tackling difficult issues, particularly in relation to the unsatisfactory provision for Foundation Stage children. She has taken a direct role in teaching English to try to improve the quality of pupils' writing.

29. Management is satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher has begun to establish secure management systems to ensure that the school runs effectively and efficiently, but these have not been in place long enough to have had a significant impact on pupils' learning and progress. The school development plan clearly highlights the school's strengths and areas for development and outlines the main priorities for improvement. Teachers have clearly defined responsibilities for leading and managing particular subjects but have not all been effective enough in carrying out those roles. The acting headteacher has re-assigned leadership roles and responsibilities but there are not enough permanent teachers to carry out these roles effectively; there is, therefore, too great a burden on the acting headteacher. The management of provision for pupils with SEN is satisfactory. The management of the Foundation is unsatisfactory. Performance management is in place. However, staff absence and the lack of permanent teaching staff are slowing the pace of change and leading to the acting headteacher having a greater management burden than she should have. Parents expressed some concern about the lack of staffing stability and how this might affect their children's learning. The school runs efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Support staff, lunchtime supervisors, clerical and cleaning staff all work hard to ensure the smooth running of the school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

30. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **unsatisfactory** overall. Children join the Reception class at the beginning of the year in which they reach their fifth birthday and there are good induction processes that help them to settle happily and feel secure in their new environment. Attainment on entry is above average. Parents feel welcome and the teachers and support staff work together in harmony. However, although the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory in the lessons observed during the inspection, it is unsatisfactory overall because the children are not provided with an appropriate curriculum that is tailored to their age group and specific learning needs. Assessment procedures are poor. Reading and spelling tests are conducted occasionally, but daily records are not kept effectively and assessment information is not used formally to adapt teaching and learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory because the weaknesses identified in planning and assessment have not been rectified.

31. The management of the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory and there are not sufficient resources for children to use. The acting headteacher has quickly identified several areas for improvement and has begun to tackle them by writing an appropriate policy for the Foundation Stage, drawing up an action plan, and allocating funds. This bodes well for the future.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are polite and well behaved.

Commentary

32. From above average standards on entry, the children exceed the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year in this area of learning. They work and play together happily. They share equipment willingly and take turns. Most children concentrate well during teacher-directed sessions and spend sustained periods on the tasks they are given. They are confident and interact well with each other during lessons and playtimes. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Adults provide good role models for the children and treat them with courtesy and respect, which leads to good attitudes and behaviour. The beginnings and ends of the day are efficiently organised and staff ensure that a calm, orderly atmosphere prevails.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Plenty of opportunities are provided for children to develop speaking skills.
- Insufficient focus on planning to the national requirements and a limited use of assessment impede children's learning.

Commentary

33. Children attain the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year but, as they enter the school with above average attainment, they do not make enough progress. Children talk clearly to each other and to adults, mostly using full sentences, and they are successful when recalling the stories they have been told, such as *We're going on a Bear Hunt*. The school's recent introduction of 'Story Sacks' and hand-puppets has helped to increase children's speaking and listening skills. The teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, and all adults involved the children successfully in conversations, which helped them to increase their skills and take an interest in the surroundings. However, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall because the inappropriate activities organised for this phase of learning, and weak planning for lessons, have led to the underachievement of the most capable children. Writing skills are developing and children learn letter sounds through the 'Jolly Phonics' scheme, but the limited use of assessment information is holding back standards and the children are not achieving as well as they might.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships between staff and children help promote a positive ethos.
- Weak planning and poor use of assessment hinder children's achievements.

Commentary

34. Children reach the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year, but learning is unsatisfactory because the children's good standards on entry are not built upon sufficiently throughout the year, and they slip back. Most extend their knowledge of the numbers 1 to 10 satisfactorily. They achieve satisfactorily when counting up and back to 20, and sometimes beyond. However, there are not enough opportunities throughout the day to help them consolidate their understanding of shapes and sequences. The adults working with the children liaise together well and are kindly towards them, which results in good relationships and a positive ethos for learning. However, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory because weak daily planning limits the children's achievement, and assessment information is not collected and used rigorously to help staff focus learning. Thus, standards are too low amongst the most capable by the time they reach the end of the Reception Year. Moreover, there are limited opportunities for independent investigations and an overuse of worksheets and commercial photocopiable materials, and this exacerbates the problem.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are confident when using computers.
- Not enough opportunities are given for children to explore for themselves.

Commentary

35. Children attain the expected standards and discover the world around them through daily activities. Staff encourage them to use all their senses and to develop their thinking. For example, the children are beginning to show good control when using the computer, and they learn scientific facts about living things. However, they are not challenged sufficiently to extend their understanding

through structured play, because lessons are not planned to an appropriate curriculum and assessment procedures are not used to assist planning. Not enough opportunities are provided for children to explore and find out for themselves through sand, water and construction play. The classroom is not organised effectively to enable the children to participate in a range of activities they can choose for themselves, and learning is not focused enough to ensure adequate progress of the most capable.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Indoor activities develop the children's manipulative skills.
- The provision for outdoor play is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

36. Children reach most of the expected goals, but the provision for outdoor activities is limited. They develop fine movements through the use of pencils and scissors. Other activities include the use of the computer keyboard and mouse. However, access to the fenced outdoor area is limited, and until recently there has been no fixed equipment for climbing, stretching or balancing. Teaching is satisfactory, given the limited resources, and staff make good use of praise to encourage the children to try to master skills such as throwing hoops.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have a good range of artistic activities.
- The unsatisfactory role-play area lacks resources for imaginative play.

Commentary

37. Children achieve well and exceed the expected standards in artistic development, but they do not attain them in imaginative activities. They have a wide range of opportunities to fuel their creativity through drawing, painting, cutting and gluing. Teaching is good in this area and all artwork is well displayed, demonstrating the high value adults give to the children's efforts. However, the home corner is unsatisfactory and does not adequately allow for imaginative play. It is cluttered, untidy, uninviting and not conducive to children's learning. Not enough opportunities are provided for children to explore imaginary situations through dressing up or role-play, and there are not enough resources for them to use.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

This subject was sampled, as not enough lessons were seen to be able to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision.

38. French is taught regularly to all pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school employs a specialist teacher for the subject to help pupils develop their language skills and gain an understanding of a culture other than their own. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, so it is not possible to make overall judgements about provision or standards. Nevertheless, it is clear that pupils have good opportunities to learn conversational French and that they enjoy their lessons. The quality of teaching and learning was good in the lesson seen. Activities were managed well and organised carefully, within a calm atmosphere, conducive to pupils' learning. As a result, pupils used appropriate spoken language to name various foods found in a French café, and they tackled written tasks confidently when designing a menu.

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards attained in the national tests are generally good by Year 6.
- Speaking and listening skills are good.
- Pupils' handwriting and spelling are too variable.

Commentary

39. Pupils currently attain sound standards in lessons overall by the time they reach Year 6, and most achieve satisfactorily in relation to their capabilities. The exception is in writing, where achievement is unsatisfactory. In the national tests for 11 year olds, pupils have attained well above average standards in recent years except for 2004, when standards were average. Pupils have done so well in the national tests partly because the school has placed a strong emphasis on preparing them well beforehand. However, a few of the most capable pupils could achieve more and are not being sufficiently challenged, especially in writing, where standards are too variable.

40. Throughout the school, speaking and listening skills are good. Pupils concentrate well and take heed of instructions quickly. They participate confidently during class discussions and show enthusiastic attitudes to drama. They particularly enjoy activities known as 'hot-seating', whereby individuals go into a role-play situation and act out characters, such as those associated with Grieg's music in *The Hall of the Mountain King*.

41. Reading standards are average by Year 6. The teaching of reading is appropriately organised and managed. Library areas have been improved since the last inspection and include a good range of materials to support the teaching of reading. In the infant class, adults give due attention to teaching letter sounds and patterns through the use of the 'Jolly Phonics' programme. Consequently, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn the correct pronunciation and names of letters. Pupils with SEN achieve success during lessons because they are supported closely by caring teaching assistants who know them well. In Years 3 and 4, most pupils locate simple information in non-fiction books, using their knowledge of the alphabet, and they use the index to find the correct page for information. By Years 5 and 6, the pupils use dictionaries effectively. Most are interested in reading and are fascinated by the way authors use words for effect or to create various characters and settings, for example in *Flat Stanley* and in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*.

42. Standards in writing are average overall by Year 6, although unduly variable across the year groups. The acting headteacher has recently placed a strong emphasis on this aspect of English in order to raise standards and ensure suitable development of writing skills in both the infant and the junior classes. This is beginning to take effect, but there is more work to be done. From a shaky start when they first enter Year 1, pupils begin to build up their knowledge and learn to attempt tasks in small steps; for example when looking at how to write the beginning, middle and end of a story. By the time they get to the end of Year 2, most know how to place a capital letter and full stop accurately, although this is not consistent. Learning continues at a steady pace so that by Year 6, pupils discuss their opinions of authors and texts confidently and write stories based upon a theme, using dialogue, action and description. However, handwriting and spelling are weak because pupils do not have secure skills, and the most capable pupils are underachieving.

43. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers and teaching assistants are well deployed during lessons and work in close harmony together. This ensures that pupils with SEN achieve appropriately, as was seen in Years 3 and 4 when they worked on character descriptions, using adjectives and verbs. The quality of marking is generally satisfactory overall, and occasionally good in Years 3 to 6, when pupils are given good advice on how to improve their written work.

44. Management of the subject is satisfactory, albeit temporarily owing to the current instability of staffing. The headteacher has taken on the role of subject leader recently and is knowledgeable. She works hard and has a clear view of the strengths and needs of the subject. Assessment procedures are used satisfactorily to help assist planning. Successful work has been carried out to extend pupils' skills in handwriting, which is now taught systematically throughout the school, and this is beginning to raise standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

45. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. Pupils share their views confidently with others and they are encouraged to develop reading skills and written work across the different subjects, such as music. Computers are used well for word-processing activities.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the 2004 national tests at ages 7 and 11 were well above average.
- There is a good focus on teaching basic skills.
- There are some weaknesses in planning for numeracy in Years 1 and 2.
- The activities cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Commentary

46. Achievement is satisfactory overall. In the national tests for pupils at age 7 and 11 in 2004, standards were well above average, although the work in pupils' books at the time of the inspection shows standards to be above average, rather than well above. The small class sizes lead to standards in the national tests fluctuating from year to year, but the trend is for standards to be rising over recent years, despite the slight dip from 2003 to 2004. Pupils with SEN achieve satisfactorily.

47. Standards are above average largely because children start school with above average skills and knowledge in mathematics, and satisfactory teaching leads to satisfactory progress in their learning. The good focus on pupils learning basic numeracy skills ensures that they consolidate their knowledge and grow in confidence through the years. Teachers are generally confident in

planning activities to support pupils' learning, although some of the planning for Years 1 and 2 is not as effective as it should be. This slows learning at times for some pupils who could achieve more in the lesson, particularly the more able. In the main, the work pupils are given is set at around the right level for their age and ability. Teaching assistants work well with designated groups to ensure pupils work hard and make progress. Teaching at Years 3 to 6 is enthusiastic and well structured so that pupils enjoy their lessons. Occasionally the pace of the lesson drops a little, but the practical activities enthuse the pupils so that they work hard and behave well.

48. The work the pupils are given covers all aspects of the National Curriculum. Balance between the different elements is maintained, so that pupils learn about shape and measuring, creating and reading graphs, and fractions and decimals, as well as improving their mental mathematics. This broad coverage of the various aspects of mathematics helps pupils to achieve satisfactorily and to attain above average standards overall.

49. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The acting headteacher has taken on the role of subject leader recently and has a clear view of how to improve mathematics provision, as shown in the three-year action plan.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. Mathematics is used satisfactorily in other subjects. Pupils use their skills in measuring in science and design and technology. In ICT lessons they create graphs to support their mathematics learning through using spreadsheets.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the national tests at Year 6 have risen faster than standards nationally.
- Work is now planned for different ages and abilities in the class but this appears to be a recent development.
- There is a strong focus on practical investigations now but this was not the case until recently.
- Teaching assistants support pupils effectively but, sometimes, overlong lesson introductions leave them inactive for too long.

Commentary

51. Achievement overall is satisfactory. Standards in the national tests at Year 6 have been well above average in recent years compared with those of all schools and with those of similar schools, with a good proportion of Year 6 pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in 2004. However, in the teacher assessments at Year 2 no pupils gained the higher Level 3 in 2004, although all pupils gained at least the expected Level 2. The work in pupils' books, and in lessons seen during the inspection, suggests that standards at Year 2 and Year 6 are above average currently, as they were at the time of the last inspection, so improvement since then has been satisfactory.

52. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching emphasises the activity of pupils working together on practical investigations, as in a lesson with Years 3 to 6 when pupils carried out investigations on sound and learned about the importance of fair testing and how to ensure it. Work is planned at different levels for different ages and abilities, so that pupils build upon previous learning. However, the work in their books from earlier in the school year shows pupils to be all covering the same tasks in Years 3 to 6, with the result that the work was too hard for some of them and too easy for others. In order to manage the number of groups in a lesson good use is made of teaching assistants to support pupils. As a result, well briefed teaching assistants make a

significant contribution to the successful learning of pupils. The practical nature of the work and the amount of good quality support available means that pupils, including those with SEN, enjoy their lessons, work hard and behave well. On occasions, lesson introductions are a little too long, and teaching assistants are left observing rather than being actively involved. In Years 1 and 2, the teacher makes good use of links between subjects, as in a lesson on sounds which involved using musical instruments. Pupils enjoyed the practical nature of the work. The activities teachers plan for pupils cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Systems for checking how well pupils are doing have improved recently and are now being used to plan work for the different abilities within a class.

53. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The acting headteacher has taken on the role of subject leader recently and has a clear view of how to improve science provision, as shown in the three-year action plan.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good use of computers in English and mathematics.

Commentary

54. Pupils achieve average standards by Years 2 and 6. This is a sound improvement from the findings of the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, pupils show satisfactory skills in using the keyboard and mouse. They use a range of programs satisfactorily, for example when creating and modifying images. By the time they leave the school, most pupils in Year 6 are confident in demonstrating and explaining their computer skills, including the use of word processing, spreadsheets and computer generated presentations. They discuss their work confidently, using some appropriate terminology, and collaborate well with each other when working together at the keyboards.

55. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers manage pupils well and interest them with well planned tasks. They make good use of the computer suite to support and extend learning. Staff draw on secure subject knowledge to give confident demonstrations and quick, well informed support. This enables pupils to learn effectively and promotes enthusiasm for learning.

56. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recently introduced assessment procedures allow teachers to track pupils' progress with sufficient accuracy, although they are not yet used to assist lesson planning and to ensure that pupils' differing needs are met. Monitoring has improved since the last inspection but is too limited to have an impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

57. The school makes productive links between ICT and other subjects and so motivates pupils to learn. Pupils' work in the classroom is often applied to other subjects. In English, pupils use word-processing when they write about characters and settings in stories. Useful links are also made with mathematics when pupils use data to produce tables and graphs.

HUMANITIES

58. In humanities, work was sampled in history, geography and religious education. No lessons were seen in any of these subjects. It is therefore not possible to make judgements about the overall quality of provision. However, the inspectors spoke to teachers and pupils, sampled pupils' work and scrutinised planning documents.

Religious education

59. Religious education is planned in accordance with the locally Agreed Syllabus. It is planned to enable all the pupils in the mixed-age classes to cover all the themes without repeating the detailed content. Recently the religious education work was covered through a focus on 'being a vicar'. This involved meeting clergy, visiting the church, writing prayers and conducting a mock wedding service. This practical approach ensures that pupils explore issues in a meaningful way and learn effectively about the culture and heritage of their local area. Religious education covers not just Christianity but other faiths as well, giving pupils a chance to learn about Judaism and Islam.

Geography

60. In geography, pupils in Year 6 apply mapping skills successfully, develop fieldwork skills, and extend their understanding of the local environment. They consider ways of improving the school, with the help of local visitors, and use computers to help them set out their ideas. Pupils in Year 2 identify similarities and differences between their own surroundings and those of other cultures, such as Africa. A full programme of work has been developed, drawing upon the national guidelines, and the balance of time for the subject has improved since the last inspection.

History

61. Pupils enjoy history topics and they link historical enquiry and geographical skills well. For example, pupils in Year 6 learn about Ancient Greece, use maps and develop their knowledge of gods and goddesses associated with Mount Olympus and Greek legends. In Year 2, they discover facts about bygone times, such as the Victorian era, through activities that include looking at artefacts. The school has improved its provision since 1999, when there were shortcomings in the curriculum.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. These subjects were sampled. No lessons were seen in art, design and technology, music or physical education, so it is not possible to make overall judgements on the quality of provision.

Art and design

63. The work on display in art and design was of a high standard. It included some good drawings of local buildings by pupils of various ages. They had taken great care and looked very carefully to achieve correct proportion and scale. They took care in illustrating the patterns and textures of walls and roofs. In some cases the pictures had been developed into coloured pastel pictures of good quality. Pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 had also made collages, using a variety of materials to create the desired effect.

Design and technology

64. Work in design and technology is based on national guidelines, and planning ensures that pupils cover all the work expected of them. The work seen was of a standard to be expected of pupils of this age. It included clear designs, with simple drawings of the proposed finished product,

and notes of the materials to be used. Pupils follow a logical structure in planning in design and technology and take great care with the finished product. They work in a variety of materials, including food technology.

Music

65. Standards are good in singing, as observed in whole-school gatherings. In lessons, pupils link their work effectively to English topics and enjoy taking part in musical activities at the local secondary school. Staff have maintained the satisfactory provision since the last inspection. They make good use of taped music by composers such as Mozart and Grieg, and accompany pupils well on piano. A sound range of extra-curricular opportunities adds to pupils' enjoyment and personal development. For example, a few pupils learn to play instruments, such as clarinets. Appropriate priorities for future development include the monitoring of teaching and learning and developing assessment procedures.

Physical education

66. Activities are planned to cover all aspects of physical education during the year. Although the school has no hall and no playing field, it makes effective use of the nearby village hall and adjacent village green to give pupils the opportunities to develop their physical skills. The school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to engage in sport beyond the school day.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

67. No lessons were seen in PSHE so no overall judgement on the quality of provision can be made. The school takes care to ensure that pupils know the importance of being healthy and staying safe, through lessons in science and physical education. In religious education lessons they consider issues of spiritual, social and personal concern. Pupils learn about personal responsibility through undertaking various duties around the school, and older pupils are encouraged to care for younger ones. As a result, a delightful family atmosphere pervades the school, particularly at lunchtimes when pupils happily take turns to help to clear up after eating. The lunchtime supervisors play a strong role in encouraging this atmosphere. Sex and drugs education follows the governors' policies on these issues.

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	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
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).