

INSPECTION REPORT

RIDGEWELL CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Halstead, Essex

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115142

Headteacher: Mr A Richbell

Lead inspector: Mr M Newell

Dates of inspection: 4th – 6th October 2004

Inspection number: 267563

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number on roll: 81

School address: Church Lane
Ridgewell
Halstead
Essex

Postcode: CO9 4SA

Telephone number: 01440 785364

Fax number: 01440 785364

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of Mrs S Howard
governors:

Date of previous 28th June 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the village of Ridgewell in Essex. The school gained a School Achievement Award from the government in 2002, an Advanced Healthy School award in 2003 and Investors in People in 2004. There are 81 pupils on the school roll, with an almost identical number of boys and girls. The school is smaller than other primary schools. There are year groups with relatively high levels of pupil mobility. The vast majority of pupils are of white ethnic origin, and of the small number of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds, none are at an early stage of acquiring English. The school regularly has traveller children on roll. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average, as is the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The nature of special educational needs includes moderate learning difficulties,

emotional and behavioural needs and physical impairment. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is approximately four per cent, and this is below the national average. Attainment when children start at the school covers the full ability range, varies from year to year, and is at an average level overall.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10638	Mr M Newell	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Special educational needs English Science History Geography Physical education Personal, social and health education and citizenship
15181	Mrs M Hackney	Lay inspector	
16493	Mr N Sherman	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 7JX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	9
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	20
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

This is a **satisfactory** school. There are strengths in a number of aspects of school life and under the good, visionary leadership of the headteacher, it is a school that is well aware of areas that need to be tackled to ensure that all pupils achieve and attain well by the time that the pupils leave school. Taking all factors into account, this is a school that is providing satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The newly appointed headteacher has very quickly and astutely mapped out an accurate agenda for school improvement.
- Children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 achieve well because of good quality teaching.
- Standards in writing and the use made of computers to enhance pupils' learning in different subjects could be better, particularly in Years 3-6.
- Although teaching in Years 3-6 is satisfactory overall with some good practice, it is presently unsatisfactory at times for Year 3 and 4 pupils.
- Many pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning, but there is a significant minority of pupils in Years 3-5 whose behaviour and attitudes to learning are not good enough.
- Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- Good opportunities are provided to enrich pupils' learning through visits, visitors and themed weeks.
- The school places a high priority on pupils' welfare and well-being, and pupils' voices and views are listened to, respected and acted upon.
- The links with parents and other schools enhance the quality of pupils' learning.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Although most of the key issues identified at the last inspection have been tackled in an effective manner, the school recognises that there is room for improving how well pupils attain and achieve by the time that pupils leave school. Under the leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, the school now has a firm focus on improving the learning and achievement of pupils and of further raising standards in information and communication technology.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	D	D	E
Mathematics	D	E	C	D

Science	D	E	A	A
---------	---	---	---	---

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory** overall. Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1-2. It is more variable in Years 3-6 and could be stronger, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils. Achievement is satisfactory and at times good for Year 5 and 6 pupils when teaching is good. The achievement of Year 3 and 4 pupils is at times unsatisfactory when teaching is unsatisfactory. The above table shows that on the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was well above the national average in science, in line with the national average in mathematics and below the national average in English. When compared to similar schools, attainment was well above average in science, below average in mathematics and well below average in English. The small number of pupils tested each year means that comparisons with national data are not always reliable. The fluctuating pattern of attainment is reflected in the unconfirmed 2004 test results. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are currently well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. These findings reflect the fact that this group of pupils is particularly small in size, has a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and has had a high level of pupil mobility. Standards in information and communication technology and other inspected subjects are at an average level, with the quality of singing being good. Achievement in these subjects is satisfactory, but at times it could be better for the higher-attaining pupils.

Inspection findings show that standards by the end of Year 2 are at an average level in reading, mathematics and science, with pupils of all abilities achieving well. Standards in writing, although improving, are a little below average and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in information and communication technology and other inspected subjects are at an average level and achievement is never less than satisfactory.

Attainment when children start at the school varies from year to year, but on balance it is at an average level. The good quality teaching and well-planned curriculum in the Foundation Stage help to ensure that all children make good progress, and by the end of the reception year most children have exceeded the nationally recommended early learning goals in all areas of learning.

Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. The support provided by teaching assistants is good and enhances the quality of pupils' learning.

The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory** overall and is good for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The attitudes and behaviour of many pupils are good and at times very good. However, there are some pupils in Years 3-5 who do not behave well and show less than positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is good and above the national average. Punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is presently **satisfactory** with some good strengths. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall. Teaching for reception-aged children and pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good because it is often challenging and demanding, and learning is made fun. Teaching in Years 3-6 is satisfactory overall with teaching good for Year 5 and 6 pupils when work is well matched to the needs of the more able pupils. This is not always the case. Teaching is less than satisfactory for Year 3 and 4 pupils when the behaviour of pupils is not managed well, and as a result pupils do not learn as well as they could. Assessment is satisfactory and data is increasingly being used to help set targets and to carefully track pupils' progress. The curriculum on offer is satisfactory overall, good in the Foundation Stage and good opportunities are provided to enrich pupils' learning through arts and multicultural weeks and through a range of well planned visits and visitors. The school places a high priority on pupils' welfare and well-being, and provides many opportunities for pupils to take part in the decision-making processes of the school. The links with parents and other schools are good and impact most positively on pupils' learning. The school is seeking to improve links with the local community to enhance the quality of pupils' educational and social experiences.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The headteacher, who has only recently been appointed, has quickly and astutely set a very accurate agenda for school improvement, and leads and manages the school well. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher who shares his fierce and steely determination to raise standards and ensure that all pupils achieve well. Management of the Foundation Stage and special educational needs is good. Subject leadership is satisfactory with some strengths. Governance of the school is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are happy with the school and the quality of education that it provides. Parents find staff very approachable and say that there is a strong partnership between home and school. Most pupils speak very positively about school and find learning fun. Pupils feel happy and secure in school and state that it is a school where they genuinely feel that their views are listened to, respected and acted upon.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve how well pupils achieve are to:

- Ensure that teaching and learning for pupils in Years 3 and 4 improves and that the work that is set for the higher-attaining pupils in Years 3-6 is consistently demanding and challenging.

- Improve how well pupils learn by improving pupils' attitudes and behaviour in Years 3-5 and by ensuring that pupils throughout Years 3-6 take more responsibility, independence and initiative for their own learning.
- Ensure that writing skills are taught in a direct and systematic manner and that opportunities for developing pupils' writing skills in other areas of the curriculum are planned for and capitalised upon.
- Capitalise on opportunities for computers to be used to support and enhance pupils' learning across different subjects of the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are **average** by the end of Year 2 but **below** and in some instances **well below** average by the end of Year 6. Children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 achieve **well**. Achievement is more variable but **satisfactory** overall in Years 3-6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well in Years 1-2.
- Achievement for Year 3 and 4 pupils is currently not good enough at times.
- Work that is set for pupils in Years 3-6 is not always challenging enough for the higher-attaining pupils.
- Writing standards could be higher.

Commentary

1. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, there are only a small number of pupils assessed each year, and so comparisons with national test results need to be treated with caution. Results often fluctuate from year to year and this pattern is reflected in both the 2003 test results and the unconfirmed test data for 2004. In addition, there are varying numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the different year groups and there are times when there is a significant level of pupil mobility in particular year groups.

FOUNDATION STAGE

2. The small number of children that are admitted to the school each year means that attainment levels vary from year to year, and it is at an average level overall. The good quality teaching and provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that all children make good progress and achieve well. By the end of the reception year, most children will have exceeded the nationally recommended early learning goals in all areas of learning.

KEY STAGE 1

3. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well above the national average in mathematics, above the national average in reading and in line with the national average in writing and science. When compared to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, attainment was average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing. The school's trend of improvement is below the national trend. Inspection findings indicate that standards in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science are at an average level. Standards in writing are a little below average, although they are improving at a good rate. Any differences between test results and inspection findings can be explained by the natural ability

levels of the different cohorts. The important factor is that all pupils are currently achieving well in English, mathematics and science, although achievement in writing is satisfactory. Standards in information and communication technology and other inspected subjects are at an average level, and achievement is never less than satisfactory and good within lessons when teaching is good. Standards in singing are good. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls in any subjects.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (15.7)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.8 (12.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.4 (15.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 18 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

KEY STAGE 2

4. The picture that emerges in Years 3-6 is a little more complex. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was well above the national average in science, in line with the national average in mathematics and below the national average in English. When compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment, the school's performance is well above average in science, average in mathematics and well below average in English. The unconfirmed test data for 2004 shows a lower pattern of attainment and reinforces the fluctuating picture of attainment caused by small year groups and varying numbers of pupils with special educational needs. However, the school's trend of improvement over time has been broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection findings show that attainment for the present Year 6 pupils in English and mathematics is well below average and below average in science. There are certain factors that account for this. The number of pupils in Year 6 is small, and within this group there is a high percentage of special needs pupils and a high level of pupil mobility. There is, however, scope for improving standards, particularly in writing. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are set to rise in 2005. The achievement overall in Years 3-6 is satisfactory but too variable. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 5-6, but there are times when it is unsatisfactory for Year 3-4 pupils when teaching is unsatisfactory. In addition, evidence indicates that achievement throughout the key stage could be stronger because there are occasions when work that is presented for the higher-attaining Year 3-6 pupils is not challenging enough.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.8 (26.2)	26.8 (27.0)

Mathematics	27.0 (25.3)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.6 (26.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 5 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. Standards in information and communication technology are at an average level overall by the end of Year 6, and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level and achievement is satisfactory, although again there is some variability, particularly for the Year 3 and 4 pupils. Singing standards remain at a good level across the key stage, and in different subjects there is no significant evidence of differing levels of achievement between boys and girls.
6. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of their classmates. The pupils benefit from good levels of support, particularly from teaching assistants who make a major contribution to how well pupils learn. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans because of this support. The achievement of higher-attaining pupils is satisfactory overall and good for the children and pupils in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1-2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall attitudes and behaviour are **satisfactory**. The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory** overall and is **good** in terms of pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many pupils behave well, but the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils in Years 3-5 is not good enough.
- The good provision made for spiritual and cultural development adds much to pupils' personal development.
- Although many pupils in school have positive attitudes to learning, too many pupils in Years 3-6 show a reluctance to take initiative or responsibility for their own learning.
- Attendance rates are above the national average, and the vast majority of pupils arrive on time for school.

Commentary

7. Many pupils in school are lively, confident and friendly and readily speak to visitors. This adds much to the learning environment of the school. However, whilst attitudes to school and work are good and often very good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1-2, they are only satisfactory overall in Years 3-6. The younger pupils in school are well motivated and eagerly participate in the different learning activities that are on offer. Many of the pupils in Years 3-6 are eager and

keen to learn and to participate enthusiastically in all that the school has to offer. However, a significant minority of pupils at this key stage, particularly, but not exclusively in Years 3-5, show an indifference to learning and do not readily see that they have a part to play in how well they achieve by taking a greater responsibility and initiative for their own learning.

8. The vast majority of pupils behave well both in class and around the school. However, the behaviour of some pupils in Years 3-5, and in particular Year 3-4 pupils, is at times inappropriate and unsatisfactory. The behaviour of the pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is particularly good, with pupils showing a good level of self-discipline and maturity in their actions. Inspection evidence indicates that bullying is not an issue and pupils are confident that should it occur, it would be tackled quickly and firmly.

Exclusions

9. There has been one fixed-term exclusion over the last 12 months, although such action is the exception rather than the norm at the school.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

<i>Categories used in the Annual School Census</i>	<i>No of pupils on roll</i>	<i>Number of fixed period exclusions</i>	<i>Number of permanent exclusions</i>
White – British	76	1	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

10. The provision made for pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall and is enhanced by the good provision made for pupils' spiritual and cultural development and the satisfactory moral and social development. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered through uplifting assemblies where music resonates joyfully and through the many opportunities provided for pupils in class to discuss their feelings and emotions on a range of different issues. Good provision is made through visits, visitors and through art and music to enable pupils to develop a good awareness and understanding of different faiths, cultures and traditions as well as the celebration of their own faith and culture. The quality of provision is further strengthened by the school's participation in a "Multicultural Week", which involves a number of local schools, and where pupils learn about and experience music, art and literature from different cultures around the world.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/2004 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.2	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.

11. Attendance is good and has improved during the last academic year. Unauthorised absence is low, and pupils arrive punctually in the morning. The school has worked hard to improve monitoring procedures and to encourage good attendance. Parents are reminded regularly of the effect this has on their children's progress.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **satisfactory** quality of education. Teaching, learning and assessment are **satisfactory**. The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall with **good** enrichment opportunities. Accommodation and resources are **good**. The care and guidance for pupils are **good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and

acting on their views is **good**. Links with parents and other schools are **good** and links with the community are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage provides children with a vibrant range of learning experiences.
- Teaching for pupils in Years 1-2 enables pupils to achieve well.
- Behaviour management for Year 3-4 pupils is at times not good enough.
- There is not always enough challenge for Year 3-6 pupils.
- Teaching assistants make an important contribution to how well pupils learn.
- Opportunities to use pupils' writing and computer skills across different subjects need to be consistently seized upon.
- Although pupils are set individual targets in some subjects, their awareness of them is sometimes patchy.

Commentary

12. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but this judgement does not paint the full picture. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1-2 is good. Teaching in Years 3-6 is satisfactory. Teaching for the Year 3-4 pupils is at times unsatisfactory. Although teaching for Year 5-6 is satisfactory overall and good when the tasks set for the higher-attaining pupils are demanding, there are times when the work that is set for such pupils throughout Years 3-6 is too easy, and this prevents learning from being even stronger.
13. The teaching in the Foundation Stage enables pupils to achieve well. Tasks that are set are always carefully matched to the individual needs of the children. Assessment information is used well to guide and inform planning. Children are provided with lots of exciting activities where they can learn through practical, hands-on experiences, and children are often encouraged to find things out for themselves. Alongside these experiences, children are directly taught key skills and concepts across the different areas of learning which do much to ensure that they get off to a flying start to their educational lives. Teaching assistants and other adults contribute a great deal to the very pleasant learning environment and to how well children achieve. Occasionally, opportunities are missed where computers could be put to more effective use to enhance learning and to make it even more fun.
14. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 in the core subjects is good overall and helps to make sure that all pupils make good strides in their learning. Teaching provides many opportunities for pupils to put their speaking and listening skills to good use. Reading skills are taught well and an early love and enthusiasm for literature is encouraged. Although writing skills are being increasingly taught directly and well, opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' writing skills in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils are expected to put their scientific and mathematical knowledge to the test in challenging, and often fun, practical, investigative and

problem-solving activities. Pupils invariably rise to the challenge, and good advances in pupils' learning are made as a result.

15. The quality of teaching in Years 3-6 in English, mathematics and science, although satisfactory overall, shows too much variability. Teaching is better in Years 5 and 6, where it is always at least satisfactory and at times good when the work that is set for the higher-attaining pupils sets a good level of challenge and really gets the pupils thinking. This is not always the case for these pupils and for the pupils in Years 3-4, and as a result pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Reading skills are taught in a satisfactory manner, but writing skills are not always developed across other subjects, and at times there is not a high enough level of expectation for the Year 3 and 4 pupils as to how they are to present their work. Mathematical and scientific knowledge and concepts are taught in a satisfactory manner across the key stage, but what are sometimes missing are investigative tasks where what pupils have learned is really tested out. The main weakness in teaching, however, is the manner in which the behaviour of pupils in Years 3 and 4 is managed and tackled. Management techniques and classroom organisation are at times ineffective, and this results in unsatisfactory behaviour which impacts adversely on the learning of other pupils.
16. Teaching and learning in information and communication technology are satisfactory, with some good aspects including the good use that teachers make of the computer suite for directly and effectively teaching important skills. A good example of this was seen for the Year 5/6 pupils. There are times when opportunities are not planned for or grasped for computers to be used to advance pupils' learning across different subjects of the curriculum. Teaching in other inspected subjects was satisfactory, with examples of very good and good teaching carried out by the headteacher in physical education and art and design respectively.
17. Teaching assistants across the school make an important contribution to how well pupils with special educational needs learn. They are very supportive of and sensitive to the needs of individual pupils and also set high expectations with regard to the quantity and quality of pupils' work and responses.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 14 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	1	8	3	2	0	0

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

18. Assessment overall is satisfactory. Good procedures are in place for assessing and setting targets for individual pupils in English, mathematics and science. The school has accurately identified the need to ensure that this information is put to its best and most rigorous use to track individual pupils' progress towards these targets and to take action when targets are not met and to explore the good practice if targets are exceeded. Although pupils' targets in English and

mathematics are in their target books, discussions with pupils shows that they are not always fully aware of them. Assessment in the Foundation Stage is good and the information used well to help plan the next steps in pupils' learning. Assessment in the non-core subjects is satisfactory.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** curriculum for pupils of all ages. The enrichment of the curriculum is **good**. The quality of accommodation and resources is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage curriculum meets children's needs well.
- The school provides a good range of supplementary learning opportunities for all pupils.
- The school plans well in order to promote the pupils' personal, social and health education.
- There are missed opportunities to promote the use of computers and to develop pupils' writing skills across different subjects of the curriculum.
- The accommodation and resources add to the quality of pupils' learning experiences.

Commentary

19. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is planned well. Although the children are taught alongside Year 1 and 2 pupils, the teacher is careful to ensure that the small number of reception-aged children undertake activities that are well geared to their needs and interests. Care is taken to ensure that the children undertake first-hand experiences and take part in imaginative structured play. The well-equipped classroom and outside area are organised to stimulate children's curiosity and to encourage them to achieve well. Well-planned links between different areas of learning bring added interest to children's activities and successfully promote progress and the children's curiosity in their everyday learning.
20. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1-6 is satisfactory. It is securely based on the National Curriculum and meets all statutory requirements. Teachers capitalise on the opportunities to put pupils' numeracy skills to the test in different subjects of the curriculum in a satisfactory manner. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to enhance pupils' writing and computer skills across the curriculum, and this prevents learning from being stronger. Improvements in the curriculum since the last inspection overall, however, have been satisfactory.
21. The provision that is made for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, and this enables these pupils to make similar progress to that of their classmates. The school has a strong commitment to ensuring all pupils are included in all aspects of the curriculum and in all that the school has to offer. Particular care is taken to make sure that those pupils with a particularly high learning need have full and equal access to the curriculum.

22. The school provides a good quality range of additional learning and enrichment opportunities for pupils of all ages and abilities. Although the school is quite small, there are good opportunities for pupils to participate in competitive sports against other schools, to take part in extracurricular sporting activities and other activities for pupils who may not be sportingly inclined. When planning the various topics and themes, teachers give good consideration to how visits to places of interest or visiting speakers can be used to extend pupils' learning. Cultural and science weeks are a regular part of pupils' learning and subjects such as history are brought to life through role-play and drama activities, which add much to the quality of pupils' learning as well as being great fun.
23. There is a good programme for personal, social and health education. Where possible, teachers draw on the potential in other subjects to promote the pupils' understanding of issues about drugs awareness, sex education and road safety. As a result, the pupils get a good foundation about the importance of treating these issues seriously. The school has been successful in achieving the Advanced Healthy School award since the previous inspection.
24. The school's current facilities and accommodation are good, and every effort is made in ensuring that the building and grounds are creatively used to promote learning. The extensive and attractive school grounds provide good opportunities for the pupils to broaden their learning in different subjects, such as science, art and design and geography. The small outside play area for children in the Foundation Stage is used extensively and has a positive effect on the promotion of the pupils' physical and personal, social and emotional development as they learn to use and share outside play equipment sensibly with one another. The range of learning resources in many subjects is of a good quality and brings an added dimension to learning.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **good**. Pupils receive **satisfactory** support, advice and guidance. **Good** provision is made to involve pupils in decision-making about the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils are well cared for in a happy and safe environment.
- Health and safety issues are closely monitored through good procedures.
- Pupils' personal development is monitored well.
- Well organised induction and transfer arrangements ensure that pupils settle quickly into school.
- Pupils are involved well in helping to improve the school environment and in helping to make decisions about school life.

Commentary

25. The school provides a happy and safe learning environment. All pupils are well supported by staff who know them well. Parents are very satisfied with the high

quality of care their children receive from the school. Health and safety issues are well monitored through regular risk assessments. Child protection procedures are good, and all staff are well informed about their responsibilities. Pupils have good and trusting relationships with their teachers and learning support assistants. This contributes well to pupils' personal development.

26. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' academic achievements, although the school has accurately identified the need to ensure that this information is put to the best use to help further improve how well pupils achieve. Good and effective procedures are in place for tracking pupils' personal development and the information is put to good use when providing pupils and their parents with good quality information and guidance about the progress made. The good induction arrangements that are in place ensure that pupils settle quickly into school routines and school life, and that their parents are well informed and involved. Through the good links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer, pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for their transfer to Year 7.
27. Good arrangements are made for pupils to take on a range of responsibilities and special tasks around the school. Older pupils are appointed as play leaders, and are encouraged to care for younger pupils in the playground. The school council, involving pupils of all ages, is an enthusiastic group who are actively involved in organising changes and improvements to the school environment. Pupils play an important and genuine role in decision-making and they feel confident that their views are listened to and they are proud that some of their suggestions have resulted in improved facilities and improvements to the life of the school in general.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **good** partnership with parents. Links with the community are **satisfactory**. **Good** links have been established with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school welcomes parents and there is a good partnership in helping to develop pupils' learning.
- Information provided by the school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress and the life of the school.
- Good links with other schools support the curriculum and pupils' personal and social development.

Commentary

28. Parents speak highly of the strong partnership between home and school. The majority of parents are very supportive and interested in their children's progress. Parents are unanimous that they feel welcome in the school and are encouraged to be involved. Open evenings are well attended. The new headteacher has recently met with parents for a consultation evening to discuss his vision for the

school with them. Parents feel well informed through the weekly newsletters, curriculum booklets and regular consultation with teachers. They value the fact that their children's targets for improvement are shared with them each term, and that parents are encouraged to help their children at home. Reports to parents are good and details about progress are clearly stated. A small number of parents help regularly in classrooms and assist with extracurricular activities. A group of parents are currently creating a school website. The Parent Teacher Association has been very active, and parents have organised a range of social and fund-raising activities to support the school.

29. The school's links with the community are satisfactory. The new headteacher has recognised that this is an area for further development, and a community open day is currently being arranged. There are strong links with the church where pupils attend special services and use the facility for environmental and historical studies. There are good links with the Ridgewell Village Pre-school, and the school works closely with them to ensure that induction arrangements help children to settle quickly. The school is part of the Colne Valley Consortium of schools, and this has provided pupils with the opportunity to take part in joint events such as arts, science and multicultural weeks. Pupils also benefit from taking part in inter-school sports and participating in an annual local music festival. All these activities add much to pupils' personal, as well as their academic, development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The leadership and management of the headteacher are **good**. Leadership of key staff overall is **satisfactory**. There is **good** governance of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has very quickly developed an incisive and astute picture of what the school does well and where the school demonstrates potential to improve further.
- The deputy headteacher has provided the school with a clear steer in a period of high staff turnover.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning has not always identified where improvements are necessary.
- The governing body plays a valuable part in the everyday life of the school, and provides well-targeted support.
- Financial management and school administration are good.

Commentary

30. The headteacher has only been in post for a short period of time prior to the inspection. In a short time, he has very quickly, astutely and accurately got a strong grasp of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. He has supported staff well, led by example in his teaching role, and his leadership qualities have gained him the respect of pupils, staff, governors and parents. The headteacher has not shirked from dealing with issues such as improving the quality of teaching in certain classes. He has been supportive but firm and fair in putting in place rigorous strategies to address the issue. The deputy headteacher led the school well in the period prior to the headteacher taking up the post. Early indications are that both she and the headteacher are working well together, with the headteacher drawing well on the good knowledge and understanding she has of the school in establishing the school's agenda for improvement. Together with the staff, there is a strong sense of shared purpose and there is a common commitment by all to ensure that the school builds on what it provides for pupils to raise standards and to ensure that all pupils achieve well. Teachers and support staff know what they are working towards and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
31. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good because the co-ordinator ensures that the curriculum is well geared towards meeting the needs of how young children learn, has established strong and effective links with parents and has played an important role in helping to improve the quality of outdoor provision. Management of special educational needs is good, and the school's commitment to ensuring that those with particular needs are included in all that the school has to offer is visible and genuine. The role of subject leaders is satisfactory overall. There has been some monitoring of teaching and learning in the core subjects over time and subject leaders scrutinise pupils' work and teachers' planning. However, monitoring has not been consistently rigorous or evaluative enough to have the biggest possible impact on ensuring that all pupils achieve as well as they can. Procedures for analysing test and assessment data have taken on a sharper focus since the appointment of the present headteacher, with the information being used increasingly well for setting targets and for tracking pupils' progress.
32. The governing body conscientiously oversees the work of the school and effectively fulfils its responsibilities. The chair is a frequent visitor to the school and has a good oversight of what the school provides for pupils. The governing body is increasingly rigorous in how it oversees the school's provision and in holding it to account for the standards it reaches. Each governor has taken on responsibility to

oversee different subjects of the curriculum. The information they gather on the school is based on a regular programme of visits which form the basis of a written report that is shared with the rest of the governors. Such work enables them to have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. There is strong emphasis on training and professional development of governors' understanding of how best they can support the school. These positive approaches to school improvement bode well for the governing body's capacity to work closely with the new headteacher in order to further raise the quality of education the school provides for pupils.

33. Financial planning and budget control are good. The school and governors ensure the principles of best value are applied well when purchasing goods and services. Good procedures are in place to assess the impact of major spending decisions on standards and the quality of education provided. Spending is very much linked to the educational priorities that are identified in the school development plan. The office staff ensure that the day-to-day running of the school is smooth, unobtrusive and efficient. Taking all factors into account, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	288 230	Balance from previous year	18 548
Total expenditure	291 248	Balance carried forward to the next year	15 530
Expenditure per pupil	3 595		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage, and achieve well.
- Teaching takes good account of how young children learn best.
- Children are well supported in their learning by the learning support assistant.
- Children with a high level of special educational needs are very much included in all that is on offer.
- There are some missed opportunities in lessons for children to use computers to support learning.
- Strong links with parents have a positive influence on the children's learning.

Commentary

34. The number of children in the Foundation Stage varies each year, and they are admitted full-time in either the autumn or spring term, depending on their birthday. At the time of the inspection, only three children were in the Foundation Stage. The size of the school necessitates the teaching of the reception-aged children alongside Year 1 and 2 pupils. Attainment on entry varies from year to year, but overall is at an average level. By the time they start Year 1, the children exceed the early learning goals in all areas of their learning. Overall achievement is good. Those with specific learning needs are given good levels of care and support. This enables them to feel comfortable in their new school surroundings, and they achieve as well as their classmates.
35. For some aspects of their learning, particularly in the introductions to lessons, the children are taught alongside their Year 1 and 2 classmates. They benefit well from this arrangement as the children learn to interact with pupils older than themselves. On other occasions, a learning support assistant, who is guided in her work by the teacher, teaches the children. Teaching and the curriculum provision are good overall, and learning activities are well planned, fun and enjoyed by the children. When children enter the school, the teacher and assistant check the level of their attainment and use the information to plan work that is a good match with the children's needs. As they move through their first year in the school, children are assessed regularly to determine how well they are progressing and what additional support some might need. The children settle quickly into the school, helped by the warm and purposeful relationships between the adults and the children. This ensures that the children work in an atmosphere that enhances the positive attitudes many of them have for their learning.
36. The school has established good relationships with parents, and this has a positive effect on the children's learning in a number of ways. Many parents

support the school in its wish that they assist their children at home, particularly in relation to their reading development, and this contributes well to their overall achievement. Parents are kept regularly informed about their children's progress, both formally and informally. In addition, a number of parents work in the classroom at many different points of the week. The co-ordinator ensures that the curriculum on offer is well matched to the needs of the children, ensures that all adults are deployed effectively, and has played an important role in helping to improve the provision for outside play activities. Improvement in terms of overall Foundation Stage provision has been good since the time of the last inspection.

37. Children achieve well in their **personal, social and emotional development** and exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are good and planned in a way to enable the children to achieve well in this area of their learning. Every encouragement is given to the children when changing for physical education work to do so quickly and to leave their clothes in a neat pile ready to change again quickly upon their return. Children perform these skills ably, and few require the support of an adult when changing. The teacher and assistants regularly give the children good scope to work independently on certain tasks. Such encouragement enables the children to successfully develop their early learning about the importance of negotiating with others. Children play well together and are often to be seen sharing resources and equipment fairly and sensibly.
38. By the time they enter Year 1, children exceed the expectations of the early learning goals in their **communication, language and literacy** development. Teaching is good, and much of the children's good learning stems from the way in which teaching ensures that the children have plenty of opportunities to develop their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills through many of the activities that the children undertake. Children enjoy reading and follow the stories that they are read with high levels of enthusiasm. Higher-attaining children, for example, are already able to read and explain in a simple way what they like about the stories they read. Children take books home on a nightly basis, and many parents take the time to listen to their children read and to discuss the stories they share together. Many children are confident speakers and are given good encouragement to participate in creative, structured role-play activities. Children listen attentively to what others have to say. Children make good progress in their early understanding that writing is used to communicate, and their skills are sufficiently developed to enable them to write simple messages and statements. By the time they enter Year 1, children are writing their names clearly, and higher-attaining children write short accounts or stories that are well-structured and where it is easy to follow their line of thinking.
39. By the time they enter Year 1, children exceed the expectations of the early learning goals in their **mathematical** development. Achievement is good, which is aided by good teaching. The children demonstrate high levels of confidence in counting beyond twenty, and many of them do so accurately. They also explain with confidence what number is one more than a given number. The children are taught well to gain an early understanding of simple addition and subtraction, and

their understanding of how to solve simple problems involving money is good. Many children have a secure understanding of the difference between long and short shapes, and higher-attaining pupils explain the similarities and differences between two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Teaching allows the children to use a wide range of different equipment and mathematical resources, enabling them to learn successfully and to make good progress into understanding more abstract mathematical ideas.

40. Children make equally good progress in their **knowledge and understanding of the world**, and by the time they enter Year 1 they have exceeded the expectations of the early learning goals. Achievement is good because of the good quality teaching. Children have a good general knowledge and understanding for their age, and give examples of countries beyond England. They know that a village consists of fewer houses than seen in towns, and they understand well that Ridgewell Church is a special building where people may marry, and requirements for the teaching of religious education for the children are met well. Children understand well that birthdays are special events and that people get older when these are celebrated. The children are quite competent for their age in using computers and other related ICT equipment such as tape recorders. They identify the main peripherals that are added to computers, such as a monitor or printer, and they use a mouse ably to move around the different layers of a program. However, there are missed opportunities during the course of day-to-day lessons for the children to use such equipment more frequently in their learning.
41. The children achieve well in their **creative** development. By the time they reach Year 1, they exceed the expectations of the early learning goals. Teaching and learning are good and provide the children with many interesting and frequent opportunities to participate in creative play. These can be in the 'Ridgewell Village Shop', where the children learn to 'buy' or 'sell' food items to one another. Children learn the importance of working co-operatively and negotiating with one another as a result. Children are provided with good opportunities to work with a variety of media when constructing simple artwork and learn to appreciate that colours can be mixed to form others when doing so. The children demonstrate high levels of enjoyment when participating in singing simple songs and rhymes, and they have a good understanding for their age that songs are often sung in different genres.
42. By the time they enter Year 1, children exceed the expectations of the early learning goals in their **physical** development. Teaching and learning are good, and children achieve well. Teaching places good emphasis on the development of the children's fine motor skills, and children are proficient in using scissors, for example, in the course of their practical work. In more formal physical education work, children change for their lessons quickly and competently. When in the hall, the children ably follow a given sequence of instructions and can run and jog on the spot as well as changing direction, and they are mindful of others when doing so. Children use larger outdoor equipment sensibly and demonstrate good co-ordination skills when moving around objects.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well.
- Writing standards could be better across the school.
- Teaching does not always expect enough in terms of the quantity and quality of work in Key Stage 2, particularly for Year 3 and 4 pupils.
- Teaching assistants contribute much to the quality of pupils' learning.

Commentary

43. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was above the national average in reading and in line with the national average in writing. When compared to similar schools, attainment was below average in reading and writing. The 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils show attainment was below the national average, and well below average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that attainment at the end of Year 2 is at an average level overall, although writing standards are a little below average. Standards at the end of Year 6 are well below average. There is variability in levels of attainment from year to year because a small number of pupils are tested each year, there are fluctuations in the number of pupils with special educational needs and there are year groups with a relatively high level of pupil mobility. This is again reflected in the unconfirmed test data for 2004 which shows below average attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. These facts, however, do not tell the full story. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well, and, although achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 3-6 and at times good for the older pupils, there are times when Year 3 and 4 pupils do not achieve as well as they could when teaching is not satisfactory. Across the school, writing standards could be better. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

44. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are attentive listeners and speak with confidence in group and class discussions. By the time that pupils leave school, most use an appropriately expressive vocabulary and show respect when listening to the contributions of others. There are, however, a minority of pupils in Years 3-5 who do not listen attentively, speak when others are speaking or do not follow the normal social conventions in question and answer sessions. At the end of Year 2, pupils read with a reasonable degree of accuracy and expression and have been taught a number of different strategies to help them tackle unfamiliar words and phrases. Reading standards by the time that pupils leave school are currently below average. The highest attaining pupils read very well, with high levels of expression, and can read beyond the literal level. However, there are other pupils who are not at this high level, and, although they read with a satisfactory level of

accuracy and expression, they do not have a genuine love for reading or have a good knowledge of a wide range of authors. The main area for improvement in standards is writing. Although these are currently improving at a good rate, they are not yet good enough. By the end of Year 2, pupils use capital letters and full stops in a satisfactory manner, and spelling standards are at an average level. Writing, however, lacks a real sense of fluency and vibrancy to enable pupils to attain at a higher level. By the time that pupils leave school, writing for a good percentage of pupils still lacks a sense of expressiveness or the use of an exciting vocabulary, or simply fizzles out after a lively opening. There are also occasions in Years 3-6, particularly in Years 3 and 4, when expectations are not high enough as to how much work pupils should produce or how work is to be presented.

45. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good. Reading skills are taught well. The increasing emphasis that is being put on the direct teaching of key writing skills is paying dividends as standards are rising rapidly at this key stage. Lessons in these year groups are good because teaching is lively and animated and captures the interest of all pupils. Lessons often zip along at a good pace, time deadlines are set and pupils are only too ready to respond to the high expectations that are set for them. Texts to support learning are chosen well, and many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills and to read aloud in class. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 3-6, but there is too much variability. Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good for the older pupils when pupils are under no illusion as to what is expected of them in terms of the quantity and quality of their writing, when writing skills are taught well and when pupils are provided with an exciting range of writing stimuli. In these instances, pupils respond well. Higher-order reading skills, such as skimming and scanning, are taught in a satisfactory manner. Teaching is at times unsatisfactory for pupils in Years 3 and 4. The reasons for this are that expectations are at times simply not high enough in terms of behaviour, application or how well pupils present their work. There are also occasions when pupils do not take enough initiative or responsibility for their own learning. This results in pupils not always making the progress of which they are capable. Across the school, teaching assistants make a significant and important contribution to how well pupils learn. Their support is sensitive yet challenging, and well matched to the individual needs of pupils.
46. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Over time there has been some monitoring of teaching and learning, and scrutiny of pupils' work has regularly taken place. The subject leader monitors teachers' planning and provides good support and guidance to colleagues. There is now a more focused and rigorous approach to the analysis of test data and to more careful tracking of pupils' individual progress towards the targets that have been set for them. However, this approach has not been rigorous enough over time, nor have any weaknesses in teaching been tackled in a sufficiently robust manner to have the biggest possible impact on standards and on how well pupils achieve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall, although there is scope for improvement. Many lessons provided pupils with good opportunities to put their speaking and listening skills to the test and to use an appropriate technical vocabulary. These opportunities are best capitalised on in Years 1 and 2, where expectations as to how pupils speak and listen are at their highest. This is not consistently the case in Years 3 and 4. Although there are some good examples of pupils' writing skills being enhanced in different subjects of the curriculum, there are too many occasions across the school when opportunities are not planned for or grasped and chances to extend pupils' writing are missed.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 provides good opportunities for pupils to learn through practical, hands-on activities.
- Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is not always effective in building on what pupils learn in Years 1 and 2.
- Teaching assistants support and enhance pupils' learning well.
- Computers are not always used well to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils do not always present their work with sufficient care.

Commentary

48. On the basis of the 2003 end of Year 2 national test results, the pupils' attainment is well above the national average, and average in comparison with similar schools. The 2003 test results show that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is below the national average, and average based on how well they performed in the national tests when aged seven. Standards vary from year to year because of the number of pupils assessed, the fluctuating number of pupils with special educational needs and the high level of pupil mobility which is a feature in some year groups. This is again reflected in the unconfirmed 2004 test results for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, which show a below average picture of attainment. Inspection findings show that standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations, and that standards at the end of Year 6 are well below national expectations. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. In Years 3- 6, achievement is satisfactory overall, but there are areas where it could be better. Teaching is not always at a satisfactory level for pupils in Years 3 and 4, and occasionally work for the higher-attaining pupils in Years 3-6 is not sufficiently challenging. Pupils that have been at the school for the full duration of their primary years generally achieve better. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

49. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of number and how to solve problems mentally. Pupils grasp well, for example, the relationship between fractions and number, and solve problems such as 'what is half of 50p?' well. Pupils have a good understanding of shape and measure. They differentiate well regarding the difference between two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and see the relationship between the number of corners, side and edges. Good support for pupils with special educational needs enables all pupils to take a full and active part in the opening and concluding parts of lessons.
50. By the end of Year 6, only higher-attaining pupils multiply quickly by ten, 100 and 1000. The same pupils have a good understanding of the different approaches that could be used to make calculations. Average and less able pupils have only a skimpy grasp of how to use decimal notation, and their ability to convert fractions to decimals and percentages is not well developed. Pupils are given some opportunities to carry out problems of an open-ended nature, but there are times when teaching underestimates the potential some pupils have to undertake more challenging problems in this aspect of their learning.
51. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good for pupils in Years 1 and 2. In Years 1 and 2, lessons are generally lively and challenging and provide good, well planned opportunities for pupils to learn through practical activities where pupils find things out for themselves or get a good grasp of how mathematics can be used in everyday life. Across the school, teachers follow the guidance given in the national strategy for teaching mathematics well, and good care is taken to ensure that those with special learning needs are allowed good access to practical equipment to aid them grasp the concepts being taught. In both key stages, teaching assistants make an important contribution to how well pupils learn. Teaching is at its best in Key Stage 2, when the tasks that are set are demanding and challenging for the more able pupils and pupils are presented with problems that really get them thinking. They invariably rise to the challenge when such tasks are provided, but there are occasions when work is not always at this level. A weaker element of teaching across the school is that opportunities for pupils to use computers to enhance their learning are not consistently planned for or capitalised upon. Teaching in Year 3 and 4 is unsatisfactory at times when it does not consistently build on the learning made by pupils in Years 1 and 2. Weak management of the pupils that leads to time being frittered away and pupils quickly losing interest in their learning is the main explanation as to why teaching is weaker. Teaching at times in Years 3-6 expects too little as to how pupils are to present their work and is too welcoming of work that is scrappily presented. There are also occasions when pupils do not put enough effort into their work or show a reluctance to take initiative and responsibility for how well they learn.
52. There is satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. The headteacher has taken on the responsibility for co-ordinating the subject. There has been some limited monitoring of teaching and learning in the past. Pupils' work and performance in national tests, have, for example, been evaluated. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning and the analysis of data has not been rigorous or systematic enough over time to have the biggest possible impact on standards

or in ensuring that all pupils achieve consistently well. This issue is now being fully addressed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. Numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily and at times well in most classes, and there are some satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in their work in other subjects such as science, design and technology and geography. However, there are some missed opportunities in science to produce tables and charts as a means of presenting the findings of the investigations they have undertaken.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 provides many good opportunities to learn through practical, hands-on scientific experiences.
- Pupils do not always achieve as well as they could in Years 3 and 4.
- Computers are not always put to best use to enhance pupils' learning.
- Teaching assistants bring an added dimension to the quality of pupils' learning.

Commentary

54. The 2003 teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils indicate that attainment is at an average level, although the percentage of pupils working at a higher level than normally expected for pupils of this age is low. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was well above the national average and well above average when compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment. Inspection findings show that attainment at the end of Year 2 is at an average level and currently below average by the end of Year 6. Attainment levels fluctuate from year to year at the end of both key stages because of the small number of pupils assessed each year and the fluctuating percentage of pupils with special educational needs and the high levels of pupil mobility which are present in some year groups. The unconfirmed test results for 2004 show that attainment is below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The picture that emerges regarding achievement is satisfactory overall, but variable. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well, and, although achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 3-6, it is at times unsatisfactory in some lessons for Year 3 and 4 pupils. There are also times in Years 3-6 when the challenge for the higher-attaining pupils is not always high enough. Improvement has been satisfactory since the time of the last inspection.
55. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding and awareness of healthy eating and lifestyle. Pupils name different body and plant parts and have a satisfactory level of knowledge about electricity, forces and light and sound.

Teaching provides good opportunities for pupils to learn through practical and investigative tasks, although pupils do not always use their knowledge to best effect when making predictions. By the end of Year 6, standards are currently below average. The higher-attaining pupils have a good base of scientific knowledge across many aspects of the subject and are competent at instigating their own investigations. However, not all pupils are at this level. A significant percentage of pupils have a secure knowledge of aspects of science they have recently covered such as healthy diets and how things grow. However, their recall of previously learnt topics is patchy, they do not use an appropriate scientific vocabulary and are not secure in how to predict and hypothesise accurately.

56. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 because it is challenging and sets high expectations for pupils of all abilities. Learning is made fun with many opportunities for pupils to experiment and to find things out for themselves. Pupils thoroughly enjoy this aspect of science and participate with high levels of enthusiasm and commitment. Pupils are often expected to write up their investigations in their own words, and this does much to enhance pupils' writing skills as well as developing their ability to set out their scientific thoughts and conclusions in a logical manner. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 3-6, but this does not paint the full picture. Although teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory, it is at its best when the challenge for the higher-attaining pupils is high and pupils are expected to set up their own investigations and to use their scientific knowledge to help make accurate predictions and to explain conclusions. Such good practice is not always as consistent as it could be. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is at times unsatisfactory. The content of the lesson is often appropriate and the teacher has secure subject knowledge, but expectations as to how pupils are to behave and how pupils are to present their work are not high enough. Behaviour in lessons is not managed well, and the behaviour of a minority of pupils spoils the learning of the rest of the class. Teaching assistants play a proactive and very supportive role in many lessons, which impacts most positively on pupils' learning. Not enough use is currently being made of computers to enhance the quality of pupils' learning or as a method of recording results in either text, tabular or graphical forms.
57. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader monitors planning and provides much informal guidance to colleagues. There has been some monitoring of teaching and learning over time and there is now a more focused approach for target-setting and for tracking individual pupils' progress. However, over time, the whole process of monitoring and of data analysis has not been consistently rigorous to have the biggest possible impact on ensuring that standards and how well all pupils achieve are good enough.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the school's ICT suite to support learning.
- Recent improvements in resources have helped to raise the status of the subject.
- Teaching does not always make sufficient use of computers in day-to-day lessons.
- There are gaps in pupils' understanding of some aspects of learning in Years 3-6.

Commentary

58. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below the nationally expected levels at the end of both key stages. Since the last inspection, there has been a good improvement to the provision made for ICT. As a result, pupils reach standards that are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The small but well used computer suite has had a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve satisfactorily, and at times well, within lessons when the teaching is good.
59. Pupils throughout the school have a satisfactory understanding of how information and communication technology can help them in their learning. The strongest feature of pupils' attainment is in the way that they used word-processing software to help them in their literacy work. Year 2 pupils can change the size and appearance of fonts to make their work more pleasing for the reader. By the end of Year 6, pupils show good levels of confidence when using the more advanced features of a word-processor to mix together text and graphics. Pupils make increasing use of the Internet to explore and gather information in their studies. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are introduced to and have a satisfactory understanding of control technology through exploring how to manoeuvre programmable toys at an early age. In Years 3-6, pupils explore control and modelling equipment when they take part in residential activities. There are, however, some gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Year 5 and 6 pupils, for example, do not use spreadsheets sufficiently to explore and interpret mathematical data, and very few are sufficiently able to produce graphs and charts in subjects such as mathematics and science.
60. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good features. Strengths in teaching include the good use teachers make of the small computer suite. Pupils are often directly taught key skills and then provided with good activities and challenges where these new skills can be put to the test. Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding has improved since the previous inspection, and good use is made of related ICT equipment such as projectors to make teaching points clear to pupils. At times, teachers make good use of word-processing software to allow pupils to draft their work, which has clear links with other subjects. Year 5 and 6 pupils, for example, draft modern day stories as a result of reading Greek Myths. In the main, however, too little use is made of ICT in daily lessons.
61. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recently appointed headteacher has taken on the responsibility of co-ordinating the subject, and he has quickly established a clear vision of continued development in the subject. However, there has been little clear and effective monitoring of teaching and learning over time to gauge the impact that the investment that the school has made in ICT has made in helping to secure improvements in the standards that pupils reach.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

62. The use of computers to support and enhance pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum is satisfactory. Although there are some good examples of computers being used well across the curriculum, not enough opportunities are consistently planned for or capitalised upon. The school has currently highlighted this as an area for development within the subject.

HUMANITIES

63. Timetable constraints meant that not enough lessons were observed in **geography** to make a secure judgement on the overall quality of provision in the subject. However, work in the subject was sampled. Evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are at an average level. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the world in which they live, but have a more patchy recall of topics that they have covered in geography. Planning shows that all aspects of the subject are covered in sufficient depth over the course of the year. Geographical skills such as mapping and the use of co-ordinates to locate places are taught alongside the development of geographical knowledge of different countries and areas of the world. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed satisfactory mapping skills and know simple landmarks in the locality. They know different forms of transport and that some forms of transport are better than others for travelling to different places. Pupils recognise that there are differences between where they live and other parts of the world. By the end of Year 6, pupils name different countries of the world, but are less sure of continents and capital cities. Pupils describe attractive and less attractive features of their locality, but need prompts to recall different aspects of the subject that they have covered. The school makes good use of the locality and of visits and visitors to embellish pupils' learning experiences in the subject. Computers are not always used to support and enhance pupils' learning. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.
64. Not enough teaching could be observed to make a secure judgement about the overall quality of provision in **history**. However, the subject was sampled. Teachers' planning and pupils' work was scrutinised and discussions took place with teachers and with pupils. Planning shows that all aspects of the subject are covered in sufficient depth. Evidence suggests that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a secure understanding of chronology and a satisfactory knowledge of famous people in history. Pupils know that objects can sometimes tell us about how people lived in the past. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory level of knowledge and understanding about life in Ancient Greece and about life and times in the Victorian era. Some pupils have difficulty recalling facts about other periods of history that they have studied, and are not secure in their awareness of how different periods of history may be interpreted differently by different people. Pupils know about primary and secondary sources of evidence and of the importance of artefacts. There are some good examples of the subject being used

well to develop pupils' writing skills, but this good practice is not as consistent as it could be. Not enough opportunities are being provided for pupils to carry out independent study or research, or for pupils to use computers for finding out about the past. The school makes good use of historical trips and visitors to the school to help to bring the subject to life. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65. Due to timetable constraints, not all subjects were inspected in depth. The following represent the inspection findings.
66. In **art and design**, on the basis of scrutiny of available pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers, evidence indicates that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Younger pupils in school mix colours to produce the desired effect, and are becoming more confident at working in three-dimensional formats as well as two dimensions. Pupils are encouraged to be creative and imaginative in their work. By the time that pupils leave school, they have been provided with opportunities to work in a range of different media, including paint, pastels, charcoal, pencil and clay. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils are taught key artistic skills as they move through the school and all pupils in school are expected to use sketchbooks to record ideas or to try out different techniques. Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of famous artists but are not conversant with specific styles or techniques that famous artists use. Pupils study art from different countries and continents around the world, and this adds much to their cultural development as well as adding to their artistic knowledge. There are some examples of computer programs such as 'word art' being used to embellish texts, but less evidence of computers being used, for example, to carry out independent research projects about the work of different artists. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.
67. In **design and technology**, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Planning indicates that the subject is taught in sufficient depth over the course of the year and that pupils are provided with the opportunity to work with a range of different materials and are taught to use a variety of fixing and joining techniques. Younger pupils in school are provided with a good range of different construction kits and are given specific design briefs from which to work. They take part with great enthusiasm in food technology activities, such as making and baking bread, which also link well with their work in science. As pupils move through Years 3-6, they make puppets, masks, bags, photograph frames and moving toys, which are often of a satisfactory standard, and at times better. Discussions with pupils indicate that they thoroughly enjoy the practical experiences that the subject offers and also that teaching places a good emphasis on the designing and evaluating aspects of the subject as well as the making. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

68. In **music**, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils indicate that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, with standards in singing being good across the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing with gusto and tunefully in assemblies and in class. Pupils play untuned instruments in a satisfactory manner and recognise that different pieces of music can evoke different feelings. Pupils beat and follow a simple rhythm and remember a good number of songs from memory. Observations of pupils in assemblies and in class indicate that pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part in musical activities, and are disappointed when they end. As pupils move through Years 3-6, singing standards remain at a good level. Pupils of all ages take part in singing in assembly with confidence and enjoyment, and their singing is tuneful, joyous and uplifting. Singing is enhanced by the good quality of musical accompaniment of the headteacher's guitar playing. Discussions with Year 6 pupils indicate that they have a satisfactory knowledge of famous composers, such as Beethoven, Mozart and Bach, and of more contemporary musicians and forms of music. Pupils are provided with opportunities to listen to and experience music from many different cultures, and this helps to raise pupils' cultural awareness as well as broadening their musical knowledge. Discussions with pupils also indicate that fewer opportunities are provided for pupils to compose music or to use computers in the subject. Some pupils are provided with opportunities to play musical instruments. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are significant strengths in how games skills are taught to older pupils.
- A good range of learning activities is provided for pupils.

Commentary

69. Standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Swimming standards are above average by the time that pupils leave school. Achievement is satisfactory overall and is good within individual lessons when the quality of teaching is strong. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
70. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory awareness of space and of the needs of others. In lessons and at outside play, pupils demonstrate a satisfactory degree of physical agility and throw and catch balls with a reasonable degree of success and accuracy. Pupils already show a good awareness of the importance of physical exercise for a healthy lifestyle. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the impact of exercise on the body and of the importance of warm-up and cool-down activities at the beginning and end of the lesson. Pupils demonstrate satisfactory ball-handling skills, with a significant minority of pupils demonstrating higher levels of skill. Pupils control balls well and pass with a satisfactory degree of precision and power. Pupils work well together.
71. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Planning indicates that over the course of the year, all aspects of the subject are covered. Teaching is at its best when key skills are taught in a direct manner and then pupils provided with opportunities to practice and refine these skills. In a very good lesson for Year 5 and 6 pupils, the high level of behaviour management, the high expectations, the emphasis on rigorous physical exercise alongside the direct teaching of how to pass a rugby ball at pace led to significant improvements in pupils' performances, as well as pupils thoroughly enjoying the lesson. Teaching for the younger pupils in school again centres on the direct teaching of skills and on keeping physically active. There are times when there are not enough opportunities provided for pupils to evaluate their level of performance. Pupils' learning in the subject is enhanced by a good range of extracurricular sporting activities that are offered and through opportunities to take part in inter-school sporting competitions which all add to pupils' personal development as well as improving their physical skills.
72. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader monitors planning, and plans are in hand for the monitoring of teaching and learning to take place when the subject is an identified area of priority on the school development plan.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

73. The programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good and adds positively to pupils' personal development. The school promotes healthy eating and healthy lifestyles through both the science and physical education curriculum. The school has recently been awarded the Advanced Healthy School Award. There is good provision made for pupils to learn about sex education, drug awareness and road safety. Pupils are provided with many good quality opportunities to learn about life in a multicultural society. In many lessons and in 'circle time', pupils are encouraged to offer their views and opinions on a wide range of different and diverse issues. The pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for tasks around the school and do so well, although there is less emphasis on pupils taking a greater initiative and responsibility for their own learning. Discussions with pupils show that they feel confident in expressing their views, but also express the opinion that they know that their views will be listened to, respected and taken on board. There is also an active school council which both the school and pupils are proud of. The council plays an important role in decision-making and pupils genuinely feel that the actions of the council have led to improvements in the school environment and to the life of the school in general. Inspection findings certainly support the pupils' views.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).

