

INSPECTION REPORT

MURRAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124649

Headteacher: Mrs D Gooding

Lead inspector: Mr M J Cahill

Dates of inspection: 3-6 May 2005

Inspection number: 267366

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:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	341
School address:	Nacton Road Ipswich Suffolk
Postcode:	IP3 9JL
Telephone number:	01473 728564
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Father Paul Carter
Date of previous inspection:	30 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Nacton, south east of Ipswich town centre. Part of the school's natural catchment area is within one of the 10 per cent most deprived wards in England. The school is larger than average and offers morning and afternoon Nursery classes. There are two small Reception classes and three classes for pupils in Years 1 and 2; pupils in Years 3 and 4 are in mixed age classes and there are two classes for pupils in Year 5 and two for those in Year 6. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is double the national average. Pupil mobility is very high, affecting about one in five pupils every year¹. Around 70 cent of the pupils are from White British families with the next largest groups being pupils from Caribbean and Bangladeshi backgrounds. At more than seven per cent, the proportion of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English is higher than in most schools. Children enter the school with a wide range of abilities but overall their knowledge and understanding is well below average, particularly in speech and language development, and this affects their learning across the curriculum. The school had operated two area support centres until funding ceased and has re-integrated the pupils served by these centres. It has a strong local reputation for succeeding with pupils who have experienced learning or behavioural difficulties elsewhere. Consequently, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above the national average and increasing; the proportion with a statement of special educational need is about five times the national average. As well as a wide range of moderate and special learning difficulties, the special educational

¹ Mobility refers to pupils who join after the start of the Reception year or leave before the end of Year 6.

needs in the school include severe and multiple learning difficulties, social, emotional, behavioural, hearing, autistic, physical, and speech or communication needs. The school is involved in Sure Start, Excellence in Cities and other national and local initiatives. During the year of the inspection long term absences had deprived the school of several senior members of staff, including the deputy headteacher; this has had serious financial implications. During the inspection, two classes were taken by experienced teachers covering long term absences.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19623	Michael Cahill	Lead inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Music
9619	Bob Miller	Lay inspector	
19897	Arthur Evans	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Physical education
22657	Mark Madeley	Team inspector	Foundation stage English as an additional language Art and design Design and technology Religious education
32332	Debbie Willis	Team inspector	Geography History

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	19
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	22
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This satisfactory school is improving and has several good features. Standards are improving and the school effectively promotes pupils' personal development. Leadership and management are satisfactory and pupils are well cared for, guided and supported. The school provides **satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the leadership of the headteacher is good and is clearly directed towards raising pupils' achievement through improving the quality of education that the school provides;
- national test results in Year 2 and Year 6 are well below the national average although most pupils make satisfactory progress from what, for many, are very low starting points; overall achievement is satisfactory and improving in Years 3 to 6;
- the school welcomes and values all pupils and successfully helps them to develop good attitudes to learning and good behaviour;
- the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good but provision for teaching information and communication technology and religious education is unsatisfactory;
- the governing body is not sufficiently active in supporting and monitoring the work of the school;
- some parents are not active enough in encouraging their children to come to school.

There has been a satisfactory level of improvement since the last inspection in 1998. The overall quality of teaching, including the management of pupils' behaviour, has improved and standards in mathematics are higher than they were.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - very low.
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Many pupils enter the school with poorly developed language and social skills; the school has a much higher proportion of pupils who have special educational needs than most schools and a very high proportion of pupils with full statements of need. The school succeeds well with its pupils and most make the progress expected of them. National test statistics are badly affected by the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the school failed to meet the targets agreed with the local education authority.

National test results for pupils in Year 2 are consistently well below the national average. Standards in the present Year 2 are well below average in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology. Pupils have made steady progress since joining the school. In religious education, pupils do not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

Inspection evidence indicates that the standards attained by Year 6 pupils are well below average in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology. Standards in religious education do not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

In Year 6, the results of national tests improved substantially, overall, in the period 2000 – 2003 but fell to very low in 2004 because almost half the year group had special educational needs, including one in six of the pupils having full statements.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are above average. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and there are good relationships throughout the school. Attendance is well below average because of lack of support from some parents; punctuality has improved and it is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality education for all its pupils. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with a significant proportion of better teaching in Years 3 to 6. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to make sure that all pupils have the support that they need in order to make progress. Pupils develop good attitudes to their learning and generally work well on their own or in groups.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage, and throughout the school, meets the needs of pupils to a satisfactory extent and there is a satisfactory variety of enrichment activities, including good opportunities in sport and the arts as well as an interesting range of visits and visitors. The accommodation is broadly adequate and has been considerably improved since the last inspection. Present financial constraints mean that aspects of the resources, for example, much of the computer stock, are unsatisfactory.

The school provides a good standard of support, care and guidance for all its pupils. It has developed very good links with other schools and these provide extra support for staff and pupils. The school maintains a satisfactory partnership with parents and there are some good links with the local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership that is clearly focused on raising pupils' achievements through improving the quality of education that the school provides. Other key members of staff provide varying levels of support; this is satisfactory overall. The school is satisfactorily managed and it has coped well with the turbulence caused by extended staff absence. Governance is unsatisfactory, but improving, and statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents hold positive views of the school but a sizeable number feel that they are not well enough informed and that their views are not sought, although the school works hard to involve them. Pupils like coming to school and join enthusiastically in all aspects of school life, contributing to its development, for example, in respect of appointing junior road safety officers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science;
- improve provision for information and communication technology and religious education;

- develop the role of the governing body in terms of supporting the school and monitoring its work;
- continue to impress on parents the importance of sending their children to school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but their low starting points mean that few are on course to achieve the national goals for early learning by the time that they enter Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are building on their earlier learning to a satisfactory degree although standards in Year 2 are well below average. Current standards in Year 6 are well below average but are improving, and indicate that there has been satisfactory overall progress in Years 3 to 6 and that these pupils are on course to gain improved national test results in 2005.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children who have special educational needs achieve well in relation to their targets and, frequently, in relation to National Curriculum levels.
- The national test results for pupils in Year 2 were very low, overall, in 2004 although they represent an improvement on the previous year; Year 6 results fell to very low in 2004 after several years of improvement.
- Pupils' progress in Year 6 is satisfactory compared with their national test results in Year 2; standards are improving but they are still well below average.
- Standards in religious education and information and communication technology are well below what they should be.

Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average in terms of children's skills, knowledge and understanding, and very low in relation to speech and language development. Many children have poorly developed personal and social skills and this has a negative effect on their learning. Overall, children's achievement in the Foundation years is satisfactory but few achieve the early learning goals for their age. Attainment on entry to Year 1 is well below average, overall, and most children are not ready to embark on the full National Curriculum.
2. The overall standard on entry is made even lower by the high pupil mobility, which is tending to bring in a large number of pupils with learning difficulties. Many of these pupils have had a disrupted educational career and have made slow progress before joining the school. The school has a much higher proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and a very much higher proportion having statements of special educational need than almost all comparable schools. Many of these pupils make good progress against their individual targets. A significant number of local pupils have transferred to the school in recent years because of the school's good provision for special educational needs. The school's success in attracting such pupils reduces the proportions attaining or exceeding nationally expected levels in the tests and this should be born in mind when interpreting test results. The school does particularly well with pupils whose emotional, behavioural and social difficulties have previously prevented them learning.

3. The achievement of pupils in the early stages of acquiring English is satisfactory. They receive good support from specialist teachers and support assistants and generally adequate help in class lessons.
4. Over the last five years, the school's national test results for pupils in Year 2 have been consistently well below average in reading, writing and mathematics; the trend in the school's results has been below the national trend, overall, although there has been good improvement in mathematics. In 2004, results were very low in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. These results indicate, however, that pupils have made satisfactory progress from their low starting points when they joined the school.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.4 (11.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	9.8 (9.5)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.8 (12.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 48 pupils in the year group, 23 boys and 25 girls. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. In the present Year 2, the attainment of pupils is currently well below average in speaking and listening, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Standards in writing are well below average but there are signs of gradual improvement. Reading standards are well below average but they are beginning to rise. In religious education, pupils' knowledge falls well below the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus. It was not possible to inspect fully the other subjects of the National Curriculum in Years 1 and 2. Overall, achievement is satisfactory.
6. Results in English and mathematics in Year 6 improved substantially in the period 2000 – 2003; those in science improved slightly. The overall trend of results for that period was similar to the national trend. Results in 2004 fell to very low when compared with the average of all schools nationally, mainly because nearly half of the pupils in the year group had special educational needs, including 17 per cent of the year group who had full statements. If allowance is made for the exceptionally high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs, the results are satisfactory and the substantial majority of pupils are making the nationally expected amount of progress over time.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	21.9 (25.1)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	24.1 (25.3)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	23.1 (26.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 47 pupils in the year group, 26 boys and 21 girls. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

7. More than half of the pupils, including many of those who have special educational needs, joined the school other than in the first year. The school's records show that a high proportion of those pupils who were at the school for the whole of Years 3 to 6,

including some of those with statements of special educational need, made at least the expected two National Curriculum levels of progress. Overall, their achievement is satisfactory. Over the last five years girls have often performed better than boys at both key stages, especially in reading; the school has acted effectively to address this. There are no significant differences in the achievement of any group of pupils, including those from minority ethnic families; the school is monitoring carefully the progress of Afro-Caribbean pupils who were not making the expected progress.

8. In 2004, the school failed to meet the targets agreed with the local education authority for the proportions of pupils achieving at the expected level in English and mathematics. In part this was because of changes in the composition of the year group after the targets were set. The target for the pupils to attain a higher level was not met in English but was slightly exceeded in mathematics. Targets for the present Year 6 are challenging but achievable in respect of both the Level 4 and the Level 5 proportions.
9. Of the present Year 6 pupils, more than 50 per cent have special educational needs, including 10 (17.5 per cent) with full statements. Current standards in Year 6 are well below the national average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Standards in religious education are well below those indicated in the locally agreed syllabus. The overall quality of teaching in Year 6 is good and pupils are on course to record improved results in each of English, mathematics and science. In the current Year 6, the vast majority of pupils who have been at the school for the whole of Years 3 to 6 have made the required two National Curriculum levels progress. Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory; and that of many pupils who have special educational needs is good in this respect. It is not possible to report fully on the other subjects of the National Curriculum in Years 3 to 6 although work of a satisfactory standard was observed in most subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Behaviour is **good**. Pupils' attitudes are **good**. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Attendance is **poor** and punctuality is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school sets high expectations for pupil behaviour and there are very good principles that enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong.
- The school is highly successful in promoting good relationships and racial harmony.
- There is a very high respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.

Commentary

10. Overall, the pupils' behaviour is good. Most behave very well for most of the time. There is an increasing number of pupils however, who are identified as having specific behavioural needs. These pupils are given good support and most make satisfactory progress in their behaviour over time. A significant minority of parents do not think behaviour is good and believe that their child is bullied or harassed. Inspection findings do not support this view. The school sets very high expectations of behaviour. It recognises the need to review constantly the behaviour management, to consult with parents and pupils, and to ensure consistency among staff in their application of

sanctions and rewards issued to pupils. Anti-bullying is a strong theme in personal, social and health education. Ten pupils, all of them from White British families, have been excluded in the past academic year; two exclusions were permanent. This level of exclusion is very high compared to other schools. The procedures followed conform to nationally expected practice and the majority of pupils involved were reintegrated into school successfully. Short-term exclusion is used as an extreme measure, essentially to involve parents in order to devise a common approach.

11. Pupils' attitudes, both to learning and to each other, are good. Pupils are clear that if there are any problems between pupils, the school will act quickly and in most cases effectively. Pupils say teaching is good and teachers help them when they get stuck with their work. Praise and encouragement are used particularly effectively. The school establishes its own values and ethos, and it works very hard in combating the examples of anti-social attitudes and behaviour modelled within the immediate neighbourhood.
12. Pupils felt that their individuality and independence were recognised and developed. There is a strong sense of respect for each other's feelings and beliefs. Most pupils take time to listen to one another, to build upon an idea, and to shape and refine through discussion. A secure, trusting framework is established in lessons and relationships among pupils are very good. The school is a racially harmonious community and parents say their child likes coming to school.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	205	8	2
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	18	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	38	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	10	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

13. The provisions for pupils' moral and social development are very good. The school is highly inclusive; the pupils value its diversity and are sensitive to cultural heritage, both their own, and that of others. Reminders of what is right and wrong in the way of conduct are displayed

throughout the school. One poster in particular which caught the eye of the inspection team reads, “a smile given will always be returned”. The older pupils particularly relish the opportunities to take on responsibilities such as “playground buddies”, looking after younger pupils and helping out at assemblies. They regularly raise money for various local, national and international charities. All of these activities add to their personal development.

Attendance

Attendance is **poor**. Punctuality is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The efforts of some parents and carers to ensure the attendance and punctuality of their children are unsatisfactory.
- The link with the educational welfare service to reduce absences is ineffective.

Commentary

14. The much higher than usual authorised absences are mainly due to sickness and an increasing number of parents who take family holidays during term time. However, the majority of parents are very co-operative in ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually. The school links with the educational welfare officer are not proving successful in arresting this decline in attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.6	School data	0.6
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for all its pupils. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The curriculum meets pupils’ needs to a satisfactory extent and there are satisfactory opportunities for enrichment. The school provides good support, advice and guidance for pupils and maintains a very good partnership with other local schools. Partnerships with parents are satisfactory and there are some good links with the local community.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and promotes satisfactory achievement. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage pupils’ behaviour well and this helps to create favourable conditions for learning; good use of praise and encouragement promote pupils’ self-esteem.

- Pupils' progress in English and mathematics is effectively tracked and used to set targets but assessment in most other subjects does not promote pupils' longer-term progress; marking is often not sufficiently focused on improvement.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to provide the support that many pupils need in order to be fully included in lessons.
- Teachers make too little use of information and communication technology resources and of pupils' skills in this respect to improve learning across the curriculum.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4 (8%)	19 (39 %)	25 (51 %)	1 (2 %)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

15. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory; in Years 3 to 6 it is good. Very little teaching is less than satisfactory. The overall quality of teaching has been broadly maintained since the previous inspection, despite the long term absences of senior experienced teachers. The differences in overall quality between teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 and that in Years 1 and 2 have also continued.
16. Where the satisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2 had a few aspects for improvement, the relevant factors included a lack of clarity about what was to be learned, expressed in language that pupils could understand. By contrast, the learning intentions for pupils in lessons in Years 3 to 6 are generally expressed well. This enables purposes to make sense to the pupils and they learn well because the work is clearly focused; they know why they were doing what they were doing and they are able to judge their own success.
17. A second factor that separated the good teaching from satisfactory teaching was the care and success with which teachers prepared lessons to meet the needs of groups of pupils with different learning needs within the class. For example, learning was good for pupils with substantial special educational needs in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 3 and 4 because the work on calculating change was set at appropriate levels of difficulty. By contrast, a Year 2 English lesson did not have enough differentiation² in group tasks and there was too little involvement by the teacher to provide the necessary support.
18. Important positive features of the vast majority of teaching seen was the success with which teachers managed the behaviour of pupils and the good team work between teachers and teaching assistants. In the best teaching, pupils' behaviour was managed very effectively because the work presented was interesting and pitched at the correct level. Teachers made clear their expectations of the standard of work and behaviour and applied the school's agreed behaviour policy consistently. Teaching assistants play a vital part in making sure that those pupils who have special

² Differentiation refers to the arrangements that teachers use in lessons to meet the learning needs of pupils with different levels of ability and attainment.

educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, have the support they need in lessons.

19. The quality of teaching of mathematics, including the skills of numeracy, is good in Year 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The leadership and example of the mathematics co-ordinator have promoted this improvement in the quality of teaching, and standards are clearly rising as the improvements work through the school. The teaching of literacy and of the other subjects inspected is satisfactory.
20. There is good support for pupils who have special educational needs, from class teachers, teaching assistants, and behaviour support assistants, and this is helping these pupils to make good progress. Lesson planning, however, often fails to state clearly what precise forms this support will take, although, in practice, the teachers often match tasks well to those pupils with the most severe special educational needs. Extra support is usually provided within classrooms in the mornings and by withdrawals for focused guidance, for example, to do with behaviour or working in groups, in the afternoons.
21. Assessment, often through well-focused and targeted questions, is a good feature of some, but not all lessons. At best, teachers help pupils to build on their earlier learning. For example, in a very successful art lesson on texture with pupils in Year 3 and 4 when the pupils were challenged appropriately and given good opportunities to be creative because the teacher knew the stages they had reached.. Most teachers use questions well to assess, consolidate and extend learning at the start of lessons, but less often in the final session, because not enough time has been left for this. In English and mathematics, good records are kept of the progress of individual pupils through the National Curriculum levels and these are used increasingly effectively. Assessment of pupils who have special educational needs is good and leads to well focused and targeted individual education plans. Many subjects are taught through discrete units of work and satisfactory assessments are made of pupils' performance in most cases. However, procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress from unit to unit and year to year in these subjects are relatively undeveloped. Overall, assessment is satisfactory with good features and areas for further development.
22. There is too much inconsistency in the quality of marking of pupils' work and in expectations of neatness and good presentation. At best, pupils are encouraged to form their numerals correctly and to write on the lines, but it is evident from some of the work that there is not enough insistence on this by some teachers. In a similar way, there are good examples of marking that clearly tells pupils what is good (or not) about their work and how it can be improved. Overall, however, there are too many examples of work that has not been marked or not marked helpfully.
23. This is an improving school and pupils are increasingly developing confidence in their ability to be successful learners because many teachers promote a *can do* culture in their classrooms. Where expectations are high and clear, pupils demonstrate that they can produce work of good quality. Consistency of approach in the two Year 6 classes and a strong focus on improvement meant that pupils achieved well in the majority of the lessons observed, often showing good perseverance and commitment to their learning. Teachers throughout the school are generally consistent in their use of praise and encouragement to promote good behaviour and because there is skilled extra support for pupils who have difficulties in this respect, most pupils develop the important skills of working with others. Relationships are generally good amongst

pupils, and between adults and pupils, and this contributes well to establishing and maintaining an atmosphere in which learning can be enjoyed.

24. There were some good examples in Year 6 in music and history, and in Year 5 in mathematics, of teachers using information and communication technology resources to support teaching and learning. Overall, however, teachers do not make enough use of existing resources or of pupils' developing skills in information and communication technology to enhance learning in other subjects; this is an important area for development.

The curriculum

The school's curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education programmes. Children's learning is enriched by **satisfactory** extra-curricular activities and visits. Staffing and accommodation meet the needs of the curriculum in a **good** way but some resources are **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school welcomes and supports the needs of every pupil.
- Pupils benefit from good facilities for physical education.
- Members of staff share personal experiences well to make collective worship meaningful.
- Personal and social education prepares pupils well for life.
- Pupils' computing skills are weak because much of the equipment is inadequate.

Commentary

25. The school works exceptionally hard to support the learning of every pupil, and because of their very diverse needs, it has to make difficult decisions about the curriculum. Most pupils experience the full curriculum but some, like pupils in the early stages of learning English or those with specific learning or behavioural problems, are withdrawn and taught in small groups. This is a positive move because these pupils need extensive additional support and a calmer atmosphere in which to learn and in this sense the curriculum fully meets their needs.
26. The school's planning covers the requirements of the National Curriculum, and exceeds them in physical education where swimming is taught throughout the school. Children in the Foundation Stage follow a suitable programme linked to the national guidance for their age group. The whole-school focus on literacy and numeracy is having a positive impact on pupils but the curriculum does not yet help pupils use and develop their skills in other subjects sufficiently well enough. The school has also sought to emphasise the creative arts and standards are rising. Pupils particularly enjoy and benefit from art, drama and dance afternoons and theme weeks.
27. The religious education programme is suitably based on the locally agreed syllabus but pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory because teachers haven't followed the programme closely enough. Assemblies are good, involve staff and pupils well, and meet the requirements of a daily act of collective worship. The school competes successfully in sports like soccer and athletics and pupils work alongside dance and drama specialists. They also enjoyed performing plays and dance works.

28. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. The teachers identify pupils experiencing problems with work or behaviour at an early stage and regularly assess the pupils' attainment and progress. Class teachers, together with the co-ordinator for special educational needs and teaching assistants, draw up individual education plans for the pupils. These plans are of good quality and are reviewed twice a year, with new targets drawn up as necessary. There is a very worthwhile weekly behaviour support group in Years 5 and 6, which helps pupils with emotional difficulties to interact more successfully with others. Pupils who have special educational needs have equal access to the curriculum and to extra-curricular activities and there is satisfactory access for pupils with severe mobility problems.
29. The pupils' good behaviour and their positive attitudes are partly a product of the well-planned and interesting programme for personal, social and emotional development. A suitable programme for sex and relationships education includes elements from science, the personal, social and emotional development programme and talks from medical staff. The programme for pupils in the early stages of learning English is satisfactory. However, the pupils should have targets that are more specific to their own learning rather than the general statements that they currently have.
30. The contribution of support staff is good. They skilfully work with pupils who find concentration difficult and offer additional support to those who have special educational needs. The school has adequate accommodation but the Reception classes have restricted access to the new outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school, additional rooms are used well to facilitate small group teaching. The school also benefits from extensive sports facilities and a high quality new outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage. Resources generally meet the needs of the pupils and the curriculum but are unsatisfactory in information and communication technology and religious education. There are also insufficient resources in the Foundation Stage to ensure that children learn through play in the Reception classes as well as they do in the Nursery.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares for all pupils' welfare, health and safety in a good manner. The quality of support advice and guidance is good. There are good arrangements for involving pupils in the life of the school by valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good induction³ arrangements for children and pupils when they join the school.
- The pupils' good and trusting relationships with adults in the school.
- The good individual support provided for pupils, including those with special educational needs.
- The good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and the effective arrangements to take account of their views on improving the school.

Commentary

31. The new school office provides a very much-improved facility. The school buildings have recently been subject of an extensive redecoration and refurbishment

³ Induction refers to the arrangements for receiving pupils who are new to the school, helping them to settle into school routines and to make friends.

programme. They are kept in a clean condition and they provide a safe and healthy environment. Regular health and safety checks and a building maintenance programme identify and rectify promptly any hazards. There are effective procedures for dealing with accidents and there are a good number of personnel trained in first-aid. Accidents are accurately recorded and analysed on a regular basis to identify and remedy the cause and frequency of any accidents. Health and safety has been continuously improved since the previous inspection.

32. Relationships are strong because pupils are listened to; mutual respect is encouraged and always apparent. Parents say that staff treat their children fairly and encourage them to become mature. The effectiveness of guidance is good in terms of pupils' personal development. Good attention is given to analysing the performance and progress of individual pupils and this information is used to set targets. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
33. Pupils are comfortable about approaching individual teachers or support staff for help or guidance appropriate to their needs. The partnership between the teachers and support assistants is effective. The pupils are very satisfied with the school.
34. The effective child protection procedures are fully understood by adults in the school. Both the designated teacher and governor have undertaken training and this is an improvement since the last inspection. There are satisfactory links with outside agencies, although those with the educational welfare service are not contributing enough to improving attendance. A "drop-in" session is organised with the school nurse at regular intervals for those parents of children who have special educational needs. The teachers know the pupils' and their families very well, are sensitive to their needs and are able therefore able to provide good support and guidance. There are good arrangements to get to know children before they start at the school. Parents agree that the induction procedure for both themselves and their child is a strong feature of the school.
35. The school actively encourages the expression of pupils' views both formally and informally. The school council meets regularly to consider matters as diverse as raising money for local and national charities and appointing junior road safety officers to raise awareness among other pupils about this important aspect. These contributions to school improvement also have a very positive impact on pupils' personal development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Links with the community are good and those with other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with other schools when pupils join or leave Murrayfield help to ease transitions.
- Parents are involved through seeking, valuing and acting on their views and there are good procedures for dealing with any concerns or complaints they may have.
- Provision of information to parents is good, overall, but the contribution made by a significant number of parents to their children's' learning both at home and in school is insufficient to help raise standards.

Commentary

36. Parents are very satisfied with what the school does. They say they feel comfortable about approaching the school, that their children are well taught, and that staff expect hard work from their children. The majority of parents contribute by supporting their child's learning at home. However, a significant number are either unable or unwilling to help their child at home or in school and this is having a negative impact on standards achieved. A number of parents do not feel they are kept well informed about the progress their child is making or of the homework arrangements. Inspection findings support the concerns of these parents and the school recognises the need to develop these links.
37. The head teacher is always available at the beginning and end of each day to deal with any concerns or complaints that parents may have. This informal contact ensures high levels of parental satisfaction and ensures that any problems are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
38. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, regular newsletters and school notice boards. Parents appreciate the opportunities to discuss their child's progress at the formal meeting with teachers. A helpful end-of-year academic report, containing targets to help improve, accompanies this meeting. Parents are consulted about school improvement and their views sought on improving behaviour. Parents are actively involved in raising money for the school swimming pool through organising events such as a summer fete.
39. The partnership with the secondary school is effective and includes good transfer of test data and pastoral information when pupils move on at the end of Year 6. There are very good arrangements for transferring information about pupils who have special educational needs. The very effective partnership with other primary schools includes very good arrangements for shared professional development activities. The school is actively involved in several locally shared initiatives to improve standards.
40. The school's leadership builds good links with the community through its work with Ormiston Children and Families Trust. Residents in the community attend the school for Family Learning, such as literacy and numeracy lessons and a number of groups use the school premises after hours. Regular outside visits, make a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. The school actively seeks out the skills and resources that are available locally in an effort to strengthen governance, decision-making and pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is **good**. Management is **satisfactory**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is good and is clearly directed towards raising pupils' achievement and creating a positive ethos for learning.
- There is a very strong commitment to ensuring that all groups of pupils have equal access to what the school has to offer.
- There are some weaknesses in aspects of staff induction and financial management.
- Governance of the school is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

41. The good leadership of the headteacher is resulting in a positive ethos in which the vast majority of the pupils behave well, are eager to learn, and make the nationally expected progress. She has effectively held the school together during the recent turbulent times. The pupils think a lot of the headteacher; this was very apparent in a dance club, which she was leading and in which over thirty pupils were participating with enjoyment. The headteacher has a clear vision of what needs to be done to move the school forward and to meet the challenges which it currently faces. She is supported by a senior leadership team, whose role in providing effective direction for the school is now developing satisfactorily, due in large measure to the short-term secondment to the school of two experienced teachers who are covering long term absences. Key members of staff are fully committed to meeting the needs of all groups of pupils.
42. The headteacher monitors the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning effectively, although this has been disrupted lately by the need to cover for staff absences and to cover the absence of other managers. Curriculum leadership by other key members of staff provides a mixed picture. Whilst leadership in the core subjects, on which the school has rightly focused, is good, leadership in some other subjects is underdeveloped. Plans to improve standards in the priority subjects are clear and set out helpful guidance as to how this might be achieved.
43. Management is satisfactory. Daily routines are well established and they result in an orderly learning environment. The school is developing satisfactory procedures for using information gained from assessments and from national test results to inform future planning and to raise standards. There are satisfactory procedures for the performance management of all teaching and non-teaching staff. This, together with whole-school needs, leads to satisfactory provision for the training of staff.
44. During a period of high staff turnover, the headteacher has managed the recruitment and deployment of personnel well. Although there is good support from their mentors for the three newly qualified teachers currently in school, the need to cover for staff absences has meant that these teachers have not regularly received the full quota of non-contact time to which they are entitled.
45. Financial management is now satisfactory, though there have been serious weaknesses until quite recently. The internal audit report of 2002 was highly critical of the systems in place. No action had been taken to implement the recommendations of previous audits. A follow-up audit in 2003 recognised some significant improvements, but found a number of issues remained unresolved. The headteacher and the secretary have worked hard to improve matters. High staffing costs, together with the need to cover staff absences and the cost of funding an acting deputy headteacher, are currently presenting real financial problems.
46. Governance of the school is unsatisfactory. The governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory obligations but there is a lack of presence, direction and challenge. The governors' role as critical friends of the school is underdeveloped and there is insufficient support for the headteacher in meeting the challenges which the school faces and in school improvement planning. Too few governors visit the school regularly in order to monitor provision and to see how the pupils learn. As a result, they are not fully aware of the school's weaknesses or of its strengths. Nevertheless, governance is improving. The newly appointed chair and vice-chair, together with other new appointments, are beginning to develop the governing body's role.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,037,585
Total expenditure	1,055,854
Expenditure per pupil	2,893

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	55,806
Balance carried forward to the next	37,537

47. In both the preceding (2004-2005) and the current (2005-2006) financial years the school is bearing the cost of temporary senior staff appointments to cover long-term absences. This is presenting the governing body with considerable difficulty in avoiding a deficit budget as well as diverting funds from school improvement.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children join the school in the term after their fourth birthday. Induction procedures are good but new children joining the school every term causes difficulties for staff and children alike because the make-up of classes is frequently changing. On entry to the Nursery, attainment is much lower than generally found. Children often have poor social skills, narrow vocabularies and little understanding of the world around them.
49. Children who have special educational needs and those who are at the early stages of learning English get good support from very capable classroom assistants. Their achievement is similar to all the other children.
50. The Nursery is very bright and welcoming and is a contrast to the Reception classrooms which appear poorly resourced and do not lend themselves as well to display, because of the high number of windows. Access to the high quality outdoor area is restricted in the Reception classes.
51. It is not possible to judge the improvement since the last inspection accurately because of changes in curriculum and age groups but it is clear that the Nursery remains almost a separate unit and there has been little effective monitoring and evaluation of provision.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for pupils' personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are keen learners.
- Teachers help children become more independent.
- Social skills at meals times are poor.

Commentary

52. Children's attainment is well below the national goals for early learning but it has improved considerably from very low starting points because the good teaching and learning focus on improving the children's social skills. Snack times are led well and children learn to pour drinks themselves and recognise that fruit is a healthy option. Social skills are poor at lunchtimes when children often talk with a mouth full of food and do not use their cutlery correctly.
53. The children learn to select tasks from the options available and concentrate quite well. They rarely play together, but alongside each other. Adults encourage sharing and co-operation and most children respond positively. They also challenge the children to do as much as they can for themselves, for instance when changing for physical activity. Teaching, learning and achievement are all good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for the development of pupils' communications, language and literacy skills is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of a multi-sensory approach to learning letter sounds is effective.
- Children enjoy forming letters with some making clear letter shapes.
- Children speak mainly in words and phrases.

Commentary

54. Children's attainment is well below the national goals for early learning. They join the school with very limited skills and make steady progress over time. Children often do not speak clearly or accurately and members of staff focus on this in the Nursery. They provide good models of speech and encourage children to listen attentively. This approach is continued in the Reception classes and children listen carefully during whole class sessions. They respond eagerly to questions but replies are frequently brief and sometimes grammatically incorrect. Children recall some of the detail from stories they have heard but few talk about them in sentences.
55. Children enjoy listening to stories and know how to hold books and treat them with care. They have a growing awareness of letter sounds and link them well to the written form they have learned from a published scheme. Higher attaining children read simple sentences whilst most others talk about the pictures illustrating the text and identify some key words.
56. In the Nursery, children improve their eye and hand co-ordination using paint brushes and crayons. They are encouraged to 'make marks' when attempting early writing skills and to tell adults what they have written. In the Reception classes, children start to write approximate letter shapes and words to convey their thoughts. Most children in the Reception classes write their own name accurately. The overall quality of teaching, learning and achievement is satisfactory.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for pupils' mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Through play, shopping routines are well established.
- Children's use of mathematical language is weak.

Commentary

57. Children's attainment is well below the early learning goals. Satisfactory teaching and learning enables children to chant numbers quite accurately to twenty and to recognise some numerals during a well taught game. They establish the routines of serving in a shop and have some concept of cost and change. Children particularly struggle with the language of mathematics, for instance continually using simple terms like 'big' and 'little' in most situations. Some children struggle when asked to find 'one

more than' a low number. Children start school with little awareness of number and over time make steady progress. Their achievement is satisfactory in both the Nursery and Reception classes.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are insufficient resources for information and communication technology.
- Children are beginning to understand about healthy living.
- The teaching of topics broadens the children's vocabulary and understanding of the world around them.

Commentary

58. Children's attainment is well below the national goals for early learning. They join school with a narrow experience of life and satisfactory teaching helps them make satisfactory progress. Most name the common farm animals but a few struggle with this. They observe things closely but do not have the vocabulary to describe what they see, for example, when Reception children held African snails. Real vegetables and fruit in the Nursery shop are helping the children to identify and name them and to start to understand about a healthy life style.
59. Children use the tape recorder well to follow a favourite story. Progress with information and communication technology skills is limited because computers are not available in every room. Children confidently use construction kits, especially when guided skilfully by classroom assistants, but teachers' planning does not always identify what children will learn from this type of play. Teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory overall.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for pupils' physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children are confident in the water.
- Adults are not involved enough in children's outdoor play.

Commentary

60. Children's attainment is below the early learning goals but most are confident in the water because swimming is taught well. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well from very low starting points. Children move with generally good control but few can skip and some find stopping difficult when running around the gym. They improve their hand and eye co-ordination through play with small toys, building blocks and jigsaws but using scissors accurately is a weakness. Children really enjoy using the new outdoor area but their skills would benefit from greater involvement by adults in their play.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for pupils' creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy painting and drawing.
- Resources for role play in the Reception classes are unsatisfactory.
- Opportunities are missed for children to learn through singing.

Commentary

61. Children's attainment is well below the national goals for early learning. They use the well- resourced shop in the Nursery to extend their language and to mimic shopping routines. Resources in the Reception classes are not as good and this restricts the children's progress because they do not talk much whilst playing in the role play area. Painting and drawing activities are always available and they help the children to improve their awareness of shape and texture. They sing some songs, but greater use could be made of music and song to support learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. From a very low starting point the children's achievement is satisfactory.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below the national average, but they are beginning to improve, particularly in reading.
- Worthwhile initiatives have been put in place to raise boys' attainment in reading.
- There are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects.

Commentary

62. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, though standards are well below average. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their literacy targets. Pupils for whom English is a second language make satisfactory progress. The boys perform less well than the girls in reading, although, in other aspects of literacy, there is no significant difference in attainment by gender.

63. Speaking and listening skills are well below average in Year 2. Many pupils find it difficult to speak more than a few simple words coherently and their concentration span is quite limited. Speaking skills improve through Years 3 to 6 and higher attaining pupils speak confidently and quite fluently. However, the listening skills of many pupils remain weak.

64. Standards in reading are well below average, but they are beginning to rise. By Year 2, higher attaining pupils read quite fluently, with good expression and understanding. They enjoy reading and read regularly at home. Lower attaining pupils are much less confident and require considerable support. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils are reading quite fluently. Lower ability pupils have weak comprehension skills and their

understanding of higher level vocabulary is limited. No evidence was observed of the regular use of reading diaries, which might provide opportunities for the pupils to review the books which they have read.

65. Standards in writing are well below average, but here, too, there are signs of gradual improvement. Only a minority of the pupils regularly uses joined-up writing. Correct use of punctuation is inconsistent and the pupils often make limited use of imaginative vocabulary. Presentation of work is frequently untidy. Nevertheless, by Year 2, the pupils are making satisfactory progress in their understanding of rhyming words and they sequence events in simple stories. Progress in poetry is often good in Years 3 to 6. Some of the pupils have recently had their poems published as part of the region's Young Writers' Competition. By Year 6, the pupils are making satisfactory progress in differing forms of writing, such as instructions, autobiographies, journalistic writing and debates. They examine story structure and they have good opportunities to write creatively at length. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand the significance of paragraphs.
66. Standards in spelling and handwriting are below average. Younger pupils fail to keep their letters the same size and often fail to keep their writing on the lines. Even higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are often careless with their handwriting. There are regular sessions in school and regular homework to improve the pupils' spelling and these are beginning to have some positive impact.
67. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Some teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good. The teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included in question and answer sessions. There is a strong focus on the development of spelling and handwriting skills. Teaching assistants provide effective support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The teachers use a range of strategies to motivate the pupils and to help them learn effectively. They ensure that resources are well prepared for lessons, with plenty of visual stimuli to focus the pupils' attention. This was the case in a Year 3/4 lesson, where a variety of stimulating pictures helped the pupils to think of interesting adjectives to use in describing a setting, and in a Year 5 lesson, where the pupils investigated a variety of tourist information to identify aspects of persuasive writing. The teachers match work well to the pupils' differing needs. They monitor pupils' progress carefully and they encourage the pupils to read regularly at home.
68. There is sometimes insufficient focus on instilling habits of good work presentation, much of which is quite untidy. The quality of marking is inconsistent. Some marking is helpful in guiding the pupils to improve their work, whilst other marking is less thorough. At times, there are no comments by teachers on pieces of unfinished work. The teachers make insufficient use of information and communication technology to enhance learning.
69. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She monitors colleagues' planning and teaching, to gain an overview of provision and standards. She has led training, which has developed expertise in various aspects of the teaching of literacy, and she has introduced initiatives to improve boys' reading, such as digital storytelling and visual texts. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress. Data is now being used more thoroughly to highlight areas of weakness and to plan the next steps in learning. There is a clear action plan to raise standards. There is a good range of non-fiction books in the school library and learning is enriched by workshops led by a visiting poet.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

70. There are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects and this is a barrier to the development of their ability to write at length. The older pupils write satisfactory accounts of practical scientific investigations. In history, they write short accounts of aspects of life in Tudor England and of aspects of life in wartime Britain. In personal, social and health education, they write about feelings, keeping safe and other issues, but not at great length. The same is true of writing in geography and religious education. Speaking and listening skills are developed satisfactorily across the curriculum, especially in Years 3 to 6.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good subject leadership is promoting improvements in provision and standards; the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress through the National Curriculum levels, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- National test results in Year 2 and Year 6 have improved over the last five years although in 2004 they were still well below the national average.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6 and pupils' achievement in these lessons is good.
- Very little use is made of information and communication technology resources to promote pupils' mathematical learning.

Commentary

71. The school's national test results in 2004 for Year 2 pupils were well below average in comparison with other schools. Test results have been improving from a very low point in 2000 and are now closer to the national average than they were. In Year 6, the school's results in 2004 were well below average when compared with all schools nationally and when compared with other schools whose pupils had recorded similar results in their Year 2 tests; here, too, the trend is one of significant improvement over five years. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and is good in Years 3 to 6. There has been satisfactory improvement in provision since the last inspection.
72. Examination of the work of pupils in Year 2 indicates that they are building satisfactorily, but slowly, on low starting points. Most pupils write numerals correctly and show understanding of how to use a number line for simple addition and subtraction. Pupils of average and above average ability are beginning to grasp the idea of multiplication as repeated addition. The recorded work of lower attaining pupils gives little indication that they have a secure grasp of place value and counting on or back. However, during the inspection, these pupils correctly read numerals as words, ordered 12p, 5p, 2p and 15p from biggest to least correctly, and made satisfactory progress in the lesson in terms of adding two numbers together and recognising number bonds to 10. Most pupils used their fingers to achieve mainly correct answers; there was too little requirement to attempt mental recall and no concrete apparatus for those who needed a more visual approach. Overall achievement in Years 1 and 2,

including that of the high proportions of pupils who have special educational needs, and of those for whom English is an additional language, is satisfactory. When mathematics is not taught by the class teacher, there are fewer opportunities than there should be for reinforcement and extension of mathematical learning outside mathematics lessons.

73. Teaching and learning for pupils in the mixed age classes for Year 3 and 4 pupils is in ability groups and is of good quality. Improvements in standards are evident in the work of pupils in these year groups, and attainment is above average. Examination of the work of the current Year 6 pupils and lesson observations shows that they are benefiting from good, sometimes very good, teaching and are making up for ground lost in earlier years. Scrutiny of work completed before the inspection shows that pupils have been encouraged to develop strategies for number based work and their recording shows increasing understanding. Some of the marking of work is focused well on improvement and this is something that could usefully become consistent throughout the school. During the inspection, pupils were revising for the following week's national tests and those in the upper ability group used mathematical language correctly, showing satisfactory understanding of *grid* methods of multiplication and *partitioning*. Those of lower ability benefited from a very good lesson which focused on developing their problem solving skills.
74. Work in Year 6 is particularly well matched to the needs of the pupils and the use of practical methods which is a feature of the better teaching. , Year 5 pupils who were learning about rounding decimal fractions were further interested when their teacher located the concept in the context of estimating whether the class would fit in an enclosed playground if laid end to end. The learning and achievement of pupils in the other Year 5 class was similarly enhanced through their teacher's energy, enthusiasm, and her use of information and communication resources to stimulate pupils and to provide them visual learning opportunities. During the inspection, achievement in lessons was often good; over time achievement has been satisfactory for pupils of all abilities and backgrounds in Year 6
75. Overall, there is little evidence of pupils using their skills, and the school's information and communication technology resources, to enhance their learning in mathematics. The co-ordinator has rightly identified this as a key component for development alongside improving number skills, so that pupils can progressively develop a range of strategies and improve their confidence and competence. The co-ordinator has made a strong contribution to improving attainment, especially in Key Stage 2, and has a clear sense of what needs to be done and how to do it.

Mathematics across the curriculum

76. There are a few examples of pupils using their mathematical skills in other subjects, mostly graphical work and data handling in science. Overall, however, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other contexts and this is unsatisfactory.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- National test results in Year 2 and Year 6 are too low.
- There is insufficient planned progression of pupils' skills in investigation and recording findings.
- There is not enough use of information and communication technology to improve teaching and learning but visits and visitors provide good enrichment of the curriculum.

Commentary

77. In the school's national assessments in 2004, around 70 per cent of Year 2 pupils achieved the national expectation of Level 2 while very few gained the higher Level 3; overall results were well below the national average. The results for pupils in Year 6 showed an overall improvement from 2000 to 2003, but fell to a very low level in 2004 for reasons outlined above.
78. Current standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are well below average but pupils have built, to a satisfactory extent, on the poor knowledge and understanding of the world that most have on entry to the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are improving their knowledge and understanding in the appropriate parts of the curriculum. For example they correctly distinguish between *alive* and *not-alive*, correctly label the main parts of the body and match young and old of different species. Good opportunities to develop their observational skills in relation to plants are provided through visiting a local farm and focusing on what grows in the local environment and on plants that we eat. Achievement over Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, most pupils, for example correctly order pictures showing the life cycle of a butterfly and identify those parts of the body that are to do with the senses. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 benefited from the stimulating presentation of a visiting marine biologist and the practical activities that she organised.
79. The pupils' recording skills are relatively under-developed because of poor literacy skills and much of the work is worksheet based. There is insufficient whole-school progression in developing recording and investigational skills. Overall, there has not been enough improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 6, for example, could identify the key components of planning a fair test but individually did not have a secure grasp of these. It is clear that they have not had sufficient systematic practice and reinforcement in earlier years. The revision lesson observed made a useful contribution to consolidating pupils' knowledge and understanding but once again it was clear that well below average literacy skills militated against learning. Nevertheless, there is evidence in work completed that pupils in Year 6 have been encouraged and required to develop their recording and reporting skills. Most, for example, make a satisfactory attempt at explaining why washing is drying quickly. There are some good examples of marking that promoted further improvement through questions.
80. The overall quality of teaching is now satisfactory and pupils of all abilities, including those learning English as an additional language, and the large proportion who have special educational needs, are building to a satisfactory extent on their earlier learning. Achievement is satisfactory in terms of the pupils' test performance at Year 6 compared with their attainment on entry to the school, but should be better. There was little evidence of the use of information and communication technology resources to promote learning, although the school possesses a temperature probe and a microscope.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent improvements in provision are appropriate and timely, but overall, resources are inadequate.
- There are too few examples of the use of the resources to enhance teaching and learning in other subjects.
- There is not enough emphasis on pupils' long term skill development and tracking their progress.

Commentary

81. At the time of the last inspection it was noted that the co-ordinator was absent from school during the inspection period, that there was no concerted programme of skills teaching and that pupils' experience depended very much on the level of individual teachers' skills. To a substantial extent this remains the position; provision and standards have not improved sufficiently since the last inspection and subject leadership is unsatisfactory. However, the headteacher has initiated improvements, including linking all classrooms to the internet and to the computer suite, and her plans for extending the provision of data projectors and interactive whiteboards in classrooms are very satisfactory.
82. Many pupils do not have ready access to a computer at home and many have poorly developed literacy and keyboard skills. Year 1 pupils were very keen to use the computers in their lesson on word processing but most found inputting even very short phrases difficult. Most successfully enlarged and reduced script size but few experimented with font size or colour as the teacher had modelled. Staff gave satisfactory support to individuals to make sure that all were included. However, the lesson was less effective than it could have been because the learning intention was neither presented in child friendly language nor shared with the pupils and there was insufficient urgency to achieve results. The benefits of organising smaller teaching groups in the computer suite were very evident in a lesson with pupils in Year 2, especially because not all computers in the suite were in working order. The teacher broke the lesson down into small steps and pupils achieved well from low starting points; they all succeeded in designing and printing an eye-catching sign. Overall standards in Year 2 are clearly well below national expectations.
83. The overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory over time because many pupils have not experienced planned and progressive skill development and use. However, there was good teaching and learning in Year 2 and Year 5. Year 5 pupils achieved well in a well-planned lesson in which they understood what they were expected to do and the majority of the time was focused on achieving the learning intention. Most pupils demonstrated that they could input the correct sequence of commands to achieve a desired result in a control program; overall their attainment in this respect was average. However, older pupils, including those now in Year 6, have not developed their skills across the information and communication technology curriculum systematically enough, and do not have enough opportunities to use those that they have outside of their specialist lessons. Achievement over time is unsatisfactory and standards are well below what they should be.

Information communication technology across the curriculum

84. Information communication technology is not fully embedded in teachers' planning across the curriculum. Financial constraints mean that the clearly recognised need to upgrade hardware and software throughout the school has had to be put on hold. Partly because of this, there are too few examples of teachers and pupils using information and communication technology resources to promote learning. A very good example of the potential was seen in the presentation created by a Year 1 teacher to stimulate pupils to compare and contrast the localities of Ipswich and Felixstowe. There were also good examples of the use of the resources in Year 6, to stimulate learning in history and music. The key area for development, after equipment has been upgraded, is increasing the pupils' application of their skills and improving the currently unsatisfactory resources.

HUMANITIES

85. **History** and **geography** were sampled; only one lesson was observed in history. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects, on the quality of teaching or on standards. An analysis of planning and of pupils' work indicates that both subjects meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.
86. In **history**, Year 1 and 2 pupils know about the Great Fire of London and that it started in a baker's shop. Year 3 and 4 pupils know about aspects of life in Victorian Britain. Year 5 and 6 pupils know about Tudor Britain and that Henry V111 became head of the Church of England so that he could re-marry. Pupils are familiar with timelines and each class has a timeline to reflect the period of history being studied.
87. Teachers make good links between history and art; for example, Year 1 pupils have completed chalk drawings of the fire and added silhouettes of the buildings using black sugar paper. In Year 6, pupils have sketched Tudor portraits. The satisfactory resources for history are well organised into themes.
88. In **geography**, Year 1 and 2 pupils have completed a traffic survey of the different types of vehicles that use a local road. Year 3 and 4 pupils know that Chembakolli is a small village situated in south east of India. Year 6 pupils enjoy participating in a residential camp at Hallowtree where they completed orienteering tasks and team building activities. This educational visit makes a very good contribution to developing pupils' personal and social skills.
89. Teachers make good use of celebration days to enhance pupils' geography learning; for example, Year 1 and 2 pupils held a Mexican party as a finale to their project on Tocuaro, a village in Mexico. Teachers make satisfactory links with other subjects, and in Years 3 and 4 a link is made with design and technology and pupils have made their own miniature Chembakolli village out of card and matchsticks.
90. All pupils participate in the Comenius Project which helps to raise pupils' awareness of other countries and makes a good contribution to developing pupils' cultural development. The satisfactory resources for geography are well organised into themes.

Religious Education

The quality of provision is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very thorough review of provision has already led to improvements.
- Pupils in Year 6 understand very little about world religions.
- There are too few chances for pupils to extend their literacy skills.
- Over time the subject has become under-resourced.

Commentary

91. In Year 2, the pupils' attainment is well below that indicated in the locally agreed syllabus. Many pupils have an insecure understanding of Christian festivals, though the few who attend church frequently have a good knowledge of them. They have little idea about Sikhism, the other faith taught, and they have recorded very little during lessons.
92. Pupils' attainment in Year 6 is well below that indicated in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have some understanding of the main features and symbols of Christianity but Year 6 pupils do not recall visiting a church as part of their studies. The same pupils had hardly any recall of their studies of Islam and Sikhism. They hazily outlined religious practices without reference to the usual specific vocabulary and could only name three of the world's major religions.
93. Pupils' achievement in both age groups is unsatisfactory because the school has not monitored teaching closely enough to ensure that the programme is taught and has no system in place to assess the pupils' learning.
94. In the lessons observed, teaching and learning were satisfactory and the pupils' behaviour was managed particularly well. However, evidence from discussion with pupils and from their books indicates that teaching over time has been unsatisfactory. Pupils know very little about religion and find concepts like God and heaven very difficult to discuss and record because their vocabulary has not been developed over time. A system of assessment has just been drawn up and implemented but has to make an impact on how the pupils are taught.
95. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspections because there have been a number of different co-ordinators and this has led to a lack of cohesive management. Recent positive initiatives, including a very clear evaluation of provision and scrutiny of pupils' books, have led to the re-writing of the curriculum and a greater emphasis on the teaching of the 'spiritual' in the subject. The lack of resources and its negative impact on pupils' knowledge has been noted and a plan devised to allow teachers to stimulate pupils' interest in the subject by making greater use of local places of worship and introducing them to religious artefacts.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

96. **Art and design, design and technology, music and physical education** were not a focus for the inspection and very few lessons were observed so that no secure judgements could be made about overall provision and pupils' attainment in these subjects.

97. The available evidence indicates that the **art and design** curriculum offers pupils a greater experience of techniques, media and knowledge of famous artists than is normally found. Pupils are very keen on art activities and art weeks. They know how to use a good range of media and have worked quite extensively in three dimensions as well. Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of famous artists and some of their works. There are well-established links between art and history which helps pupils appreciate the art-styles of cultures like the ancient Egyptians, the Tudors and sub-Saharan Africa. The co-ordinator has high quality skills and has a clear vision for the subject, which is expressed in the action plan.
98. From the available evidence in **design and technology**, pupils have an improving understanding of the design, make, and evaluate processes and experience a wide range of stimulating topics because the co-ordinator has recently re-written much of the curriculum. Teachers do not fully build on the pupils' knowledge and skills because the co-ordinator has only recently introduced assessment systems. Many pupils experience success in this subject because it places less emphasis on academic skills.
99. **Music** does not currently have a high profile in the school, partly because of the recent long term absence of the co-ordinator. However, since her return, and with the active support of another member of staff, there are encouraging signs of improvement. The newly formed choir, for example, meets weekly and responds well to the teacher's enthusiasm, learning a new song each week which it then helps to teach to the rest of the school. The co-ordinator has undertaken some monitoring of lessons, runs a recorder club, and teaches the flute. The co-ordinator provides good support to colleagues through the development of an appropriate scheme of work, and materials and resources to service it. Overall, music has a secure and improving place in the school's curriculum.
100. A Year 6 lesson showed that the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of musical instruments of the Tudor period and make sensible suggestions as to which they would include in their Tudor orchestra. Their learning was good because the teacher made good links to previous work in history and used her information and communication technology skills very well in creating a slide sequence with sound which helped to familiarise the pupils with the appearance and sound of instruments of the period.
101. **In physical education** the school's participation in the Sports Partnership scheme enables the pupils to benefit from the expertise of visiting coaches. The community hall gym affords sizable accommodation for physical education, although the acoustics are poor and unhelpful to teaching. Teaching time is lost getting there from the school building. Swimming lessons are held in the school's own indoor pool and at a local leisure centre; the vast majority of pupils achieve the national expectation of swimming 25 metres unaided. There is a strong focus on dance and the pupils have benefited from workshop sessions with visiting members of The Royal Ballet. Members of the dance and drama club perform in school and at outside venues. There are opportunities for pupils in Year 6 to engage in outdoor and adventurous activities during a residential visit to Hallowtree. The curriculum is enriched by a good number of sports clubs. School teams compete against local schools, often with considerable success. The school athletics team, for example, has won the area championships for the past two years.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

102. Although no lessons were observed during the inspection, it is clear that concern for pupils' personal and social development has a high priority and permeates all aspects of the work of the school. All pupils are valued and the school's very caring ethos is clearly evident. The headteacher and the subject leader both provide strong leadership in this subject.
103. There are regular opportunities for pupils, both through the structured curriculum and informally, to discuss relevant issues, such as feelings, kindness, responsibilities towards animals, the need for rules and resolving conflicts. Pupils develop social skills through participation in school clubs and productions. Pupils organise various fund raising events throughout the year to support good causes, to subsidise the Year 6 camp residential visit and to provide class treats.
104. Each week, individual or groups of pupils are awarded for good work and the certificates are proudly displayed for all visitors to read. Additionally, one pupil in each class is recognised for good citizenship. Ipswich Borough Council has sponsored this initiative and the pupils receive, in addition to their certificate, a voucher entitling free entry to a local sports centre, this award also makes a good contribution toward pupils' health education.
105. Older pupils are given responsibility to undertake tasks around the school. The school council has a high profile and includes representatives from Year 2 to Year 6. To help raise the profile of good behaviour school councillors recently received training and completed an audit of behaviour around the school; this is having a good impact on improving behaviour further.
106. The school is working towards achieving the Healthy Schools Award and pupils learn about healthy eating and about the dangers of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse. Some of this teaching is supported by police officers and school nurse to provide a valuable external input. Formal sex education is taught to older pupils, either in Year 5 or Year 6 depending on where the two-year curriculum cycle falls.

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	6
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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	5
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).