

INSPECTION REPORT

PAWLETT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Pawlett, Bridgwater

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123693

Headteacher: Mrs Anne Goodison

Lead inspector: Mr Graham R Sims

Dates of inspection: Tuesday 12th – Thursday 14th October 2004

Inspection number: 267486

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	62
School address:	Pawlett Primary School Gaunts Road Pawlett BRIDGWATER Somerset
Postcode:	TA6 4SB
Telephone number:	01278 684151
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Michael Wheeler
Date of previous inspection:	19 th April 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Pawlett Primary School is in the village of Pawlett, to the north of Bridgwater in Somerset. About half of the pupils live in the village, the remainder travel to the school from the outskirts of Bridgwater or Highbridge. There are 62 boys and girls in the school between the ages of 4 and 11. The school is much smaller than most primary schools. National statistics show that the socio-economic circumstances of the school's catchment area are below average, although only 10 per cent of pupils are thought to be eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are of white British ethnic origin and have English as their first language. A much larger proportion of pupils than normal either join or leave the school other than at the normal times. One third of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is well above the national average, although only a small number of pupils receive help from outside specialists. The range of special educational needs is wide, but includes moderate learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Children are admitted into the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday, some attending on a part-time basis initially. The attainment of children when they start school varies considerably, but is below average overall. Since the last inspection, the school has been through a troubled period, but a new headteacher took up her post in September 2004, just five weeks before the inspection, having served a term and a half as acting headteacher. The number of pupils on roll has fallen over the last four years.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
28899	Mr G R Sims	Lead inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Modern foreign language Music Physical education English as an additional language
31729	Mr B Harrington	Lay inspector	
31334	Mrs B Atcheson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Mathematics Science Geography History Religious education Personal, social and health education and citizenship Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

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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	10
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	13
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	19
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	21
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Under the very good leadership of the new headteacher, Pawlett Primary School is rapidly emerging from a troubled period during which the quality of education was unsatisfactory and pupils were underachieving. It is now providing a **satisfactory** standard of education. Staff morale and pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved significantly in recent months. Standards of attainment are still below the expected levels throughout the school but, given the below average skills with which many children enter the school, pupils' achievements are satisfactory. The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory. Given its well above average income per pupil, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's very good leadership has reversed the school's decline, restored staff morale and given a very clear sense of direction and impetus.
- Although pupils are now making satisfactory progress, standards in most subjects are below average by the end of Year 6. Standards are well below average in English.
- Provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and standards are well below average by Year 6.
- Although the quality of teaching is improving, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils should be or are capable of achieving.
- Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and the marking of pupils' work does not provide pupils with sufficiently clear guidance on how to improve.
- Pupils' attendance and their relationships with others are good.
- Pupils do not have sufficient skills to learn independently and are often inattentive.
- Teachers miss opportunities to enrich the teaching of English, mathematics and other subjects through more careful and imaginative planning of the curriculum.
- The school provides a very good range of learning experiences outside the formal curriculum.
- The school pays good attention to pupils' welfare, health and safety, provides a good degree of care for its pupils and makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Subject leadership has not been encouraged in the past and is weak. Subject co-ordinators do not have a clear enough understanding of their subject areas or their roles as leaders.

Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory and the school is not as effective as it was when last inspected in April 1999. This is because of a significant decline in standards at the end of Year 6 and in many aspects of the school's provision. Key issues identified in the previous inspection, such as the development of assessment procedures, monitoring and evaluation of the school's work and inadequacies in the resources for information and communication technology, have not been addressed effectively. However, since the arrival of a new headteacher in February 2004, there has been significant improvement in many areas, the school has a renewed sense of purpose, standards are beginning to rise and staff morale has improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

It is evident from looking at pupils' work for the last academic year, that pupils' achievement had been unsatisfactory for some time. Marked improvement can be traced back to the arrival of the new headteacher and, although standards are still below average throughout the school, pupils' current achievement is **satisfactory**.

The attainment of children when they join the school varies considerably, but is below average overall and well below average in communication, language and literacy. Children achieve satisfactorily during their reception year, but standards are still below average by the end of the year and their speaking, listening and literacy skills are still very weak.

Standards in mathematics and reading at the end of Year 2 have improved since the last inspection even though the results of the national tests in 2004 were below and well below the national average respectively. Apart from an improvement in 2000 and 2001, results in writing have been consistently well below the national average. Inspection findings indicate that standards are well below average in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics.

Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 have declined dramatically since the last inspection. The results of the national tests in 2004 were well below the national average in English and science and amongst the bottom 5 per cent of schools in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the results were very low indeed. Inspection findings indicate that standards are improving in mathematics and science, although they are still below average, but that they are well below average in English. Standards in most other subjects are below average, but they are well below average in information and communication technology.

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

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**. The standard of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are satisfactory. These aspects have improved in recent months, but there are still occasions when the behaviour of some pupils is inappropriate. Many pupils find it hard to concentrate in lessons and lack the ability to work independently. The school's approach to improving these aspects of pupils' personal development is not yet rigorous or consistent enough, but is improving. The level of attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**.

The overall quality of the teaching is **satisfactory**. The teaching in half of the lessons seen during the inspection was good, and it is evident that there have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in recent months. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. However, some weaknesses still remain. Teachers are not consistent enough in ensuring pupils concentrate on their learning and do not do enough to promote independent learning skills. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what the pupils are capable of, or should be, achieving, and the assessment of pupils' work is weak. As a result, pupils are not given clear enough indication of what they have done well or what they need to improve.

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum, which is showing signs of improvement. However, its planning lacks flexibility. Teachers miss opportunities to relate work in one subject to what is being covered in another, and to develop pupils' literacy skills through other subjects. The curriculum is enriched by the very good range of opportunities for learning beyond lessons. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The level of staffing is satisfactory, but the school's accommodation and its resources for information and communication technology are unsatisfactory. The imminent inauguration of a small computer suite will bring some improvement.

The school takes good care of its pupils. The school has good procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides them with satisfactory support, advice and guidance and enables them to have a voice in the school's work and development. The school has good links with parents and keeps them well informed about school events. There are good links with other schools and with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory**. The new headteacher is providing very good leadership which is leading to significant improvements, better teamwork amongst the staff and a renewed sense of purpose. Her analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses is honest and perceptive. Because other staff have not been given the opportunity to lead in the past, subject leadership is unsatisfactory. Governance is good. Governors have a good understanding of the school's situation and have worked hard to resolve previous difficulties. The governing body ensures that the school fulfils statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have positive views of all aspects of the school. Responses to the inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly supportive of the school, with no parent identifying any major concerns. Pupils are also positive about the school and like their teachers.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the standard of pupils' work in all subjects, but particularly in English, mathematics and information and communication technology.
- Improve the quality of teaching by raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of, and should be, achieving.
- Assess pupils' work more rigorously in order to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve and make better use of assessment information when planning future work.

- Pay greater attention to pupils' personal development in order to help pupils develop better powers of concentration and become more independent learners.
- Improve curricular planning to make better use of cross-curricular links and more systematic opportunities for pupils to consolidate literacy skills through the teaching of other subjects.
- Develop the role of subject leaders, making them more accountable for standards and the quality of teaching within their subject areas.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are **below average**. Pupils' achievement throughout the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Test results over the last few years and pupils' past work indicate that pupils in Key Stage 2¹ have been underachieving.
- There have been significant improvements in pupils' progress since the arrival of the new headteacher.
- Despite these improvements, standards are still not high enough by the time pupils leave school, particularly in English, mathematics and information and communication technology.

Commentary

1. The attainment of children when they start their primary education at Pawlett varies widely. Overall, however, it is below average for four-year-old children, except in the area of communication, language and literacy, where it is well below average. Children achieve satisfactorily but, by the end of their year in the reception class, few children are likely to achieve the goals expected of them in each area of learning. Their speaking, listening and literacy skills are still very weak. Overall standards are, therefore, still below average by the time pupils start Year 1.
2. Pawlett is a very small school and there are far fewer pupils in each year group than is the case in most schools. Caution is needed, therefore, in interpreting data from national test results, as those from any one year can be misleading. However, overall trends are clear. Whilst there has been gradual improvement in recent years at Key Stage 1, the school's results and evidence from pupils' past work show that pupils had been underachieving for some time. Staff absence, and the knock-on effect this has in a small school, has been a contributory factor, but the main reasons are that the quality of the teaching has not been good enough and the school has not dealt adequately with pupils' under-performance. However, significant improvements in pupils' work start to appear very soon after the arrival of the new headteacher and a new impetus is having a positive impact on pupils' work in every subject. As a result, pupils are now achieving satisfactorily and standards are improving again.

¹ The words 'Key Stage' refer to the different stages of learning in schools. Children start school in the Foundation Stage, which caters for children aged 3 to 5 and generally refers to children who are in the Nursery, Reception or Early Years classes. Key Stage 1 is the first stage of compulsory primary education. It caters for pupils aged 5 to 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2. Key Stage 1 is also frequently synonymous with the term Infants. Key Stage 2 is the second stage of primary education. It caters for pupils aged 7 to 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6. Key Stage 2 is also frequently synonymous with the term Juniors. At the age of 11, pupils start Key Stage 3, which marks the beginning of their secondary education.

3. In 2004, the results of the national tests² at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, all three results were well below average. There have, however, been improvements since the last inspection, especially in reading and mathematics, in which results have improved more than in most schools. Results in writing have fluctuated more than in reading, having fallen significantly from a high point in 2001. The most recent results, however, were better than in 2003 and above those pertaining at the time of the previous inspection. Very few pupils exceed the national expectation of Level 2. Inspection findings show that pupils are making satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, although standards are still well below average in all aspects of English. Standards are below average in mathematics, science and information and communication technology and in line with expectations in religious education.
4. Results at the end of Year 6 have declined dramatically since the previous inspection when they were well above average in mathematics and science and average in English. This contrasts unfavourably with the gradual improvement in results in most schools. Results in 2004 were well below the national average in all three subjects and amongst the bottom 5 per cent of schools in mathematics. When compared with schools whose pupils achieved similar results at the end of Year 2 and schools whose pupils come from similar backgrounds, the overall results were very low. Pupils made least progress in mathematics, where the improvement in pupils' knowledge and understanding between Years 2 and 6 was far less than is expected over a period of four years. Inspection findings show that standards are improving in mathematics and science, although they are still below average. Improvement is less marked in English, where standards are still well below average, particularly in writing. Pupils produce some good individual pieces of work, but the quality of their writing for subjects other than English is poor. Standards are well below average in information and communication technology because there are significant aspects of the specified curriculum which have received little teaching and the school has not had adequate resources to allow pupils frequent access to computers. Standards in most other subjects are below average.
5. The school has an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and their achievement has mirrored that of other pupils. They are currently making satisfactory progress because they have individual education plans which are appropriate for their needs, and they receive a good level of support from teachers and teaching assistants in the classroom. The school has only one pupil whose mother tongue is not English who has only recently joined and very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. There are differences in the performance of boys and girls, but no noticeable trend apart from in English, where boys do less well than girls in most year groups, as is the case nationally.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **satisfactory**. The level of attendance is **above average** and punctuality is **good**.

² The tables of standards in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 have been omitted because there were fewer than 10 pupils in each of the two year groups.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The level of attendance has risen because the school has very good procedures to promote good attendance.
- There have been good improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour in recent months.
- Relationships are good, but a small number of pupils have difficulty managing their own behaviour and this has an adverse impact on others.
- Many pupils find it hard to concentrate in all lessons and lack the ability to work independently.
- Provision for pupils' moral and cultural development is good.

Commentary

6. The rate of attendance for the last academic year for which national comparisons are available was above the national average. Almost all absences are authorised, and there is an extremely small number of instances of lateness. This good rate of attendance is part of a progressive improvement over recent years, and results from the very good procedures adopted by the school to promote good attendance. The administrative assistant who follows up any absence on the first day monitors attendance closely. Pupils are rewarded with certificates for good attendance, and the award of house points may be withheld if pupils have not been punctual. The school has recently informed parents that it is unacceptable for family holidays to be taken during term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.7	School data:	0.1
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

7. The attitudes of the great majority of pupils to their work and to school are satisfactory. Most pupils take an interest in school life and understand the need to make an effort in lessons. Discussions with pupils indicate that their attitudes have become more positive in recent months, and they appreciate new initiatives which have been introduced by the new headteacher. In many lessons, pupils respond well to the teaching, but a significant proportion of pupils find it hard to concentrate for long, and this results in a restless atmosphere in some lessons. Many pupils are reluctant to try things out on their own and immediately seek help from adults. At times, adults give this too readily, rather than helping pupils to think things through for themselves. As a result, pupils' independent learning skills are not as well developed as they should be.
8. Good relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff have a positive effect on the overall standards of behaviour, which are satisfactory. Pupils insist that there is no bullying at school, and no pupils have been excluded for breaches of discipline in the recent past. Teachers and teaching assistants are aware of pupils' needs and work hard to address them. Discussions with staff, pupils, parents and governors indicate that there have been significant improvements in pupils' behaviour in recent months, and teachers have raised their expectations with regard to what constitutes acceptable behaviour. However, a small number of pupils in Key Stage 2 still have difficulty in managing their own behaviour and, at times, have a disruptive influence upon other

pupils who are prepared to suspend their own satisfactory behaviour. For much of the time, pupils with identified behavioural difficulties respond well to the school's behaviour policy and this helps to minimise disruption to the rest of the school. However, the school's approach to managing pupils' behaviour is not yet entirely consistent or rigorous enough to ensure the highest standards of behaviour and attention at all times.

9. Pupils' personal development is generally satisfactory. It is good where they are given firm guidance, such as through class rules which are applied consistently. Pupils' spiritual awareness stems from school assemblies which are of a very good quality. Younger pupils show delight in their discoveries of minibeasts and are keen to show their finds to their classmates. Pupils are challenged to confront prejudice and to acknowledge that, because people are different, it does not necessarily make them a threat. Curricular studies of other cultures and beliefs provide pupils with an insight into the values held by differing cultures and help them to appreciate their validity. Class rules, and studies of those members of the community who are there to help others, enable pupils to accept that organisations work better when there is a common approach to tasks. Pupils' social skills are satisfactory overall, but are good when they are fully involved, such as in team games of their own devising or when listening to visiting speakers in assembly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The overall quality of the teaching and pupils' learning is **satisfactory**. The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum, which is enriched by a **very good** variety of activities outside the normal curriculum. The staff provide a **good** level of care for the pupils. The school's links with parents, other schools and the local community are **good**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' work are **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been unsatisfactory teaching in the past, but there have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning since the arrival of the new headteacher.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are good, but staff have not done enough to develop pupils' independent learning skills or their abilities to concentrate.
- Many weaknesses in teachers' planning are being eradicated and the work planned is now much more relevant to pupils' needs and conducive to good learning.
- Expectations with regard to the quantity, presentation and quality of pupils' recorded work are improving, but are still not high enough.
- The marking of pupils' work has not been rigorous enough or provided pupils with clear enough indication as to what they need to do to improve, but the headteacher is showing the way forward.

Commentary

10. Although the quality of the teaching is currently not as good as that reported at the time of the previous inspection, there have been some significant improvements since the arrival of the new headteacher who, through her own example, has provided new impetus and motivation for the staff. Work in pupils' books from the previous academic

year and the school's national test results indicate that teaching in the past has been unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. At the present time, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some weak practices still remain, and there is still a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, but many of the lessons observed during the inspection were good. Importantly, staff have renewed their enthusiasm under new leadership, and are keen to continue introducing new improvements.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 20 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	10	8	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.

11. Pupils like their teachers, and relationships between staff and pupils are good. These fundamental pre-requisites for good teaching and learning frequently result in good behaviour in the classroom, positive attitudes to work and pupils who are eager to please. In many lessons, therefore, pupils are engaged in their learning. Bad habits from the past, however, resurface from time to time and have a negative impact on pupils' learning. A few pupils, particularly those with special educational needs in Years 3 and 4, find it very hard to manage their own behaviour and, at times, disrupt the flow of the lesson and the learning of other pupils. Teaching assistants play a valuable role in helping the teachers to manage such situations by dealing with individual pupils and isolating the problem, but their help is not available in every lesson. Whilst pupils are often interested in their work, their powers of concentration are very limited. They are very easily distracted, are often restless and fidgety, and find it hard to stick at a task for long, all of which has a negative impact on their learning. They find it hard to work independently and too readily seek the help of an adult, rather than trying to work out how to solve a problem for themselves. The teachers are trying out different methods, such as 'brain gym'³, in order to improve pupils' concentration, with some success, but they have not done enough in the past to develop pupils' abilities to learn independently.

12. Weaknesses in teachers' planning are clearly evident from past work. Although staff have known for a long time that pupils' language and literacy skills are weak, there has been little development of these skills through work across the curriculum. Too much of the teachers' planning has been heavily dependent on schemes of work or lesson plans produced by third parties which are not necessarily relevant to the needs of the pupils in this school or appropriate for mixed-age classes. When used 'off the shelf', these plans rarely allow work in one subject to complement and enrich what is being taught in another. Pupils' topic books have become an uninspiring collection of unrelated work. Too often, all pupils in a class, regardless of age, ability or need, have been given the same work to complete. Too many tasks have involved the completion of unchallenging worksheets, particularly in Years 1 and 2 and in subjects such as history, geography and religious education in Key Stage 2. Not enough use has been made of information and communication technology as a tool for learning. Skills in subjects such as art and design have not been developed systematically.

13. Some of these weaknesses are still evident from time to time, but there have been some significant improvements in recent months. There is a growing awareness of the importance of using as many subjects as possible to develop pupils' literacy skills. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils have already completed more written work in history

³ 'Brain gym', the commonly used term for 'educational kinesiology', is the application of natural movement experiences to facilitate learning. It focuses on the performance of specific physical activities that activate the brain for optimal storage and retrieval of information. As applied in schools, teachers will get pupils to carry out a variety of physical activities and movements at the start or in the middle of a lesson in order to help them to concentrate better.

in half a term than they completed over the whole of the previous year. Teachers are now more aware of the importance of developing subject-specific vocabulary so that pupils have the tools to talk and write about what they are learning. Teachers are finding ways of enriching the teaching in all subjects by developing a more cross-curricular approach. A unit of work in design and technology in Years 5 and 6, for example, is helping pupils to develop important skills in literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and science. There is much greater differentiation in the work provided for pupils. For example, whilst basing work in an English lesson around the same story, pupils in reception and Years 1 and 2 all had different tasks to complete, all of which were relevant to their stage of development. Pupils with special educational needs receive good specialist teaching. Individual education plans are now realistic and helping them to make progress. In Years 3 and 4 at the start of a topic in history and science, pupils are given an outline of what they are going to learn and a list of key vocabulary. This helps them to know what they are expected to achieve. Different teaching methods and more imaginative activities are helping to provide greater motivation for the pupils. The school has dealt effectively with one of the issues highlighted in the previous inspection report, namely the planning for the school's youngest children, which now pays due regard to national guidance and the areas of learning identified for these children. The result of these improvements is that the teaching and work provided for pupils is now much more relevant to their needs and helping them to make better progress in their learning.

14. Pupils' past work indicates that teachers have not had high enough expectations of what the pupils are capable of, or should be, achieving. In subjects such as geography, history and religious education, there is little recorded work in pupils' books. In all subjects, there are too many examples of work which is poorly presented or unfinished or in which pupils have made little effort. Because teachers have accepted such work with little comment, standards have fallen. Teachers have also been too ready to give praise for work which does not merit it. Analysis of pupils' performance in national tests indicates that pupils do not complete tasks in the time available and the root cause of this is seen in the small amount of work pupils have produced in lessons in the past. As is the case with teachers' planning, teachers have raised their expectations in recent months, as seen in the way they prepare more challenging tasks for the more able pupils, in the emphasis they are placing on the importance of working more quickly and in the brisk pace of some lessons. Some individual pieces of work and work on display indicate that a significant amount of care has been taken over some tasks. The school is good at ensuring that pupils with specific needs or disabilities are provided for and that work is suitably modified to allow them to build on what they have already learnt. However, teachers, teaching assistants and voluntary helpers are still not always challenging enough in the way they interact with pupils. At times, they are too ready to provide assistance or give pupils the answer, rather than helping them to think through a problem or learn how to tackle things on their own.
15. The marking and assessment of pupils' work have been weak. Although most of the pupils' work has been looked at by the teacher, most pieces received only a tick or a cursory comment. The marking has rarely been rigorous and has not pointed out often enough where pupils have made mistakes or given them an indication of how they can improve their work. Unfinished, poorly presented or inadequate work has not been challenged, and rarely have pupils been asked to re-visit a piece of work in order to learn from their mistakes, make improvements or act on advice. This is in contrast to the verbal feedback given during the lessons, which is nearly always helpful. The school has not tackled effectively the key issue identified in the previous inspection with regard to assessment. Information which is collected through a variety of assessment procedures has not been used often enough to identify the next steps which need to be

taught. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs has been inconsistent and not dependable. The procedure to assess a piece of pupils' writing at the beginning of each month has merit, but assessments have not been accurate, giving an over-generous interpretation of how well pupils are doing, and have not drawn out what pupils need to do to improve. However, as in so many areas, there have been significant improvements recently. The headteacher points the way forward. In her classes, pupils' books are marked much more rigorously. If the work is not good enough, pupils are told so. Comments give pupils clear indications as to what they need to do to improve, and mistakes are pointed out so that pupils are aware of where they have gone wrong. A new, reliable system for assessing the work of pupils with special educational needs has just been introduced which gives teachers a firm basis upon which they can plan for the learning of these pupils. The effects of the improvements are very clear to see. Pupils are making greater effort, they are taking a greater pride in what they produce and the quality of their work is improving. Other staff are beginning to follow this lead.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** and fully inclusive curriculum that meets pupils' academic and personal needs. The curriculum is enriched by the **very good** opportunities for learning beyond lessons. Staffing is **satisfactory**, but accommodation and learning resources are **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although there are some good cross-curricular links, teachers do not always relate the teaching in one subject to what is happening in other areas of the curriculum.
- The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs well.
- A very strong extra-curricular programme supports the learning of many pupils well.
- Unsatisfactory accommodation limits pupils' opportunities for learning.
- Learning in information and communication technology has been hampered by lack of resources.

Commentary

16. The school's curriculum is both broad and balanced. With the exception of information and communication technology, the curriculum for all National Curriculum subjects and religious education is satisfactory and meets all statutory requirements. Provision for information and communication technology has been hampered by lack of resources and there has been very little input into some aspects of the curriculum for this subject. The teaching of French enhances the curriculum. There are some good examples of cross-curricular work, but there are many missed opportunities to develop key skills, particularly literacy skills, through other subjects. Over-reliance on commercial schemes of work results in teachers missing opportunities to link learning in one subject with that in another, although the headteacher is providing staff with good examples of how this can be achieved to bring further enrichment to pupils' learning.
17. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and is much improved since the headteacher took over the role of special educational needs co-ordinator. Clear procedures, which closely follow the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of pupils, are now in place. The individual education plans provided for pupils are of good quality and care is taken to ensure that the work provided for pupils is closely suited to their needs. Pupils are involved in the full range of school activities. Teaching assistants support their learning well.

18. The school enhances pupils' learning through a very strong extra-curricular programme, particularly in the arts and physical education. There are good opportunities for drama, music and a great variety of sporting activities, including table tennis. Pupils enjoy these activities, which are well attended. Curricular provision is also enriched by good use of the locality for visits to places of interest. The school promotes participation in sport effectively through inter-school competitions. Weekend events and residential visits increase pupils' confidence and social and personal skills. Subject days enrich and bring added relevance to the curriculum. Several visitors to the school provide interesting stimuli for pupils' learning. Visits from specialists have provided pupils with opportunities to make tiles and create a mural.
19. Accommodation is unsatisfactory, as space is limited and storage is at a premium. The separate hall is too small to provide adequately for older pupils in gymnastics and dance. Classrooms are very small and this restricts the range of teaching methods teachers can employ, particularly in subjects where practical work is involved. The accommodation for children in the reception year does not provide enough space for free-play and role-play activities that are essential to this stage in their education. The school has good outdoor facilities, which the school uses to good effect for physical education. The provision of learning resources is unsatisfactory. Whilst there is a sufficient range to teach most subjects adequately, this is only achieved by very careful management of the timetable and incurs additional organisational difficulties involved in sharing essential resources rather than having each classroom fully equipped. The school has insufficient resources for information and communication technology, although a small annexe has been added to one of the classrooms to provide a small computer suite, which is due to be operational towards the end of the year.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are **well** cared for and are provided with **satisfactory** support and guidance. They are **satisfactorily** involved in the work of the school from an early age.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide a good level of pastoral care and support for all pupils, but academic advice and guidance has been weak.
- Child protection procedures are well established.
- Induction arrangements for new pupils are good.

Commentary

20. The headteacher has been named to deal with any issues of child protection that may arise and has received recent training for this role. The annual staff review of procedures ensures that members of staff are familiar with the policy and guidelines for child protection. A member of staff is trained in first aid, and first-aid kits are suitably positioned around the school. Satisfactory provision has been made for pupils with specific medical needs, and the care provided for such pupils is very good. The governing body is made aware of any potential health and safety hazards identified on a daily basis. However, these are not formally reported, nor is there a procedure in place to ensure the removal of such concerns.
21. Staff know the pupils and their personal circumstances well and provide good pastoral care. The care provided for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the headteacher took over the role of special educational needs co-ordinator and is now good. Academic support, advice and guidance is not as strong, as the school has not had comprehensive or accurate assessment procedures to give staff and pupils clear

guidance as to how well pupils are doing or what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.

22. Pupils' views are sought by the headteacher through her role as mentor to the school council which now meets regularly and has two representatives from each year group in Key Stage 2 and two representatives from Key Stage 1. This is an initiative that has been reintroduced by the headteacher, and pupils appreciate the fact that their views are being taken seriously. The council has not been in operation for long enough to have had a noticeable impact. Welcome packs provided for new parents ease the induction of young children and their parents into school routines. Older pupils joining the school are given induction appropriate to their ages and experiences. Teachers and teaching assistants provide positive role models for pupils and offer significant support for pupils within and outside the classroom. Staff willingly give of their own time to allow pupils to mix socially and to learn in a variety of settings.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** links with parents, other schools and the local community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive good formal and informal information about the school and its work.
- Parents and pupils are very supportive of the headteacher and her staff.
- The school has a significant level of involvement with the local community.

Commentary

23. Parents are kept very well informed about school events. They receive good-quality information about the school through letters, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. A new initiative of a weekly newsletter containing information for parents, as well as the wider community and churchgoers, is well received within the community and causes the school to become a focus of information for the area. Staff make themselves available to parents at the beginning and end of the day and, despite a heavy teaching commitment, the headteacher maintains an open-door policy for interviews with parents. Annual progress reports provide parents with useful information about their children's achievements and personal demeanour and enable pupils to comment upon their own perceptions of their year's work.
24. Many parents involve themselves in the life of the school by helping in classrooms and sharing their skills with pupils. The parent-teacher association is a very effective organisation and has recently provided transport for a number of visits as well as providing additional learning resources. Parents' contributions to their children's learning at school and at home are benefiting from their understanding of the disruption to learning caused by family holidays being taken during term time and of the need for them to support their children with their homework. In the past, 'Inspire days' have enabled parents to become more familiar with their children's topics of study through working with their children, although none have taken place recently. Parents are pleased that their views are sought through public meetings and questionnaires, and the findings are used to inform school policies.
25. The school has well-established links with several high schools and assists parents and pupils in making decisions about, and easing the transfer to, secondary school. The schools involved send staff representatives to talk to pupils in Year 6 and, in one case, students from Year 9 are sent as peer mentors.

26. The school's links with the local community have been revitalised since the arrival of the new headteacher. Strong links with the local churches provide opportunities for pupils to celebrate the major Christian festivals and to be challenged in assemblies with moral lessons and dilemmas. Pupils are involved in community events through taking part in the Remembrance Day service at the British Legion in the village and by entertaining older members of the community on May Day. Pupils enjoy a range of educational visits, and visitors to school have presented theatrical performances and shared their work experiences with pupils. These features enhance pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **satisfactory**. The leadership provided by the new headteacher is **very good**. The leadership provided by other staff is **unsatisfactory**. The school's management procedures are **satisfactory**. Governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher is providing very good leadership which is leading to significant improvements in many areas of the school's work.
- Because other staff have not been given the opportunity to lead in the past, subject leadership is unsatisfactory.
- The management of the school is improving and the school's development plan focuses on the most important issues.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's situation and have worked hard to resolve previous difficulties.

Commentary

27. The school has been through a difficult period in recent years, during which time there have clearly been some considerable difficulties with the leadership and management of the school. Issues identified in the previous inspection were not tackled effectively, the working relationship between headteacher and governors deteriorated, standards at Key Stage 2 fell dramatically, and staff became demotivated. The previous headteacher resigned at the end of 2003. The current headteacher was appointed in an acting capacity in February 2004 and then in a substantive capacity in September 2004.
28. Since her appointment, the headteacher has provided very good leadership. She has tackled the task with energy, optimism and determination, and has a very clear vision of what she wants the school to be. Significant improvements have been made in many aspects of the school since her arrival. Most importantly, she has re-established the confidence of governors, staff, parents and pupils in the school and re-invigorated many aspects of the school. Relationships within the local community have improved. Pupils like her approach, and staff have regained their motivation and enjoyment of teaching. One member of staff said, 'I was demotivated, but she has inspired me.' Her analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses is honest and perceptive and this is leading to improvements. The quality of pupils' work and standards of behaviour are improving and there is a much clearer sense of direction. Staff are working together as a team and appreciate the guidance they are given. The headteacher is aware that much still remains to be done but is determined to maintain the momentum which has been so much in evidence in recent months.
29. Subject leadership is unsatisfactory. Although other staff have nominal responsibilities as subject co-ordinators, they have not, in the past, been expected to, or allowed, to

exercise leadership of their respective areas. They have not been given time to monitor the quality of teaching or how well pupils are doing in their subjects and, until recently, have not been involved in development planning for the future. The headteacher is very aware that the role of subject leader needs to be developed if the good work which has been started is to be consolidated. Staff show a willingness to become involved, but lack training and experience of the standards currently expected of subject leaders.

30. The management of the school is satisfactory, but there are emerging strengths. The headteacher has looked carefully at all aspects of the school and monitored provision in the core subjects⁴. As a result, the school's development plan focuses on the most important priorities for improvement, with the improvement of standards and pupils' achievement as the primary goal. Other staff, however, are not yet sufficiently involved in monitoring what happens within their areas of responsibility. The school is starting to look more carefully at its performance data to analyse what needs to be done to improve, but this practice is only fairly recent. The previous performance management of staff has not had a significant impact on raising the quality of teaching, although there are clear indications of intent to use the recommended procedures more effectively in the future. The management of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs by the headteacher is good. Pupils with special educational needs are now identified, have appropriate learning plans, and receive good support in class.
31. The governance of the school is good. Governors have worked hard in conjunction with the local authority to resolve previous difficulties. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provide good support, advice and challenge for the headteacher. They are playing an increasingly important part in setting clear direction for the school and maintaining an effective overview of the school's priorities for development. The governing body ensures that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities. The school's finances are monitored and managed well. The day-to-day financial systems and administrative procedures are managed efficiently by the school's administrative officer. Governors are aware of the need to promote the school more effectively within the local community in order to ensure that numbers remain at a level which enables the school to continue to run three classes.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	224 091
Total expenditure	238 871
Expenditure per pupil	4 343

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	21 961
Balance carried forward to the next	7 181

⁴ The core subjects are English, mathematics and science.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are well cared for, but expectations of what they should be achieving are not always as high as they should be.
- The staff provide children with good support, but not enough opportunities for children to have a choice of activities to help them learn to play and to become more independent learners.
- Good induction procedures help children to settle quickly and get used to school routines.

Commentary

32. Children start school in the September of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday and are taught in a mixed-age class together with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Although it varies considerably, children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is below average overall and well below average in communication, language and literacy. The quality of teaching and learning and the achievement of children are satisfactory but, by the time they enter Year 1, few children reach the goals expected in any of the six areas of learning.
33. Despite the difficulties of having three year groups in one class, the curriculum is satisfactory, providing different starting points from which children can develop their learning. The teacher has a secure understanding of the curriculum and how to teach key skills, and teaching assistants provide effective support. Work planned is interesting and varied, but expectations of what the children should be achieving are not always as high as they should be. Children are sometimes given activities which are similar to those they have already completed successfully and which provide them with little challenge, or they are not asked sufficiently searching questions to extend their learning. Children are not provided with enough opportunities for them to develop independence, self-control and self-reliance. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory, but are not always related clearly enough to the intended objectives of the lesson, which results in staff not having sufficient information to ensure future planning meets the specific needs of the children.
34. Children enjoy coming to school and are secure in the welcoming atmosphere of the class. The restricted accommodation is unsatisfactory and makes it difficult to provide adequately for the learning needs of children in a room which also has to cater for the needs of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. The small outdoor area is not immediately accessible but it does provide children with a secure area to play out of doors, and children use the area to good effect when the weather permits. The achievement of children with special educational needs is satisfactory. They receive good support from the class teacher, teaching assistant and voluntary helpers. Induction procedures are good and form a sound basis for strong relationships with parents. The staff work well together as a team, and their efforts are enhanced significantly by the contributions of voluntary helpers. The leadership and management of the co-ordinator are satisfactory.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and the school has dealt effectively with the key issues that were raised at that time.

35. Provision for children's **personal, social and emotional development** is satisfactory. Children's achievement and the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. By the end of the reception year, children are still below the goals they are expected to reach in this area of learning. Some good learning opportunities are provided. During the inspection, for example, as children learnt how to make sandwiches, they also learnt about the need for hygiene as they washed their hands and about taking turns as they passed the butter dish around. Both the teacher and teaching assistant provide good role models, using conversation and carefully framed questions to develop children's confidence. The planned activities are within the children's reach but well-intentioned kindness at times hinders the promotion of independence.
36. Provision for **communication, language and literacy** is satisfactory. Children's achievement and the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Although interesting activities provide effective opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills, the support provided for the children is not always sufficiently focused or challenging enough. For example, some children find it hard to sustain attention when listening to a story, but helpers or assistants do not always observe this or help them to refocus their attention. The poor language skills of many children when they enter the school are clearly evident in many activities. When making their sandwiches, for example, only two of the eight children used more complex statements to interact with the helper. The rest were happy to observe, occasionally interrupting with isolated words or phrases. Less than half of the children are beginning to write recognisable letters. By the end of the reception year, overall standards are well below those expected, although a few children are much more advanced than others.
37. Provision for children's **mathematical development** is satisfactory. Children's achievement and the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. The teacher provides appropriate opportunities for children to develop their knowledge of number and shapes. Children are beginning to develop the understanding expected for their age, but this still needs to be consolidated in order to make it secure. Overall standards are still below expectations by the end of the reception year.
38. Provision for children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Interesting activities support learning effectively, helping to stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. For example, an autumn walk provided an effective starting point for children to use their senses, and making cakes helped them to show an awareness of change. In a religious education lesson, well-framed questions from the teaching assistant helped children to identify their favourite story. Children's achievement is satisfactory, but few children reach the goals they are expected to by the end of the reception year.
39. There was insufficient evidence in the time available to make secure judgements about children's achievement and the quality of teaching in **creative development** and **physical development**. The classroom space is too small to allow easy access to role-play areas or space within which to carry out creative activities, which limits the possibilities for children's creative development. Children find difficulty in using one-handed tools unaided and, at times, well-intentioned kindness on the part of the adults helping them hinders children's development. Planned activities give children the opportunity to explore different instruments, creating different sound effects. Children experiment with marks and collect different textures. Indications are that, in both of

these areas of learning, children do not reach the goals they are expected to by the end of the reception year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

40. The school now provides 30 minutes of French teaching each week for all pupils from Year 2 upwards and a French club on one lunchtime a week. Only one lesson occurred during the inspection, in which pupils in Years 3 and 4 successfully consolidated their knowledge of some basic phrases. Pupils have not been learning French for long enough to indicate how beneficial this new provision is proving, but they enjoy their French lessons and parents appreciate the fact that their children have the opportunity to gain some acquaintance of French.

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are well below average, although they are now improving and pupils are achieving satisfactorily.
- Pupils' writing and listening skills are particularly weak.
- There have been noticeable improvements in all aspects of the school's provision for English since the arrival of the new headteacher.
- Teaching assistants and voluntary helpers are well deployed, but staff are not always rigorous or challenging enough in their dealings with pupils.
- The assessment and marking of pupils' work has not given pupils clear enough indication of their mistakes or ways to improve, but this situation, too, is improving rapidly.
- Although improving, not enough use is made of opportunities presented in the teaching of other subjects to develop pupils' language and literacy skills.

Commentary

41. Since the previous inspection, the school's national test results in English at the end of Year 2 have varied more than in mathematics. The results achieved in 2004 were significantly better in reading than five years ago and marginally better in writing but, in both aspects, they were well below the national average. Standards in writing declined sharply after a high point in 2001, but have started to improve again. Many pupils enter the school with poor language skills and little previous experience to help them develop their literacy skills. Inspection findings indicate that, by the end of Year 2, standards are well below average in all aspects of English, with a significant proportion of pupils not reaching the level expected for their age. However, given their level of attainment on entry to the school, their achievement is satisfactory. Progress is evident in their writing books, in the records kept for reading, and in lessons, but the teacher's expectations of what pupils could or should be achieving are not always sufficiently high to enable pupils to make more rapid progress.
42. There has been no improvement at Key Stage 2. The decline in the school's results in English at the end of Year 6 is not as dramatic as in mathematics, although the results in 2003 were very low indeed. The results in 2004 improved significantly on this low point, but were still well below the national average and below the results achieved at the

time of the previous inspection. In the intervening period, it is clear that some year groups have made unsatisfactory progress, although a distinct improvement in pupils' writing has been evident since the arrival of the new headteacher. There is greater rigour in the marking of pupils' work and a more realistic assessment of the standard of pupils' work. As a result, pupils are now making better progress than before and their achievement is satisfactory, even though standards are still well below average overall. Pupils' reading skills are stronger than their writing skills, and their speaking is better than their listening.

43. The overall quality of teaching and learning is improving under the impetus and clearer focus provided by the new headteacher and is currently satisfactory. From the work in pupils' books and the standards achieved in national tests, it is evident that there has been unsatisfactory teaching in the past. The school is rapidly emerging from that stage, although the effects of weaknesses which had become ingrained are still evident in some lessons. During the inspection, for example, the quality of lessons varied from good to unsatisfactory.
44. Work over the past year shows that, all too frequently, pupils of differing ages and abilities have all been given similar work to complete. More recent work, however, shows that teachers are now much more conscientious in their planning, and are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of catering for the wide range of needs and abilities within their classes. In a lesson in the infant class, for example, all pupils participated in the reading of the book *The Rainbow Fish*, but then completed a wide variety of individual activities, related to the story, but pitched at their level. Some planning is still overly reliant on commercially produced material which is not necessarily the most appropriate within the school's context and which does not link in with work which is being undertaken in other subjects. An over-use of unchallenging worksheets and repetitive tasks, such as the writing of personal news about what happened at the weekend, is giving way to more interesting and challenging tasks.
45. Some good opportunities are provided to develop pupils' language skills, but they are not always followed up with sufficient rigour. Teaching assistants and voluntary helpers are deployed well and make a significant contribution to the organisation and smooth running of lessons, but they are not always sufficiently challenging in their questioning and do not place enough emphasis on helping the pupils to become more independent learners. A key feature of the lesson observed in the infant class, for example, was the skill with which the teacher managed the different age groups, and successfully used the teaching assistants and voluntary helpers to provide assistance for pupils. However, opportunities were missed to help the pupils develop better listening skills or to develop their understanding by asking more probing questions. In a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher too readily gave pupils answers to questions, rather than helping them to work out the answers for themselves. The availability of assistants and helpers is of significant benefit to pupils with special educational needs, who make noticeably better progress when additional help is available.
46. The marking of pupils' work in the past has been poor, giving pupils little indication of where they have made mistakes or how they can improve; the assessment of pupils' writing has been inaccurate; and little use has been made of information gained from the school's assessment procedures. The headteacher is giving a very clear lead and significant improvement is evident in all of these areas, although the good practice is not yet consistent in all classes. Some of the pupils' work is now marked much more rigorously, comments about how to improve are more perceptive, and pupils are asked to improve work which is of unacceptable quality. There are, however, still too many occasions when pupils' work is marked cursorily or when praise is given too readily for work which is only of mediocre quality. Analysis of pupils' performance in past tests has

shown that pupils find it difficult to complete work in the time available. The teachers are now providing a stronger drive to get pupils to be more productive when carrying out their individual tasks. The monthly assessments of pupils' writing are now more accurate.

47. A factor which is still impinging on pupils' learning is the difficulty many find in concentrating for any length of time and the lack of confidence many pupils have in working on their own. In some lessons, short breaks for physical activity are helpful, but procedures are not entirely consistent throughout the school and it is taking time to resolve some of the behavioural issues of the past. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils can be very well behaved and concentrate well in one lesson, yet in the next a small amount of disruptive behaviour can have a disproportionate effect on the other pupils which affects the ability of all to learn and make progress during the lesson.
48. Until recently, the leadership and management of English have been unsatisfactory, as the co-ordinator has not been given the opportunity to provide clear leadership and undertake monitoring and analysis of the school's provision for English. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, the situation has changed. Both leadership and management are now satisfactory, and there has been good analysis of what the school is providing and what needs to be done to bring improvement. Much still remains to be done. Staff need clearer guidance as to what is expected of them and how to plan for their mixed-age classes. The school has identified that the quality of pupils' writing needs to improve and that pupils' speaking and listening need to be developed, but the way forward has not yet been clearly mapped out. Steps have been taken, however, to ensure that the school has access to external advice and support and additional training in order to bring improvement. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory, though much has changed in the last few months, and the school is now moving in the right direction to bring even further improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. The development of pupils' language and literacy skills across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There are some good examples of opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills through other subjects, but this fruitful avenue for improving pupils' literacy skills is still largely untapped. The topic books of pupils in Years 3 and 4 for this year contain many more pieces of substantial writing than before. However, staff are still not entirely clear as to how they should treat written work in other subjects. Previous work indicates that teachers rarely pay any attention to the quality of pupils' writing, ignoring mistakes and giving no indication as to how pupils should improve their writing. As a result, the quality of pupils' writing in other subjects, such as history and geography, is of a lesser quality than that found in their English books. A few pupils are given the opportunity to produce their written work using a word processor, but teachers have yet to exploit the power of new technology to help pupils produce successive drafts of a piece of writing. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop speaking skills in different situations. A very good example is the way pupils have discussed and devised rules for a new game in physical education. However, there is not yet a really coherent plan to ensure that all such opportunities are fully exploited and that there is a consistent drive to develop pupils' listening skills in all lessons.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 6 have fallen since the last inspection and pupils have been underachieving, but recent improvements are enabling pupils to achieve satisfactorily.
- Recent monitoring of the provision for mathematics has been effective in bringing about improvement and the quality of teaching is improving.
- Pupils do not know their tables well enough or have sufficient strategies to make quick mental calculations.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils should be achieving are not high enough.
- Teachers do not make effective use of assessment or the marking of pupils' work to help pupils understand how to improve.

Commentary

50. At the time of the previous inspection, the school's results at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average. Since then, they have risen steadily, at a faster rate than in most schools, although the results in the 2004 national tests were still below the national average. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, although standards are still below average.
51. The school's national test results at the end of Year 6 have fallen dramatically since the previous inspection when they were well above the national average. In 2004, they were amongst the bottom five per cent of schools in the country. For the last few years, pupils have made insufficient progress from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 and their achievement has been unsatisfactory. Inspection findings show that there have been significant improvements in the teaching of mathematics in recent months and that standards are improving again. They are still below average, but pupils' achievement is now satisfactory. The most significant weakness at Key Stage 2 is pupils' poor facility to carry out mental calculations quickly, confidently and accurately. In the past, they have not been taught strategies which enable them to develop rapid recall skills, and their knowledge of multiplication tables and number bonds is very weak. There has not been enough consolidation of mathematical concepts and different strategies for carrying out calculations. As a result, pupils' mathematical understanding is not secure enough to enable them to carry out independent work with confidence.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory overall, although the quality of the teaching observed during the inspection varied from class to class. The teachers are generally secure in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics, but still do not have sufficiently high expectations of what the pupils should be achieving. In one class, for example, the teacher had been very aware that pupils' knowledge of tables was weak, but had not done enough to improve this knowledge so that pupils could cope adequately with work on fractions. Some good teaching was observed during the inspection, and in these lessons pupils achieved well. These lessons were characterised by good pace, higher-attaining pupils were challenged and assessment information was used well in order to plan appropriate tasks for different groups of pupils. In all classes, relationships are good, and teaching assistants are well deployed. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in class and achieve satisfactorily. Inefficient assessment procedures in the past have not helped pupils to progress. The use of assessment is still unsatisfactory, although teachers are now beginning to use data to help them plan what pupils should learn rather than assessing work to check what parts of the curriculum have been covered. The marking of pupils' work is generally unsatisfactory. Some work remains unchecked, and teachers do not

give sufficient indication as to how pupils might improve their work. There are, however, some good examples of marking which give pupils a much clearer idea of how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.

53. There has been unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection and standards have fallen at Key Stage 2. For much of the intervening period, weaknesses have not been tackled effectively by the school or subject leaders, and the subject co-ordinator had neither the support nor the circumstances to bring about change. In recent months, however, there has been a significant improvement as the subject co-ordinator is beginning to follow the clear lead of the new headteacher. Leadership and management of the subject are currently satisfactory, and the co-ordinator now has a firm grasp of what needs to be done to address the cumulative errors of the past. The changes that have been instituted in the last few months have not yet had time to have a noticeable impact upon standards, but pupils' achievement is improving as a result.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. The use and development of mathematics across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Some satisfactory use of mathematics across the curriculum was observed during the inspection as teachers linked work in mathematics with information and communication technology, science and geography. However, the systematic development of mathematical skills through other subjects is still a weakness.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results at the end of Years 2 and 6 have been well below average, but standards are improving and pupils are now achieving satisfactorily.
- Not enough emphasis has been placed on teaching correct scientific terminology, but steps are being taken to rectify this weakness.
- The quality of teaching and learning is improving, although teachers' expectations of what pupils should be achieving are still not high enough.
- Although leadership and management have been unsatisfactory in the past, the headteacher is providing good impetus for improvement.
- Assessment and marking procedures are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

55. The results of the teacher's National Curriculum assessments at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average. Evidence from the inspection indicates that standards are improving and pupils are achieving satisfactorily, although standards are still below average by the end of Year 2.
56. Since the previous inspection, the school's results in science at the end of Year 6 have declined dramatically, indicating that improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. In 2004, the results were well below the national average, continuing an almost continual decline over the last five years. As in many other aspects of the school, there have been improvements in recent months, and inspection evidence shows that standards are now below average and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is also satisfactory. Pupils'

progress is, however, impeded by low levels of literacy and the need for constant consolidation of what has been taught before. For example, pupils often struggle to read, write and understand scientific vocabulary. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 found it difficult to answer questions on the respiratory system because key words had not been reinforced sufficiently.

57. Pupils' books from the past year indicate that there has been some unsatisfactory teaching in science, accounting for the declining standards, but there have been noticeable improvements in recent months to the extent that the quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory overall. Most teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of science. Pupils are now finishing pieces of work, their presentation is neater and there are signs that pupils are making greater effort with their work. However, there is still some variation in the quality of teaching, and teachers' expectations with regard to what pupils are capable of achieving are not yet high enough. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and pupils enjoy science. Teaching assistants are well deployed and support pupils well. The marking of pupils' work does not consistently foster improvement, inefficient assessment procedures do not give staff or pupils a clear idea of how much progress has been made.
58. There has not been as much input into improving the quality of the school's provision in science as there has been in English and mathematics. Little opportunity has been provided for the co-ordinator to exercise leadership or have an influence over what is done in science. As a result, the leadership and management of the subject are still unsatisfactory, although poised for improvement as the subject co-ordinator begins to follow the clear lead of the new headteacher, and learn from her monitoring of the subject. This has, for example, shown that staff have not placed sufficient emphasis on the use of correct scientific terminology. In one class, this weakness is already being tackled effectively as pupils' books contain explanations of the key words they will need to use when covering a particular topic.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and well below average at the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Inadequate accommodation and resources for the subject impede the acquisition of new skills or consolidation of pupils' learning.
- Insufficient use is made of new technology as a tool for learning in other subjects.
- The school recognises the weaknesses in its provision for information and communication technology and is taking steps to provide better accommodation and resources.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and making use of the information are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

59. There has been insufficient improvement in the school's provision for information and communication technology since the last inspection. Standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and well below average by the end of Year 6, and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. The main reason for this is that the school does not have enough

resources to allow pupils frequent and sufficient access to computers, and this has resulted in inadequate planning to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered in sufficient depth to enable pupils to achieve at the expected levels for their age. In Key Stage 2, the classrooms are so small that computers have to be used in the small communal area outside the classrooms, which makes it difficult for staff to teach new skills other than to a small number of pupils at any one time. Steps have been taken to rectify the problem. A new annexe has been built on to one of the classrooms to house a small computer suite where groups of up to 10 pupils will be able to use computers simultaneously, but the facility will not be available until towards the end of the autumn term.

60. The overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory because pupils are not taught a sufficiently wide range of skills and are not given enough opportunity to make use of information and communication technology. The teaching is best in Key Stage 1 where pupils are taught on a one-to-one basis by a teaching assistant. Pupils receive good individual attention and are asked suitably challenging questions to help them develop their understanding. However, the arrangement is time-consuming and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use new technology at other times to consolidate their learning. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in the skills that are taught, but there are gaps in pupils' learning and there is little evidence of the use of information and communication technology in other subjects.
61. At Key Stage 2, the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to operate a computer, and they use a limited range of programs successfully. Pupils have a basic understanding of how to exchange and share information, such as by using a word processor to present written work, and of how to find things out, such as by using the Internet. However, there has been very little development of more advanced skills which enable pupils to develop ideas and make things happen, and little opportunity for pupils to apply skills by reviewing, modifying and evaluating work as it progresses. Pupils have had little opportunity to use technical equipment, such as a digital camera or sensing devices, or to explore how to use and apply a wider range of software, including spreadsheets, databases, control or music programs. Good links with the local secondary school have enabled pupils to use their facilities to learn how to prepare a visual presentation, but pupils have not had the opportunity to use or consolidate this skill within the normal course of their work. Pupils whose preferred learning style is to use a computer to present their written work are given the opportunity to use the computers occasionally for this purpose, but there are insufficient machines to enable many pupils to do so.
62. Leadership and management of the subject have been unsatisfactory, although the expectations of the current headteacher that subject co-ordinators should play a fuller role in leading their subjects is bringing improvement. Whilst log books have been introduced as a means of recording pupils' skills in the subject, these have not been used systematically to ascertain where there are weaknesses and what needs to be taught to bring improvement. Thus, the assessment of pupils' achievement and progress in the subject is unsatisfactory. Teachers' planning is not scrutinised to ascertain whether all aspects of the curriculum have been covered adequately. Workbooks have been purchased for pupils, but these have hardly been used, which is an inefficient use of the school's financial resources. The school has rightly identified that information and communication technology is an important area for further development and important first steps have been taken to bring improvement, but much still needs to be done in order to raise standards and ensure that the subject contributes effectively to pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There is very little evidence of work involving information and communication technology on display in the classrooms or in pupils' books. Pupils sometimes present their written work using a word processor, and occasionally produce graphs and charts for work in mathematics and science, but there are few other examples of information and communication technology being used to complement or enhance work in other subjects. Co-ordinators of other subjects have not been expected to take responsibility for indicating when information and communication technology should feature within their schemes of work or for identifying how new technology could be used to assist in the teaching of their subjects.

HUMANITIES

64. Pupils' work in **history** and **geography** was not a major focus for the inspection, and insufficient evidence was gathered to make secure judgements on provision in these subjects. However, the evidence available shows that planning for the teaching of history and geography takes satisfactory account of national guidance. There have been significant improvements in the depth to which these subjects are taught since the arrival of the new headteacher. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils are now given a clear outline of what they will be learning during the term and the quantity and quality of their work has improved. In this class, the subjects are now being used well to help pupils develop their literacy skills, although this has not been the practice in the past. Visits to places of interest enhance the teaching of both subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent changes in the quality of teaching and learning are reflected in improving standards.
- Good features evident in the teaching in Years 3 and 4 are not always evident in other classes.

Commentary

65. Standards have been maintained at the level noted in the last inspection and remain in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn about Christianity and Hinduism and, in Years 3 to 6, they also learn about Islam and Judaism. This provision has a good impact on pupils' cultural development. Recently, planning for the subject has become more cross-curricular in its nature, but teachers still do not fully exploit ways of linking work in this subject with the development of skills in other areas, such as literacy.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although it varies from class to class and this influences the achievement of pupils and their learning. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 and 4. Pupils know what they are expected to achieve because the teacher explains the objectives for each lesson. Key vocabulary is provided and explained. The marking of pupils' work fosters improvement. The teacher's expectations are high; poor standards of work are not accepted and, as a result, there has been a marked improvement in pupils' work. These features are not yet common practice in all classes and, in particular, the strategies for assessing pupils' work are not

sufficiently developed to provide helpful information for teachers to improve pupils' learning.

67. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the current topic, Islam. They use subject-specific vocabulary well and have a positive attitude to the subject. However, they have little retention of work covered previously. This factor, and the quality of their earlier written work, show that the quality of teaching and learning has not always been as good as it is now and that pupils need a lot of consolidation of learning in order to make it secure. Low levels of literacy provide a barrier to the improvement of standards, as pupils find reading and writing about their research difficult.
68. The leadership and management of the subject are at present unsatisfactory, but the subject co-ordinator is beginning to follow the clear lead of the new headteacher. Visits to different churches provide pupils with good first-hand experiences and the opportunity to compare and contrast different places of worship within branches of Christianity. There are, however, no visits to places of worship of other religions.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

69. Priority in this inspection was given to evaluating work in the core subjects, and very little time could be spent looking at provision in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Only two lessons in these subjects were observed, one in design and technology and one in physical education, both for pupils in Years 5 and 6. As a result, no judgements about provision have been made for these subjects. Evidence of pupils' work on display in classrooms and their recorded work in art and design were examined, and a discussion was held with the subject co-ordinator for physical education.
70. From the limited amount of work available, standards in **art and design** appear to be below average. Work produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6 and evidence from the art books of pupils in Years 3 and 4 indicate that skills are not developed in a systematic way as pupils move through the school.
71. The picture in **design and technology** is much more positive. The projects being undertaken in Years 3 and 4, making bread, and in Years 5 and 6, making and packaging biscuits, provide good examples of the improvements in teaching and curricular planning which have arisen since the arrival of the new headteacher. Only a short way into the project, pupils in Years 3 and 4 had already completed in preparation for their practical tasks a number of pieces of written work, each of which had been marked rigorously by the teacher. The project in Years 5 and 6 is well conceived, involving pupils in research into different types of biscuit, tasting and evaluation, looking at packaging, designing and making their own biscuits, and then designing and making the packaging for them. It also provides good input into health-related matters. These examples contrast favourably with work from the previous year which was insubstantial in quantity, often unfinished, frequently of poor quality, rarely involving any written work and redolent of low expectations. Photographic evidence indicates that this was not the case in Years 1 and 2 and depicts pupils busily engaged in a wide variety of tasks, such as making models of mini-beasts, puppets and masks, and designing carnival floats. The subject also provides a good conduit for parental involvement and collaboration with other small schools as they join forces for special design and technology events.

72. Very little evidence was gained for **music**, but indications are that the school fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum. A number of pupils receive instrumental tuition from peripatetic teachers and the choir is due to be restarted in November.
73. There are indications that much of the provision in **physical education** is good. The lesson observed during the inspection had some very good features as pupils in Years 5 and 6 were playing a team game which they had devised and refined. Not only were two teams competing against each other, but a third team was actively involved from the touchlines, thus ensuring that every pupil in the class had an active part to play. Much thought and discussion had clearly gone into devising the game, which was being played at a fast pace, with much enjoyment and very good involvement of nearly all pupils. Some of the pupils displayed very good throwing and catching skills and a good awareness of tactics. Participation in sport is promoted through inter-school competitions, and the first inter-house football tournament had taken place on the Saturday before the inspection, well supported by pupils and parents. Tennis, football and cricket experts come into the school to provide coaching for the pupils. A wide-ranging programme of extra-curricular activities provides the opportunity at various times for pupils to participate in sports such as netball, table tennis, football, rugby and rounders. Pupils have participated in outdoor and adventurous activities on a day visit to an outdoor centre. Teachers and teaching assistants give willingly of their time to run these activities and promote participation in sport. Although not observed during the inspection, swimming is a prominent feature of the physical education programme, with pupils from Year 2 upwards swimming once a week during the autumn and spring terms. The school's records indicate that standards in swimming are above average. The school has good outdoor facilities for physical education, but the hall is inadequate for most indoor activities. The school's accommodation and the emphasis on swimming account naturally for the school's strength in games and swimming and the school's perception that performance in dance and gymnastics is a weakness.
74. Although there are good features in these four subjects, the situation with regard to their leadership and management is unsatisfactory. The subjects have been organised by consensus, which has resulted in some good initiatives, but subject leadership has not been encouraged. As a result, the subjects lack a clear sense of direction, and there is nobody to keep a check on the quality of teaching or how well pupils are learning. The results are seen in art and design, where staff have not had guidance on how to teach the curriculum and pupils' skills are not being developed systematically. Even in physical education, where there are evident strengths in games and swimming, there is no clear understanding of how well pupils are doing or how to make better provision for areas of weakness, such as dance and gymnastics.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

75. Insufficient evidence was gathered to make an overall judgement about the school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The programme is planned effectively, and each class has a specific time slot within the week for this aspect of pupils' education. The emphasis in lessons is on active learning, enquiry, discussion and participation. In the few lessons observed, discussion involving the promotion of the importance of hygiene, the recognition of shock and the treatment of bleeding was used to good effect. These lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils' thinking skills as they make decisions in small collaborative groups to solve problems.
76. As holders of the 'Healthy Schools Award', the school organises several health-related initiatives. Some of these aspects are supported in other subjects like 'the importance of healthy eating' and 'the care of teeth and gums' in science, which help pupils'

understanding of the importance of a balanced diet. The policy and planning for sex education are good.

77. A school council, comprising two pupils from each year group from Years 2 to 6, has recently been started. Class councils meet to set the agenda for the school council and discuss the outcome of the whole-school meeting. Weekend events and residential visits give pupils increased independence and the time to mix socially and learn in different settings. Environmental awareness activities help to raise pupils' awareness of the need to re-cycle, re-use and reduce. Four workshops provided opportunities for pupils to paint glass, make masks and paper using re-cycled products. The co-ordinator's participation in an in-service training course is helping to improve teachers' expertise in this aspect of the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	4
Attendance	3
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	4

Inspectors make judgements on a scale:

excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).