

INSPECTION REPORT

SCOTT LOWER SCHOOL

Brickhill, Bedford

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109512

Headteacher: Mr Mike Aylen

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Lynda Bell

Lead inspector: Susan Walker

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th February 2005

Inspection number: 267636

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

© Crown copyright 2005

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: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 – 9
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 174

School address: Hawk Drive
Bedford
Bedfordshire
Postcode: MK41 7JA

Telephone number: 01234 352630
Fax number: 01234 211366

Appropriate authority: Governing Body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Balraj S Rai

Date of previous inspection: 24th – 27th May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Scott Lower School is situated in an urban part of Bedford called Brickhill, but it takes nearly half of its pupils from outside its natural catchment area. Pupils live in a wide variety of housing, but socio-economic characteristics are average. Scott Lower is smaller than most schools nationally. The school has changed to one form entry since the last inspection and now has 174 full-time pupils on roll. Year 4 is the last large year group remaining in the school. There are more boys than girls on roll. Pupils are predominantly of white British origin with about a third from a range of other ethnic groups. About ten per cent do not speak English as their first language with only seven pupils at an early stage of learning English. An average number of pupils are on the register of special education needs, but none has a statement of special educational need. Children enter school in the term they turn four and are admitted to the Early Years unit full time in the term of their fifth birthday. Attainment on entry is falling and is now below the national average. Few pupils move in and out of the school at other than the usual times.

The school is currently being led and managed by an acting headteacher, who does not belong to the permanent school staff. The long-standing headteacher, who has been in post for a considerable number of years, is on one year's unpaid study leave. There has been a large turnover of staff and governors in the last two years, but both are now more settled.

The school does not have either a deputy headteacher or a group of senior teachers to help to lead and manage the school. It gained Investor in People in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21678	Sue Walker	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs Science Art and design Music Personal, social and health education
9079	Ann Moss	Lay inspector	
16493	Neville Sherman	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education
20368	Sue Macintosh	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Religious education Geography History

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
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	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Scott Lower is a **satisfactory** and inclusive school. Leadership by the acting headteacher is good and the school is improving rapidly, due to her good overview of the school and her ability to identify and address weaknesses. Leadership overall is satisfactory. Standards are average by Year 4. Achievement is satisfactory because predominantly teaching is satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory, but needs an overhaul to give it some vitality. The school gives satisfactory value for money from a below average budget.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The acting headteacher's good skills and knowledge have motivated the whole school community to move forward.
- Standards at Year 2 are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Assessment and the use of assessment are not good enough.
- The role of the co-ordinators remains unsatisfactory.
- Teaching requires further improvement, especially in Years 3 and 4.
- The curriculum does not widen pupils' horizons sufficiently.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good.
- Provision and teaching for children in the nursery and reception class are good.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. This is primarily due to the rapid, recent and effective improvement that has been brought about by the acting headteacher. The breadth of the current school improvement plan shows that, before the start of this academic year, the previous key issues and other areas for improvement had not been addressed with sufficient rigour. The acting headteacher has this in hand, particularly assessment and the development of the co-ordinator's role.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is **satisfactory**. It is good for children in the nursery and reception classes and most children reach the national standard before they enter Year 1. Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science and consequently standards are above average. In Years 1 to 4, in all other subjects, achievement is satisfactory and standards are what you would expect for the age group, although sometimes more able pupils in Years 3 and 4 are not sufficiently challenged.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	E	C	A	A
writing	C	A	A*	A*
mathematics	D	A	B	B

Key: A - the top 5 per cent nationally A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average*

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

In the 2004 national tests for Year 2 pupils, standards were well above average in reading, in the top five per cent nationally in writing and above average in mathematics. In the

optional tests for Year 4 pupils, results in mathematics were poor and were broadly satisfactory in reading and writing.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are developed well. Standards in social and moral development are **good**, whilst those in spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall, but are good for the children in the Early Years unit. The teaching of basic skills is good in Years 1 and 2. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory, but does not always build well enough on what pupils already know. Extra adults are used well to promote pupils' learning. Assessment and the use of assessment to promote better learning are unsatisfactory. It does not provide targets for pupils to aim for, or link to future lesson planning. The curriculum is satisfactory, but there are unsatisfactory opportunities for visitors or other forms of enrichment. The care, support and guidance of pupils are satisfactory and there are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to express their views. There are good links with parents and satisfactory links with the community and other schools and colleges.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. The leadership of the acting headteacher is good. Management is satisfactory. The current school improvement plan is 'spot on' and has brought about a rigorous and well-planned programme of change in a short time. Governance is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. Governors made an astute appointment in the acting headteacher. They now have a good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses after a period when they were insufficiently informed. The role of the co-ordinator is unsatisfactory and is only just starting to be tackled in any meaningful way. There are insufficient funds to appoint staff to senior management roles.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school and think very highly of the acting headteacher. Pupils like the school and feel that their views are heard, despite the lack of a school council.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- To put into place and to consistently use good assessment systems to track pupils' progress, to set targets and to link to planning future lessons.
- To develop the role of subject co-ordinators.
- To improve the quality of teaching, so that there are more good and very good lessons, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- To improve the curriculum, so that it is innovative and enriches pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall. Standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science in Year 2 and are average in all subjects in Year 4 when pupils leave the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Achievement is good in the nursery and reception classes.
- Pupils do not use their strengths in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) well enough in other subjects in Years 3 and 4.
- More able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

Commentary

1. Children enter the nursery class with standards that are below those expected nationally. By the time that they enter Year 1, they have made good progress and most attain the early learning goals¹ in all areas, although a minority does not. This is due to good teaching which is effectively geared to children's ability and interests.
2. Inspection findings show that current Year 2 standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. There are fewer higher attaining pupils in this cohort than in 2004, which explains the discrepancy with the national assessment test results. Achievement is good, because teachers teach these aspects well and a good amount of curriculum time is allocated to them. In all other subjects, Year 2 pupils attain average standards and achievement is satisfactory.
3. Currently, Year 4 standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science, although one Year 4 class is doing better than the other. Pupils' achievement has been very variable between Year 2 and Year 4, but it is beginning to quicken and is overall satisfactory at present. Achievement has been affected by the fact that until the acting headteacher arrived pupils were not being taught for a sufficient time each week in English and ICT. The use of the same worksheet for all pupils in the class is insufficiently challenging for more able pupils and this affects their achievement in some lessons. The acting headteacher and the governors have taken good steps to try and improve matters. For instance, the large Year 4 class has been divided into small classes and the class with more pupils with special educational needs has the support of a teaching assistant in the morning to improve achievement in literacy and numeracy. The Year 3 class has a teaching assistant for the majority of the time to raise the level of achievement and to build on what pupils already know.
4. Standards for pupils in Years 3 and 4 are average in all other subjects and achievement is satisfactory. The school does not yet plan sufficiently well enough for pupils to develop and consolidate their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other lessons.

¹ The goals that children are expected to reach by the time that they start Year1.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.1 (15.7)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	17.5 (16.7)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.1 (17.5)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. In the 2004 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were well above the national average in reading, in the top five per cent nationally in writing and above average in mathematics when compared to all schools nationally. It was a similar picture when compared to schools in similar socio-economic circumstances. When teachers assessed what pupils could do in science, standards were above average. Standards vary from year to year, but 2004 was the most successful in recent years, because of the number of pupils who reached the higher levels. Standards far exceeded the targets that the school had set, because of the number of pupils who exceeded the Level 3 target.
6. The 2004 national statistics show that there are differences in the learning of boys and girls in Year 2 over the last three years. Boys appear to do better than girls in mathematics and reading. However, during the inspection, no particular differences were observed in the way in which pupils learnt, or were taught.
7. In the 2004 optional tests for pupils in Year 4, standards were poor in mathematics, and broadly satisfactory in writing and in reading. It was clear that pupils had made insufficient progress from Year 2 to Year 4, because they failed to reach any of the school's targets. Pupils had an unsettled time in Years 3 and 4 due to staff changes and pupils who joined after Year 2 were at the low end of achievement. This may help to explain their relatively weak achievement.
8. The local education authority provides the school with a full breakdown of progress from Year 2 to Year 4, including the progress of boys and girls and those from different ethnic groups. This information shows that there were no disadvantaged groups.
9. Achievement by pupils with special education needs is satisfactory and is in line with their individual education plans. These are correctly focused on improving pupils' basic skills and the occasional pupil's behaviour. The usual government initiatives are in place in English and are satisfactorily taught, but they have yet to be established in mathematics. There are relatively few pupils at an early stage of speaking English and if any difficulties occur they are well supported by adults and other pupils.
10. The school now has a policy for gifted and talented pupils, a register of such pupils and a co-ordinator to look after their needs. It does not yet make different provision for their learning, except that a very small number of Year 4 pupils are offered some extra opportunities by the local education authority. Achievement by more able pupils is often insufficient, because assessment is not used well enough to plan for their needs. This leads to underachievement in some lessons.
11. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection, standards in Year 2 in mathematics and science were below average because too few

pupils reached the expected levels, but this has improved. However, strengths in aspects of art and design, music and physical education no longer exist, this may be due to changes in staff over time.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' have **good** attitudes to their learning and behave well. There is **good** provision for the pupils' personal development. Attendance is **below** the national average.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils work hard in lessons, have good attitudes and are keen to succeed.
- There is a high level of racial harmony amongst pupils.
- There is good provision for the pupils' moral and social development, and assemblies now make a positive contribution to their personal development.
- There are many missed opportunities in day-to-day lessons to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- Pupils' attendance levels are unsatisfactory, but procedures to promote attendance are good.

Commentary

12. Parents and the school think that pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and the inspection evidence judges that this is so. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, demonstrate positive attitudes to the school, what they are asked to learn and to each other. Occasional misbehaviour is dealt with swiftly by staff. Pupils in all classes, including the children in the Foundation Stage, work hard and understand that effort is needed in order to produce a high quality standard of work. Pupils are curious about their learning and work together well, for example, when asked to work in small groups. Older pupils are able to work independently of the teacher when asked to do so, although not all of them are sufficiently tenacious in working out problems for themselves if faced with a difficulty.
13. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Older pupils are mindful of the need to look after younger children. Pupils enjoying taking on small responsibilities such as taking the register to the office. All pupils have a good understanding of the school's expectations in terms of their behaviour and of the importance of treating one another with courtesy and respect. There are effective procedures in place to enable the pupils to talk about issues that may relate to bullying and pupils are confident that, if such instances were to occur, staff would tackle the issues swiftly. There is a high level of racial harmony and pupils from different cultural backgrounds are made to feel fully included in all that the school has to offer. There have been no recent exclusions.
14. Provision for the pupils' personal development is good overall and there are strengths in the provision that is made for their social and moral development. By being encouraged to work in small groups in class, pupils develop a good understanding of what it means to work as part of a team. Pupils enjoy collecting money for others less fortunate than themselves. Such work successfully develops their understanding of what it means to be a member of a wider social group and to take responsibility within such groups. Provision for the pupils' moral development is good and is based on a new behaviour policy. The pupils have a clear understanding of how their behaviour

can impact on the wellbeing of others. Parents say that the school's moral code has been much more visible since the acting headteacher took over running the school. There is satisfactory provision made for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The acting headteacher has introduced satisfactory measures to enable the daily assembly to make an effective contribution in these aspects. However, there are many missed opportunities in daily lessons for pupils to ponder and reflect on the world around them. Similarly, there is limited scope for pupils to explore in depth the customs, traditions and pastimes of how people in other countries live their lives. This has been noted in previous inspections.

15. Attendance rates are unsatisfactory, being below the national average. However, the school has recently introduced greatly improved systems for monitoring and promoting attendance. Most pupils attend regularly and arrive on time, but a significant minority of pupils do not, or they are absent due to taking extended holidays in term time. The school now rigorously follows up any unexplained absences and discourages holidays in term time. School staff are now working very closely with the education welfare officer to inform parents that absenteeism can have a detrimental effect on pupils' attainment, progress and personal development.
16. Since the last inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour have remained good, as have standards in social and moral development. The effective actions of the acting headteacher have enabled standards in spiritual development to improve.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.9	School data:	0.1
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. Assessment and the use of assessment are **unsatisfactory**. The curriculum is **satisfactory**, but opportunities for enrichment and innovation are **unsatisfactory**. Care, welfare, support and guidance and the involvement of pupils in the school's work are **satisfactory**. Links with parents are **good** and links with the community and other schools and colleges are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment are **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are well taught in the Early Years unit.
- Basic literacy, mathematical and scientific skills are well taught In Years 1 and 2.
- Specialist teaching of music works well in Years 3 and 4.

- Extra adults are used well to support pupils' learning.
- The acting headteacher has written effective policies to give teachers a framework to improve pupils' learning.
- There are too few systems to check what pupils know and to use this information to plan the next steps in their learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 34 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	0 (0%)	19 (56%)	14 (41%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	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.

- Teaching in Years 1 to 4 is predominantly satisfactory, with the exception of the good quality teaching of basic skills in Years 1 and 2. This teaching appeals to pupils and they are keen to learn. There was a similar proportion of good and satisfactory lessons in the last inspection, but no very good lessons were seen in this inspection.
- There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching for children in the nursery and reception classes. Teaching and learning are now good and are based on clear planning for both taught and self-chosen activities. Boys and girls are managed well and there is a purposeful learning atmosphere, which engages children of all ages, abilities and ethnicities. Children's good attitudes and behaviour arise from good relationships and this raises children's self-esteem and promotes good achievement.
- The acting headteacher is beginning to make a positive impact on raising the quality of teaching overall. She has created satisfactory policies for teaching and learning and monitoring and evaluation, so that teachers are sure of her expectations of a successful lesson. This has produced lessons with a clear beginning and ending. In all classes, teachers share the purpose of the lesson with children effectively, so that they are clear about what they are to learn. The endings of lessons satisfactorily confirm what has been learnt.
- The best lessons are taught at a good pace and by knowledgeable teachers, so that time is used well for pupils to learn. Tasks are well matched to pupils' needs. In such lessons, teachers introduce specialist vocabulary well to pupils and expect them to use the new words in their explanations of what they are doing. Specialist music teaching works well in Years 3 and 4, because it is delivered by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable teacher and so pupils achieve well in these lessons. Learning support assistants and other adults are briefed well on how they can support the pupils with whom they are to work and they effectively guide the learning of the pupils concerned.
- Where lessons have areas for development, primarily in Years 3 and 4, teachers do not build on the standard of presentation which the Year 2 teacher has worked so hard to establish. In some subjects, teachers have lacked earlier training opportunities to improve their subject knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject and this leads to mundane lessons. Too many worksheets are used to allow more able pupils to show what they can do.

22. Parents feel that homework consolidates their children's learning satisfactorily and it gets steadily more challenging as pupils move through the school. The inspection team agrees.
23. Assessment is unsatisfactory and is correctly regarded by the school as a barrier to improvement. Consequently, it is a key focus of the current school improvement plan. The acting headteacher has quickly established a basic system to track pupils' progress as they move through the school, so that the impact of individual teachers on pupils' progress can be established. Termly writing assessments are already established as are assessments for reading and spelling and teachers are just beginning to assess pupils in mathematics and science. However, the school has not yet established individual targets that are shared with pupils, so they know exactly what they need to do to improve.
24. The school has a clear marking policy and some staff are now beginning to mark to clear criteria², which they have shared with pupils, so that they know whether they have succeeded or not. The best marking is often in Year 1, where the teacher is effective in telling young pupils how well they are doing and where they need to improve.
25. The school does not have a history of using assessment to match lessons to pupils' individual needs. This was an issue at the last inspection, and it is still evident today. In too many classes, especially in Years 3 and 4, the same worksheets or activity are used for all pupils. Staff are good at supporting pupils with special educational needs, but are less effective at stretching the more able pupils, so that they make the best progress.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**. The school provides **unsatisfactory** opportunities for enrichment. The quality and quantity of the accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception classes is well planned.
- The curriculum for literacy and numeracy is well planned in Years 1 and 2.
- There are too little planned opportunities for pupils to use literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other areas.
- The school has taken too little regard of recent national initiatives to enhance and enrich the curriculum.
- Subject policies have not been routinely reviewed and updated.

Commentary

26. The school teaches all subjects and now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Although much has been lacking for a long time, there is recent good improvement by the acting headteacher. There are now schemes of work for all subjects, based on national guidelines and other guidance. There is now a satisfactory programme for teaching personal, social and health education timetabled throughout

² For instance in English, 'I am looking for several different words which join sentences together, a range of punctuation and a good description of the main character.'

the school. These were issues raised at the time of the last inspection, so improvement is now satisfactory. The school meets statutory requirements with regard to teaching sex, drugs and health education.

27. The acting headteacher has produced a satisfactory curriculum policy to provide a framework for development, but many other subject policies are too old to provide useful guidance for staff. The school is working to an adequate two-year rolling programme of subjects, which reflects the fact that there have been mixed-aged classes in the recent past. There has been little recent review and development of the curriculum, however, to make it more relevant and vibrant and to bring learning alive. For example, there are few planned links between subjects to help make learning more interesting and enjoyable for pupils and few visitors to enhance their learning. The curriculum is not planned with links for literacy, numeracy and ICT written into curriculum planning for other subjects, so that pupils consolidate their learning. However, the curriculum for literacy and numeracy is well planned in Years 1 and 2 and leads to good achievement for these pupils.
28. The school provides broadly satisfactory opportunities for pupils to learn music, dance and sport on a 'paid for' basis. The music co-ordinator runs a choir, which pupils enjoy, and which provides a good contribution to their personal development.
29. The school is satisfactorily inclusive and all pupils of whatever age or gender are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum. The curriculum planning now takes satisfactory note of the individual education plans of those with special educational needs. It does not always plan activities that challenge more able pupils. As a result, such pupils do not always achieve as well as they might in all lessons. This is particularly so where teachers use worksheets too frequently. The relatively few pupils who have English as an additional language have their curriculum needs met and achieve as well as other pupils, as do pupils from other ethnic groups.
30. The curriculum for children under five is good. It is well planned around national guidance for children in the nursery and reception classes and allows children to make good progress. Mathematical development is given a high priority and this is a good improvement since the last inspection.
31. Staffing is satisfactory. The school has had to fight hard to find money for learning assistants this year and many are on temporary contracts. The school correctly regards this as a barrier to future improvement. Extra adults, including students and the graduate teacher, support learning well. Now that numbers have fallen, the accommodation is satisfactory and contains all that is needed to enable pupils to learn. However, there is a need for refurbishment and improvement, especially in the outdoor provision for children in the nursery and reception classes. Resources are generally satisfactory, except for religious education where they are unsatisfactory and in art and design where they are mundane. There are now sufficient computers, with an information technology suite as well as computers in classrooms and these have improved pupils' learning in ICT. However, the suite lacks Internet access, although the small groups of computers in Years 3 and 4 do receive it, and this limits opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides a **satisfactory** standard of care and welfare. The support, advice and guidance pupils receive are **satisfactory**. The school makes **satisfactory** arrangements to involve pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel very secure and well cared for in school.
- Pupils have good and trusting relationships with all adults in the school.
- Although health and safety procedures are good, the school does not, as yet, provide written, formal risk assessments of the premises.
- There is no school council to allow pupils to develop citizenship skills.

Commentary

32. The school provides a safe and happy environment that is conducive to learning. The acting headteacher has been thorough in addressing health and safety policies and procedures that were not in place. Close attention has been paid to health and safety issues and the acting headteacher has recognised the need to record risk assessments formally and regularly. Pupils are supervised properly in both work and play. The school is now focusing on personal, social and health education lessons and these are now being used satisfactorily to promote pupils' healthy and safe living. Child protection procedures are good and there is good liaison with other agencies. Designated members of staff are fully up to date in aspects of first aid. The acting headteacher has made good progress in involving the site manager and the midday supervisors more fully in these aspects of care.
33. Teachers and support staff know their pupils and their families very well, are sensitive to their needs and provide satisfactory support and guidance for their pupils who raise any concerns they may have, knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically. Pupils say that the adults are "*very kind*" and parents say that the school cares well for their children. Formal assessment arrangements for tracking the progress and personal development of all pupils are in need of development. The acting headteacher has put in place recent half termly assessments for numeracy; assessments for science are being developed and those for reading, writing and spelling are established. The acting headteacher has produced targets for teachers to aim for in order to improve achievement, but as yet no targets have been shared with the pupils.
34. There is no school council at present, but the acting headteacher will be introducing one as soon as she can. All pupils are highly valued and she recognises the need to listen to their views. She has taken satisfactory action to do so. She has sent out a questionnaire to find out pupils' opinions and, currently, their views are being sought in assemblies and during lessons. Pupils spoken to during the inspection period said that they were confident that the acting headteacher would listen to their ideas and act on them if they were appropriate.
35. There is good liaison with the local playgroups and this supports the smooth induction of new children into the nursery class. The acting headteacher is now organising satisfactory arrangements whereby parents of the younger children will receive better information about the transfer process from the reception class to Year 1. Pupils who join the school at times other than at the beginning of the school year are made to feel welcome and they settle very quickly and happily.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are now **good**, much improved links with parents. Links with the community and with other schools and colleges are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are now very supportive of the school and appreciate what it provides for their children. They think very highly of the acting headteacher.
- The acting headteacher is increasing the amount of information about the school that is given to parents and is now involving them more through seeking, valuing and acting on their ideas.
- There are good procedures to deal with any concerns or complaints.

Commentary

36. Parents are very satisfied with the school. They feel it is well led by the acting headteacher. They are comfortable about approaching the school and they like the accessibility of the acting headteacher. Parents feel that procedures for dealing with any concerns or complaints are good. They value the school's caring attitudes highly and say that the staff expect their children to work hard and are encouraged to become mature and responsible. They now see the school as much more open and welcoming to parents and have expressed their appreciation of what the acting headteacher has done to improve communication between themselves and the school. The inspection team agrees with all these positive views.
37. Parents are provided with good information about the school through, for example, the brochure, regular newsletter and frequent other correspondence. This helps them to help their children to learn. The school website is currently being updated and will offer even more information on, for example, areas of the curriculum and topics that their children will be studying each term. Reading diaries are being used as a satisfactory two-way communication process and this is helping pupils to build on their self-esteem and pride in their reading skills.
38. The school has organised sessions for parents to give them more information on how they can best help with their children's learning at home. Unfortunately, these sessions were poorly attended, but the school has not been deterred and will be organising further programmes to address this aspect of supporting children's learning. Parents receive information about their children's progress through regular consultation evenings and the annual reports are satisfactory.
39. The views of the parents have been actively sought through a questionnaire, and further questionnaires will be sent out regularly in the future so that the school has a good idea of what parents would like improving. Very few parents come into the classrooms to help. The parents' association is a small, but enthusiastic, group of parents which has raised substantial amounts of money which has been used to buy, for example, televisions, videos and overhead projectors. This has helped to improve pupils' achievement.
40. The acting headteacher is very aware that liaison with others is an area for development, so that such links can be used much more productively to benefit pupils'

learning. The school has satisfactory links with a local church, the local community liaison policeman and the local football club. Local volunteers from the community come into the school regularly to help with the library, the maths library and general classroom duties and this helps teachers to concentrate on teaching. The school has satisfactory links with other local schools and these are now becoming more productive to support pupils' learning and training for staff. The school takes in students from a local university for their initial teacher training and works closely with a local college and upper schools to provide student placements. This is helping pupils' personal development effectively as they get a chance to interact with a greater number of adults. The school is developing satisfactory links with the nearby middle school to ensure the smooth transfer of pupils to the next stage in their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The leadership provided by the acting headteacher is **good** and provides a secure basis for the school's continued development. Management is **satisfactory**. The role of the co-ordinator is **unsatisfactory**. Governance of the school is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher has a clear vision for the school's improvement and has brought about a well-planned and rigorous programme of change in a short time.
- The governors now have a clear idea of what is needed to improve the quality of education and are now supporting the school well.
- There has been insufficient development of the role of the co-ordinators.
- The newly created school improvement plan provides a clear and realistic appraisal of the school's strengths and what still needs to be done to raise achievement.
- More rigorous arrangements for the performance management of teaching and support staff are too recent in order to have a positive impact on pupils' performance.

Commentary

41. Since taking up the post in the autumn term of 2004, the acting headteacher has provided the school with sensitive yet purposeful leadership, which has improved the quality of education. On her appointment, she quickly gained a clear overview of what the school did well, while astutely identifying areas where improvement is still needed. These include the implementation of more rigorous procedures for assessing pupils' progress and for ensuring that the good progress that pupils make in Years 1 and 2 continues apace in Years 3 and 4. This rapid programme of improvements has, however, been measured and has the full backing of staff and governors. The acting headteacher also appreciated the need to forge a much stronger sense of teamwork amongst the staff and her work in this respect has also proved successful. There is now a common purpose by all the school community that has its central focus on raising achievement still further.
42. The governors chose well when they appointed the acting headteacher. The role that the governors now play in supporting and holding the school to account for the standards it attains is much improved, following a period where they felt they were not fully involved in the management of the school. This follows improved measures introduced by the acting headteacher to enable them to receive clearer and more frequent information to help them make decisions designed to move the school

forward. They now understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The chair of governors is a regular visitor to the school, and meetings between staff and governors are more frequent. The governors now have much more of a say in helping to decide the educational direction of the school and how best this can be achieved and the progress monitored. The 'Monitoring of Standards' committee, for example, has discussed the ways forward to raise the achievement of pupils in Years 3 and 4.

43. Too little progress has taken place since the last inspection in developing the role of the co-ordinator and this remains unsatisfactory. It is correctly a current focus of the school improvement plan. Until recently, too little professional development had taken place to enable the co-ordinators to play an active and effective part in fulfilling their role. The implementation of the arrangements for the performance management of teachers had not been fully effective, although the acting headteacher has now introduced these along with taking the necessary decisions to enable the full implementation of workforce reforms. In addition, the acting headteacher, by undertaking some teaching herself, has provided some time out of class to enable the co-ordinators to start to manage their subjects and to bring about change. The ICT co-ordinator, for example, has had such time to replace 22 computers. This has made the suite fully operational, it is used regularly, permits whole-class teaching and is starting to raise pupils' achievement.
44. The school has a strong philosophy towards inclusion and this ensures that arrangements for overseeing provision for those with special educational needs and English as an additional language are managed satisfactorily. Procedures for informing parents that their children have special needs are now in place and the parents are appreciative of the improved flow of communication in this respect.
45. Following a period where governors felt they were not fully appraised of the precise situation in respect of the school budget, the day-to-day management of the school budget is satisfactory. A falling school roll has put a strain on the school budget, but both the governors and the acting headteacher share a common approach in planning the most effective ways to compensate for this. The budget is rigorously monitored and care is taken to ensure that planned expenditure is judiciously aligned to the income the school receives. Such decisions dovetail carefully into the school improvement plan. The quality of this is good and provides a clear and realistic appraisal of the areas of strength and what needs to be improved, how these goals are to be achieved and how the success of the planned initiatives are to be measured.

Financial information for the year April 2003 - 2004

<i>Income and expenditure (£)</i>		<i>Balances (£)</i>	
Total income	406,512	Balance from previous year	462
Total expenditure	405,990	Balance carried forward to next year	522
Expenditure per pupil	2,402		

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children enter nursery part time in the term after they turn four and become full time in the reception class when they are five. They are below the national average when they enter nursery. They make good progress and most achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1, although a minority do not. The nursery and reception class follow the same timetable and topics, but lessons are well matched to children's individual needs. There are effective links with parents and induction procedures are good.

The school has satisfactorily resolved the issue of managing the Early Years unit, which was an area for improvement at the time of the last inspection. A group consisting of the headteacher, Early Years' staff and governors carries out the role. Leadership and management are now good. The organisation of the nursery and reception class is different this year, because of the relatively small number of nursery children. Staffing consists of a full-time reception class teacher, a part-time nursery teacher and a range of other adults. Management roles are clear and it is an effective way of working. Improvement since the last inspection is good, because both teaching and achievement have improved.

Overall, both the curriculum and teaching and learning are good. Assessment is good, because it directly feeds into the children's next set of experiences and so improves their learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Early Years ethos is peaceful and well focused on learning.
- Children are taught to persevere and concentrate well.
- Children have good opportunities to select their own activities.
- Independence and co-operation are developed well.

Commentary

46. Most children achieve the early learning goals by the time that they enter Year 1, although a minority do not. Children settle well into class in the morning and separate from their parents and carers willingly. Teaching and learning are good and staff have good strategies to manage children and to develop their independence. Children respond quickly to adults' request to tidy up the unit. They are polite to each other and adults, because good manners are installed in them. They play well-planned games to encourage co-operation, such as with the big parachute in the hall. Resources are well placed for them to access what they need easily. Children of all ages accept 'turn taking' in all activities without protest. They know that their turn will come, because staff keep careful note of who has had a go and who has not yet participated. Because children work on well-planned activities that they enjoy, they develop their skills of concentration and perseverance well. It is an inclusive unit and staff are very careful to ensure that children from other ethnic groups and those with special educational

needs have time to think and understand what they need to do. Their achievement is good.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The early skills of reading and writing are well planned.
- Work is well matched to children's needs.
- Children enjoy books.
- Record keeping is good.

Commentary

47. By the time that the children enter Year 1 most will have attained the early learning goals, although a minority will not. Achievement is good, because teachers have a good grasp of what children can do and have learnt and they plan their next steps accordingly. Assessment is used well. For instance, in order to recognise and record new achievement in writing, a teacher quickly took a child's whiteboard away to photograph it. All nursery and reception children of whatever age, ability or ethnicity are given good opportunities to look at and discuss books. Teachers keep good reading records that track children's progress well. Reception children are happy to show adults how well they recognise individual words and how well they read simple books. There are good links with home, and parents are sent advice and information about how their children will learn to read. Children are taught to hold pencils correctly at an early stage and this helps them to form their early letters with confidence. Achievement in writing is good because from mark making and writing over adults' words, children quickly and confidently move on to making their own lists of things that are important. Overall, teaching and learning are good.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical games support children's learning effectively at home.
- Assessment is used well to plan the next steps in learning.
- ICT supports children's learning effectively.

Commentary

48. Most children attain the early learning goals before they enter Year 1 as a result of good teaching and learning. A minority does not do so. Puppets, display and resources all help children to understand numbers, shapes and measures effectively. Children enjoy singing rhymes such as *Ten green bottles* which reinforce their understanding of 'one less' in an interesting way. Teachers write on children's work to record how well each child tackled the task and whether they did so independently. This is effective in planning the next steps in learning. Children get good guidance from adults in using computer programs to practise their skills and the 'maths lending library' lets them show their parents what they can do. Achievement is good.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the community in order to improve children's understanding of the world around them.
- Good use is made of the school grounds to track the passing of time.
- Reception children enjoy their time in the ICT suite, because the programs are well matched to their ability.

Commentary

49. Most children attain the early learning goals before they enter Year 1 as a result of good teaching and learning. The vast majority of reception children confidently use the mouse to drag objects around the screen in order to sort them into specified patterns. The occasional child who struggles is well supported and encouraged by adults. The nursery and reception staff use the grounds well to draw children's attention to the changing seasons. Visits and equipment from the nurse and the dentist enrich their play and help children to understand the world around them. The well-planned curriculum ensures that achievement is good.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Physical education lessons are well planned and managed.
- The outdoor accommodation is rather barren and difficult to manage and there is no shelter.
- Although satisfactory, the curriculum is limited by the accommodation in this aspect.
- There is a lack of wheeled toys to promote co-operative play.

Commentary

50. Most children attain the early learning goals before they enter Year 1 as a result of good teaching. Achievement is good. Older children really enjoy their lessons in the hall, because adults join in and support their learning by demonstrating various movements. The layout of the outdoor space, which wraps around the building, means that all adults and children need to go outside together to ensure good supervision. This limits both children's independence and the curriculum planning and thus the provision. However, once outside, adults extend children's learning well by joining in games and asking questions which extend children's thinking effectively. This leads to good achievement. Outside resources are carefully planned, but there is a lack of the type of wheeled vehicles that several children can share. Improving the outside space and resources is a current school priority.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults are good role models for children.
- Activities are well matched to pupils' needs.
- Resources are easily accessible for children.

Commentary

51. By the time that pupils enter Year 1, most children attain the early learning goals, although a minority does not. Achievement is good, because children are given lots of praise and encouragement to persevere and to develop their skills. Teaching and learning are good. Each teacher introduces an activity, for instance painting a picture of fruit, in a way that engenders excitement and challenges children. They teach the skills of brush control and managing paint well and children are appreciative, for example "*Ooh that's lovely!*". Resources are at child level and consequently children are skilful users of scissors, glue and paste, which they access as they need them to complete a task.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils read and write confidently by Year 2.
- Pupils make good progress from Year 1 to Year 2 due to good teaching of basic skills.
- More able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in Years 3 and 4.
- Assessment and tracking systems are not yet sufficiently developed to improve pupils' learning and achievement.
- The co-ordinator is not sufficiently involved in monitoring and evaluation.

Commentary

52. In the 2004 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were well above average in reading and in the highest five per cent nationally in writing, when compared to all schools and those in similar socio-economic circumstances. Inspection findings show that current standards are average by Year 2 in speaking and listening, and above average in reading and writing. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, particularly of the basic skills, so that nearly all pupils reach at least the expected average. However, not as many pupils are on course to achieve the higher levels as in 2004, when over 40 per cent reached such levels. Achievement is good.
53. The good progress that pupils make in Years 1 and 2 starts to slip in Year 3, where the teaching is less rigorous and challenging and insufficient account is taken of pupils' previous achievement. By Year 4, overall standards are in line with expectations for the pupils' age. Year 4 pupils are divided into two classes and the standard of one class with younger pupils and a greater number of pupils with special educational needs lags behind the other. However, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall, because the lower ability pupils have been provided with extra support for literacy.
54. Throughout the school, most pupils listen attentively to the teacher, other adults and each other. There are, however, a few pupils, particularly in Year 1, who find it hard to concentrate. To keep such pupils involved and learning, the teacher uses a range of effective strategies, including praise for positive behaviour, and a brisk pace. Pupils spoken ability is at least in line with the national average and a few are above this level. Most teachers use questioning skilfully to include the full range of abilities in the class. They are beginning to plan more opportunities for discussion in class and so pupils respond well and are keen to share their ideas.
55. Pupils have good opportunities to read together from a 'big book' with the teacher. As well as helping them to read with due expression, and taking note of the punctuation, there are good opportunities for them to show they understand what they read. The teacher also provides some challenging questions, which make pupils think. Teachers reinforce reading strategies effectively when reading in small groups.
56. By Year 2, most pupils join their letters, use basic punctuation appropriately and their spelling is plausible. The Year 2 teacher works hard to establish 'joined handwriting', but it is not consistently continued in Year 3 and this does not help either pupils' presentation or their achievement. By Year 4, most pupils in the more able class use appropriately complex sentences, and are beginning to use interesting vocabulary and ideas.
57. In pupils' books, most teachers have recently started to include the purpose of the lesson and to tell pupils how they have met the success criteria for the lesson. This is a big improvement and, where it is consistently used, is starting to have an impact on the rate of progress in pupils' writing in their books.
58. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory, but are good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils and are starting to use the endings of lessons to check what has been learnt. In better lessons, the pace of learning is purposeful with timed activities so that pupils work hard and achieve well. Teaching lacks challenge for the more able pupils in Years 3 and 4, who often have the same task as most pupils in the class, and so are not making as much progress as they might. This is one of the reasons why the high standards achieved in Years 1 and 2 are not being maintained further up the school. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning, as teachers refer to their individual education plans, and use extra adults to support them. The few pupils with English as an additional language play a full part in lessons.

59. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has not had the time or training in the past and has not yet had time to monitor in class, to track pupils' progress or to examine pupils' books. This is a focus of the current school improvement plan. She has the potential to be a good role model for staff as her own literacy teaching is good. Assessment is an area for improvement, particularly reading records in some classes, which contain too little information about pupils' skills. Although termly writing assessment is established, teachers make too little use of the information to help pupils know how to improve. The library is satisfactorily used by pupils to develop their reading skills. Overall, improvement is satisfactory because standards have improved at Year 2.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities in other subjects for pupils to use and develop their skills. For instance, Year 4 pupils get good opportunities to use their literacy skills to research topics in history. When teachers use too many worksheets, such opportunities are limited.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2.
- In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good and pupils reach standards that are higher than the national average.
- There has been much recent improvement in the provision for the subject.
- Too little use is made of assessment information to guide teachers in planning pupils' subsequent learning.
- In Years 3 and 4, pupils do not always present their work with sufficient care.
- The role of the co-ordinator is insufficiently developed.

Commentary

61. The results of the 2004 National Curriculum tests indicate that Year 2 pupils reached standards that were above the national average when judged against all and similar schools. The pattern of attainment has been mixed in recent years, but with a fairly successful year in 2004. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good from an average start at the end of the reception year. The inspection findings indicate that pupils are on course to reach standards that are above average. This is due primarily to the high number of pupils expected to reach Level 2, but with fewer pupils expected to reach the higher level than in 2004.
62. Inspection findings indicate that by the time they leave the school, Year 4 pupils are on course to reach standards that match national expectations. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Achievement has been limited by the historical shortcomings in teaching that has resulted in pupils not always building on what they have learnt and understood while in Years 1 and 2. Evidence from national tests indicates that the boys are performing better than the girls. However, inspection evidence could find no difference in achievement between the boys or girls. Those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily.

63. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have a good understanding of the basic four rules of number and apply these well in solving problems involving money, time and units of measure. They are confident in answering questions orally and enjoy undertaking practical work that has a specific mathematical focus. The pupils make equally good progress in their understanding of shape, space and measure and achievement is good due to the effective teaching of basic skills. In Years 3 and 4, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge, due to the level of understanding gained when in Years 1 and 2 not having been sufficiently developed. As a result, while achievement in all areas of mathematics is satisfactory, there is room to build on the good progress that pupils make in Years 1 and 2.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and is good in Years 1 and 2. Good teaching is characterised by good use of the time at the start of lessons when brisk mental starters help pupils focus on what they are to learn. Learning support assistants and other adults are well briefed on how they can support the pupils with whom they are to work and they effectively guide the learning of the pupils concerned. When teaching is satisfactory rather than good, which is very much the case in Years 3 and 4, teachers do not always plan lessons in sufficient detail to meet the differing academic needs of pupils. In addition, teachers do not always expect enough in terms of how pupils present their work. This results in work that is occasionally scappily presented, making it difficult for the reader and pupils to follow the train of their thinking. Across the school, too little use is made of ICT to enhance learning. Pupils get too few opportunities to use software to present the results of their work in tables, graphs or charts.
65. The leadership and management of the subject have been unsatisfactory since the last inspection. Management remains unsatisfactory because the role of the co-ordinator in monitoring teaching and learning to use the results of such work to establish further areas for improvement is unsatisfactory. However, there has been much recent improvement in the leadership of the subject; it is now satisfactory and is providing a foundation for continued improvement. The school has rightly identified the need to make crisper use of assessment information to guide both individual pupils' learning and whole-school development in the subject. The school improvement plan rightly addresses what aspects of provision need to be improved in order to raise achievement.
66. The pace of improvement and degree of change are satisfactory, but progress is more evident since the acting headteacher took over. Overall, standards have improved at Year 2 since the last inspection, but the same weaknesses remain in teaching in Years 3 and 4 which is judged to be broadly satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum areas

67. Pupils' numeracy skills are promoted satisfactorily through other subjects of the curriculum. In a practical lesson seen, pupils developed their estimation skills satisfactorily by approximating how much flour is needed when making biscuits and using scales to weigh the exact amount they needed. Pupils record their work in the form of tables and charts in science, but these can be somewhat untidily presented.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned in Years 1 and 2 with sufficient challenge for all pupils.
- In most classes, scientific vocabulary is introduced well.
- Most pupils enjoy science.
- The co-ordinator does not have sufficient impact on standards.
- All teachers have not had up-to-date training in how to teach science.
- Assessment and the use of assessment are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

68. In 2004 when teachers assessed how well Year 2 pupils were doing, they found that standards were above average. Inspection findings agree with this judgement. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good as a result of good teaching based on practical experiences.
69. In Year 4, standards are average overall and this reflects the unsettled year some pupils experienced in Year 3 and also the lack of accurate assessment procedures. The achievement of these pupils is broadly satisfactory. Learning assistants and other adults support those pupils with English as an additional language or special educational needs satisfactorily, so that they play a full part in lessons.
70. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but are good in Years 1 and 2, where lesson planning is generally good. Pupils enjoy their practical lessons. The two-year rolling programme for science reflects the time when the school had mixed-age classes and the school is aware that it needs revising to put more challenge into teaching in Years 3 and 4. The Years 1 and 2 teachers do a good job of planning lessons that challenge each class to think about and to record similar topics in a different way. Both classes use good resources to enable pupils to observe, comment and record their findings, for instance in the differences between frozen, toasted and normal white bread. Teaching is more variable in Years 3 and 4. As in mathematics, pupils in one Year 4 class do not present their work well enough. Most teachers throughout the school teach new scientific vocabulary well, for instance 'reversible' and 'irreversible', and ensure that pupils use it to explain their thinking. This does not always happen in Year 3, because in the past there has been little opportunity to attend training in how to teach science effectively. Marking is too variable. It is good in the co-ordinator's class, where the teacher's comments praise both effort and achievement, so that pupils have a clear idea of what they have done well and why.
71. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory, but are just beginning to improve. The co-ordinator's role has been passed around over time. However, the present co-ordinator who is newly appointed now has a job description and a satisfactory action plan to audit resources and to put consistent assessment in place. This is beginning to happen. She has the potential to be a good role model for staff as her own science teaching is good. Many of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection remain, for instance marking, assessment and the lack of challenge, but they are being rigorously addressed by the acting headteacher.
72. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The school has maintained its effective use of practical science noted at the last inspection. At that time, insufficient pupils were reaching the expected levels for their age but this is no longer the case.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although recent improvements have contributed well to strengthening provision, the overall pace of change since the previous inspection has been slower than that seen nationally.
- The co-ordinator has worked hard to set up a computer suite that now enables the pupils to be taught specific ICT skills as a whole class.
- Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory as a result of the recent improved provision.
- The school has yet to establish ways to effectively monitor and assess the progress pupils make in the subject.
- Pupils use ICT too infrequently to enhance their learning in other subjects.

Commentary

73. Pupils reach standards that are in line with national expectations both at the end of Years 1 and 2 and by the time they leave the school at the age of nine. Achievement by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, is satisfactory, following the recent effective efforts by the school to improve provision.
74. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to use the keyboard and 'mouse' to move around the different layers of a computer program. They use graphic packages successfully to create simple works of art in the style of different artists such as Jackson Pollock and Mondrian. Improved access to using word-processing software is rapidly improving pupils' understanding of how a word-processor enables text to be created and edited in order to produce quality pieces of work. However, these positive features of achievement are balanced by the weak understanding that pupils have of how to use the Internet, or in using programmable toys.
75. In Years 3 and 4, pupils use the finer features of word-processing software well to create banners and headlines in order to embellish their work. Pupils are given good guidance by teachers in how to add bullet points to their work and include graphics and simple clip-art. This adds well to the pupils' understanding of how such features can add to the overall appearance of text. Pupils have a more secure understanding of the benefits that the Internet can bring to their learning. This is as a result of pupils having access to the Internet in some classrooms. However, they have a weaker understanding of how to use programmable devices, or how such work can broaden their understanding of ICT generally.
76. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In Years 3 and 4, teachers integrate the use of the classroom-based machines into their day-to-day teaching and this gives the pupils regular scope to develop their skills. This is less evident in Years 1 and 2, although the teachers there are making increased use of the computer suite to support and teach pupils particular skills as a full class. Such work is helping to raise pupils' achievement and attainment. A shortcoming in teaching lies in the lack of assessment procedures to monitor and track the pupils' progress. As a result,

teaching is very much geared towards the whole class, rather than pinpointing the teaching of particular skills in order to build on what pupils know, can do and already understand.

77. The school has not kept pace with developments seen nationally in the subject since the previous inspection and the impact of leadership and management over time has been unsatisfactory. This is still the case. However, improvements during the current school year have been rapid and the new co-ordinator has responded well to the increased responsibility given to him by the acting headteacher. The computer suite that is now in place allows all pupils to have regular teaching sessions in order for them to develop their skills. Although the co-ordinator has not had time out of class in order to monitor teaching and learning, there is an action plan now in place that hopes to tackle the current number of shortcomings. These include introducing a whole-school system for the assessment of pupils' progress to enable teachers to ensure that the work set is designed to move pupils' learning on at a more rapid rate. As a result of recent events, improvement since the last inspection is now satisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. Provision is unsatisfactory. The school is beginning to make improved use of computers to support learning in lessons where computers are easily available. However, overall, the school makes too limited use of ICT to enrich pupils' learning in other subjects. Not all classes, for example, have access to the Internet and this limits the opportunities to use this resource to broaden their learning in, for instance, geography and art and design.

HUMANITIES

No lessons were seen in **geography**, so it is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in that subject. Work samples and discussions with pupils, however, indicate that pupils receive a satisfactory range of learning opportunities and that standards are in line with the national average at the end of Years 2 and 4. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop early mapping skills effectively by studying their school and home environments and use keys satisfactorily to show the different features. In Years 3 and 4, they develop a satisfactory understanding of the wider world by finding out about different aspects of life in India, such as transport, arts and crafts and celebrations. They develop their mapping skills further by drawing maps and plans of the areas in the regions most affected by earthquakes and the recent Tsunami disaster. The current co-ordinator has updated the policy, checked that the curriculum matches national requirements and made suggestions about possible assessment procedures in order to improve the pace of learning and to make pupils' achievement satisfactory. There are too few visitors to enrich pupils' learning.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide good planned opportunities for speaking and listening and literacy.
- The co-ordinator does not have enough time to monitor and evaluate.
- The acting headteacher provides a good role model.
- Assessment and its use are unsatisfactory.

- There are too few opportunities for pupils to have first-hand experiences.

Commentary

79. By the end of Years 2 and 4, pupils attain standards in line with national expectations, as at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and the few who speak English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.
80. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop their historical understanding effectively by finding out about important people and events in the past such as Guy Fawkes and the Great Fire of London. In Years 3 and 4, pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of different aspects of the lives and times of the Romans, Celts and Vikings, and of the developments associated with those times. Year 4 pupils develop their enquiry skills effectively when researching different aspects of Viking life, using books and the Internet, and recording what they find out.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In both lessons seen, teachers used questioning skilfully to build on what pupils already knew or had found out from their research in lessons and this helped all pupils' understanding and enjoyment. When starting a new topic on castles in Year 1, the teacher gave pupils' good opportunities to improve their speaking and listening skills by discussing their ideas in small groups. This teacher then used her most able pupils to record the rest of the group's ideas, and this was effective in developing their self-esteem and using their writing skills for a real purpose. Pupils' previous work shows that some teachers use worksheets too often to record what pupils know and this limits what the most able can record.
82. Leadership and management in the subject are underdeveloped as at the time of the last inspection, so progress since then in this respect is unsatisfactory. There has been no monitoring of teaching, so there is no overview of provision and standards in the subject. A trip to Duxford Air Museum linked to a topic on World War Two added to pupils' understanding of the period. Otherwise, there are too few visitors to enrich the curriculum and make the subject more meaningful for pupils. The current co-ordinator has updated the policy, checked that the curriculum matches national requirements and made suggestions about possible assessment in order to improve the pace of learning and pupils' achievement. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory because standards and achievement have remained the same, but teachers now have a better idea of the historical skills that they are teaching.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strength and weaknesses

- Teachers use questioning effectively to link what pupils know to new learning.
- The co-ordination role is underdeveloped.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.
- Resources are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils do not have enough 'hands-on' experiences.

Commentary

83. At both Year 2 and Year 4, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Achievement is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs.
84. Pupils develop a sound understanding of Christianity and aspects of Judaism as well as ceremonies and festivals in other faiths, such as the Hindu festival of light, Diwali, throughout their time in the school. Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge that people celebrate their beliefs and customs in different ways and that certain stories can be found in different religions that are very similar. Year 4 pupils understand the importance of the Bible to believers, as when one pupil says, *“If people believe it, it can be very important to them”*.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers make good connections with what pupils already know and what they are about to learn through skilled questioning. Pupils respond well to the teacher’s purposeful, manner in Year 2, enjoy their story and are eager to record the order of events. There are sound links made with other subjects, as when pupils design their own plates with foods special to them. There are satisfactory opportunities for speaking and listening, as when pupils share their reasons for their designs with the class, some showing empathy and sensitivity in their choices.
86. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. No monitoring of teaching takes place, so there is little overview of provision and standards in the subject. There is no assessment to allow lessons to be well matched to pupils’ needs. Resources are unsatisfactory, particularly for faiths other than Christianity, with few recently purchased books or artefacts to enliven the teaching and capture pupils’ interest. This lack of resources has been correctly recognised by the school as a priority for current improvement. Apart from a local church group who provide weekly bible stories in assemblies, there are few visits or visitors to make the subject more meaningful.
87. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Achievement remains the same, although standards for Year 4 pupils are not as good and overall teaching is not as positive.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

88. Design and technology, art and design and music were not a focus during the inspection. However, pupils’ work was evaluated, as was planning, and discussions were held with the pupils and the co-ordinator. Evidence from this indicates that levels of achievement are satisfactory as are the standards that pupils reach in both key stages.
89. In **design and technology**, pupils understand, for example, the need for preliminary drawings as preparatory work prior to constructing their models and artefacts. The leadership and management of the subject have been unsatisfactory historically. The role of the co-ordinator in monitoring teaching and learning is underdeveloped, and there are no measures in place to assess the pupils’ progress in the subject as they move through the school. However, newly established plans by both the recently appointed co-ordinators and the acting headteacher will help to tackle these shortcomings.
90. In **art and design**, Year 2 pupils in the co-ordinator’s class have good opportunities to study the work of other artists and to reproduce their own ideas on the computer. These pupils are enthusiastic about the work that they are currently doing. The co-ordinator potentially provides

a good role model for other teachers, by the standard of work that her class is producing. Resources are basic and not easily accessible by staff. The role of the co-ordinator in monitoring teaching and learning is underdeveloped, and there are no measures in place to assess the pupils' progress in the subject as they move through the school. However, plans by the acting headteacher will help to tackle these shortcomings.

91. In **music**, Years 3 and 4 pupils are taught by the co-ordinator, who has good subject knowledge, and this promotes good achievement. In her lessons, pupils develop good skills of rhythm, counting beats and conducting and the vocabulary to go with these skills. She provides a good role model for others. In her classes, pupils have good opportunities to listen to a range of music from traditional tunes to jazz and this helps their cultural development satisfactorily. Pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships allow them to work well in small groups and to persevere with their compositions. Teaching in Year 2 is too reliant on lesson notes and lacks opportunity for more practical work to develop pupils' understanding in all lessons. Achievement here is satisfactory. Assessment is in the early stages of development. The school has satisfactory resources, but could do with further instruments from other cultures and tape recorders with microphones that record pupils' work. The curriculum does not contain enough opportunities for visitors to enrich children's learning, or for them to perform in other places.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been little curriculum development in the subject since the previous inspection.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory, but the newly appointed co-ordinator has quickly identified ways in which provision could be improved.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and work hard in lessons.
- Pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop their skills through outdoor pursuits.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

92. Pupils reach standards that are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, which reflects the picture in terms of standards at the time of the last inspection. Overall, achievement by all groups of pupils is satisfactory.
93. Pupils are provided with satisfactory opportunities to take part in a full range of physical education work. This includes in the autumn term a regular weekly session at a local university where they participate in a good range of activities. Older pupils also have regular swimming sessions at a local pool where swimming instructors teach them. The lack of assessment records makes it difficult to verify the school's judgement that pupils leave the school reaching high standards in swimming. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 can put together sequences of simple movements that involve them having to hold a position that is well balanced. In day-to-day lessons in Years 3 and 4, pupils achieve satisfactorily when participating in small team games. The activities that teachers choose for them successfully develop their understanding of the need to play co-operatively and effectively with each other.

94. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding and plan interesting work for the pupils that promotes their interest and enthusiasm for the subject. In lessons, teachers make good use of warm-up and cool-down sessions and pupils develop a secure understanding of the importance of these sorts of activities during physical education work. Good use is made of the work that some pupils undertake in lessons as a way to demonstrate particular skills to their classmates. These positive features of teaching are balanced by the fact that teachers make too little use of assessment information in planning pupils' subsequent learning. In addition, some teachers are not confident in their subject knowledge because of a lack of training opportunities. This leads to pupils not always being managed well and the pace of some lessons can wane as a result.
95. There has been unsatisfactory leadership and management of the subject and this has limited the educational development in the subject since the previous inspection. This remains the case. The current co-ordinator, who is newly appointed to the post, is aware of the shortcomings in provision, for instance in extra-curricular activities, and is keen to build on the pupils' good attitudes to the subject and move development in the subject on at a faster pace. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

96. During the week of the inspection, only one lesson was seen as all lessons in Years 3 and 4 were taken by the local police liaison officer. This was an effective use of time, because his lively presentation allowed him to dispel some of the pupils' misconceptions about the role of the police and to inculcate some good survival strategies. Standards are as you would expect for pupils in Years 2 and 4 and achievement is now satisfactory. The provision is relatively new and is a priority on the school improvement plan. The acting headteacher has recently planned a programme of lessons of work and timetabled lessons, which satisfactorily stress respect for each other and are aimed at eliminating unsatisfactory behaviour. Current provision tends to be worksheet based, because other resources have not yet been acquired. The co-ordinator has not yet had time to produce a policy, or training to provide secure guidance for staff in how to teach this aspect well. Teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory. There is no school council to give pupils an understanding of their role in the school community. This will be established as soon as the acting headteacher draws breath. Citizenship is being satisfactorily developed through the school's charity work.

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	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	5
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
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	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	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).