

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTHILL LOWER SCHOOL

Biggleswade

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109481

Headteacher: Mrs Valerie Cholerton

Lead inspector: Mr Martin Newell

Dates of inspection: 19th – 21st January 2005

Inspection number: 267701

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Lower
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 - 9
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 69

School address: School Lane
Southill
Biggleswade
Bedfordshire

Postcode: SG18 9JA

Telephone number: 01462 813312
Fax number: 01462 813312

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Brian Pexton

Date of previous inspection: 16th November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the village of Southill in Bedfordshire. The school gained School Achievement Awards in 2000, 2001 and 2002. Sixty-nine pupils attend the school with 4 of these pupils attending on a part-time basis. There are a similar number of boys and girls. The school is smaller than other primary schools. The level of pupil mobility is a little higher than that found nationally. All pupils are of white ethnic origin. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average, with the percentage of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs in line with the national average. The nature of special educational needs includes social, emotional and behavioural and Downs Syndrome. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 5 per cent and this is below the national average. Attainment when children start at the school covers the full ability range, fluctuates from year to year and is at an average level overall.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10638	Martin Newell	Lead inspector	Special educational needs English Science Religious education History Geography Personal, social and health education and citizenship
16472	Cathy Stormonth	Lay inspector	
27568	Muriel Davidson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Inspections Limited
102 Bath Road
Cheltenham
GL53 7JX

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school in terms of how well pupils achieve and the high standards that they attain in the core subjects by the time that they leave the school. There are strengths in a number of areas of school life and the newly appointed headteacher is beginning to put in place initiatives and strategies to address the areas of school life that need to improve. Taking all factors into account the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Throughout the school, pupils achieve well overall because of good quality teaching.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and the good quality of behaviour is enhanced by the high priority school gives to pupils' moral development.
- Teaching assistants across the school contribute significantly to pupils' learning.
- Initiatives that the headteacher has introduced are impacting positively on the work of the school.
- Although writing standards are good by the end of Year 4, they are not as high as standards in reading.
- The school has yet to develop a proactive and realistic role for teaching staff that would enable them to monitor teaching, learning and standards effectively.
- Good opportunities are provided for enriching pupils' learning through visits, visitors, clubs and good links with the community and other schools.
- Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in the core subjects.
- The school is a caring and supportive school which celebrates the individuality of pupils and makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Not enough opportunities are consistently provided for pupils to contribute to the decision-making processes of the school or to set and review their own targets for improvement.
- Information and procedures for informing parents about their child's progress are not good enough.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good overall because there have been significant improvements in standards and in how well pupils achieve. The previous report identified a small number of key issues and a significant number of minor issues and overall these have been tackled well. However, the school recognises that there is still work to be done in improving the role of subject leaders and outside play accommodation for the reception-aged children.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 2 results

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

Key: A* - very high; 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.

Children achieve **well** in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1-4. The above table shows that on the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was very high, top 5% of schools nationally, in mathematics and well above the national average in reading and writing. Teacher assessments in science showed attainment to be well above the national average. When compared to similar schools, attainment was very high, in the top 5 per cent, in mathematics, well above average in reading and above average in writing. Inspection findings show that attainment in reading, mathematics and science is above average with writing standards at an average level and with scope for improvement. These results do not indicate a fall in standards but reflect the differing natural ability of the different groups of pupils and also the fact that the small number of pupils that are assessed each year makes comparisons with national figures unreliable. The important factor is that pupils achieve well overall in these core subjects with pupils' achievement in writing satisfactory. Standards in information and communication technology are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and achievement satisfactory. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level and achievement satisfactory.

Inspection findings indicate that by the end of Year 4 standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average overall and pupils achieve well. Standards in writing are above average but could be higher. Standards are at an average level in information and communication technology and achievement satisfactory. Standards, by the end of Year 4, exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education and achievement is good. Standards in history are above average with achievement satisfactory. Standards in other inspected subjects are at least at an average level and achievement never less than satisfactory.

Attainment when children start at the school is at an average level overall. Children achieve well and most will exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they start in Year 1. Attainment in the creative and physical areas of learning is in line with the early learning goals and achievement, although good on occasions, is satisfactory overall.

Across the school pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates because of the good provision that is made for them.

Overall pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Moral development is very good, social development good and spiritual and cultural

development satisfactory. Behaviour in class and around the school is generally good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and how much they enjoy school is reflected in the attendance rates, which are good. Punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good because it strikes a good balance between children learning through practical tasks and through the direct teaching of key skills. Teaching is good in Years 1-4 because pupils are often provided with challenging tasks and are encouraged to carry out investigative or practical activities which really get them thinking. More could be done to develop pupils' writing skills across different subjects of the curriculum. Assessment and tracking procedures in the core subjects are good. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enhanced by a good range of enrichment opportunities. The provision for the care, and welfare of pupils is good. The school has established good links with the community and other schools and satisfactory links with parents. The new headteacher has accurately identified the need to keep parents better informed about their child's progress.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory** overall. The recently appointed headteacher leads and manages the school in a satisfactory manner and is gaining an increasingly informed and accurate awareness of what is needed to move the school forward. Initiatives that she has introduced, such as new curriculum planning, are having a positive impact on learning. The school has not established realistic, good quality strategies to monitor and evaluate teaching, learning and standards effectively. Governance of the school is good and governors fulfil their statutory duties well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The vast majority of parents feel that the school is providing a good quality of education and are happy with how well their children achieve. Parents are keen to support their child's education in any way they can. A significant minority of parents do not feel that they are kept well enough or regularly informed about their child's progress. Inspection findings support these views with the school already looking at ways to improve this aspect. Extensive discussions with pupils indicate that pupils really enjoy school and the many different activities it provides. The pupils also feel relationships in school are strong and that bullying is not an issue. Discussions with pupils also showed that although they felt that their opinions were valued, they would like more say in how the school could be improved.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that high enough expectations are made in Years 1-2 as to how much and how often pupils are to write, that writing skills continue to be taught in a direct and systematic manner.
- Ensure that in Years 1-4 opportunities to enhance writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum are planned for and capitalised on.
- Ensure that teaching, learning and standards in different subjects of the curriculum are monitored well.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to contribute to the decision making processes of the school and to the setting and reviewing of their own personal targets for improvement.
- Improve the channels of communication for informing parents about their child's progress by providing more regular consultation evenings and improving the quality of pupils' reports.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve **well** overall. Standards are **above average** overall in the core subjects by the end of Year 2 and **well above average** overall by the end of Year 4. Pupils achieve **well** in Years 1-4.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils in Years 1-4 achieve well in English, mathematics and science.
- Although writing standards are good by the end of Year 4, they are not as high as standards in reading.
- Standards are good in religious education and history by the time that pupils leave school.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Attainment when children start at the school fluctuates from year to year, covers the full ability range but is at an average level overall. The good quality of teaching enables all children to make good progress and to achieve well. This results in attainment exceeding the nationally recommended early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they start in Year 1. Attainment in the creative and physical areas of learning is in line with the early learning goals and achievement although good on occasions is satisfactory overall.

Key Stage 1

2. On the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, attainment was very high, in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally, in mathematics and science and well above the national average in reading and writing. When compared to similar schools attainment was very high in mathematics, well above average in reading and above average in writing. The school's trend of improvement over time is broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection findings indicate that attainment is above average in reading, mathematics and science and all pupils achieve well. There is room for improvement in writing as standards are only at an average level and achievement satisfactory. The difference between inspection findings and test results can be explained by the differing natural ability of the different groups of pupils and also because the small number of pupils who are assessed each year makes comparisons with national test results unreliable. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards in information and

communication technology are at an average level and achievement satisfactory. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level with achievement never less than satisfactory. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls in any subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.3(18.2)	15.8(15.7)
writing	16.0(15.8)	14.6(14.6)
mathematics	20.5(18.3)	16.2(16.3)

There were 12 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Key Stage 2

3. Inspection findings indicate that by the time that pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, standards are well above average overall in English, mathematics and science and pupils achieve well. Standards in writing are above average but could be better and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards in religious education exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus with pupils achieving well. Standards in information and communication technology are at an average level with achievement satisfactory, as are standards and achievement in all other inspected subjects, except in history where standards are above average and achievement although satisfactory overall is good when teaching is good. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls in any subjects.
4. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates. This is because the work that is set for them is well matched to their needs, individual education plans are of a good standard and because teaching assistants offer good levels of support.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning are **very good** and behaviour is **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good** overall. Attendance and punctuality are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel happy, keen and proud of their school.
 - The behaviour of the pupils adds much to the ethos of the school.
 - Pupils have a very strong sense of morality and good social development.
 - Pupils would like more responsibility and to contribute more to school improvement
 - Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in the attendance rates.
5. Pupils confirmed in discussions and in their questionnaire how they really enjoy school, and praised interesting lessons and the happy atmosphere of their

school. From an early age children show high levels of respect to adults and classmates. Pupils respond well to the positive ethos and flourish as their confidence and self esteem increase as they move up through the school. Pupils enjoy all that they do and engage in activities with high levels of enthusiasm. They usually work hard and feel pleased by achievement and are proud of their work. Pupils show a real desire to want to do well and please the adults who teach and support them. Relationships between pupils are good and this is typified by the care shown by older pupils to younger ones.

6. Behaviour is good overall and pupils are helpful, friendly and polite. Behaviour in the classroom, in assemblies and around the school is good and at times is very good with many pupils showing high levels of responsibility and self-discipline. There is, however, a small number of older boys who occasionally misbehave in the classroom. In the playground these same boys can be a little boisterous but are well supervised and usually behave well. Discussions with pupils indicate that bullying is not an issue in school and if it was pupils are confident that it would be dealt with effectively. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Many of the strengths of pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities have been maintained since the last inspection and attitudes in particular have improved further.
7. Pupils' personal development is good overall, and this is enhanced by the good overall quality of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies are used well to nurture pupils' spiritual development. Although there are some good opportunities in lessons for pupils to explore their feelings and emotions, such opportunities are not always planned for and capitalised on and it is this that makes spiritual development satisfactory rather than good. Particular strengths of the personal development provision are pupils' very good moral development and their good social development. From an early age pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and quickly gain a very good insight into the differences between right and wrong. This helps pupils to be considerate and thoughtful in their approaches to others and to have high expectations of their own behaviour. The qualities required to become more mature and responsible, as pupils get older are promoted well but could go further. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility and are maturing into confident individuals with high self-esteem. Tasks that they undertake around the school are carried out with high levels of maturity and pupils revel in the responsibility entrusted in them. In discussion, pupils confirmed strongly that they would like even more responsibility to help with the smooth running of the school and more formal mechanisms by which they could contribute to decision making in school. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to celebrate their own culture and they learn about different faiths in religious education lessons. Some opportunities have been provided for pupils to learn about and listen to music from different parts of the world but the school is keen to examine ways in which pupils' awareness of cultures other than their own could be further developed.
8. Attendance is good and is above the national average. Unauthorised absence has been eliminated by efficient follow up procedures. The main reasons for

absence are genuine illness and holiday taking during term times despite the school's best efforts to deter this. Punctuality on arrival at school is good.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.6	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **good**. The curriculum is **satisfactory** with **good** enrichment opportunities for pupils' learning outside of the formal curriculum. The accommodation is **satisfactory** and resources are **good**. The care and welfare provided for pupils are **good**. The involvement of pupils through listening to and acting on their views is **satisfactory**. Links with other schools and the community are **good** whilst links with parents are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading skills are taught well and opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills are consistently seized upon.
- Good quality opportunities are provided for pupils to learn through practical, investigative and challenging tasks in mathematics and science.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage helps children to learn and achieve well.
- Writing skills are not developed well enough.
- Teaching assistants contribute significantly to how well pupils learn.
- Good assessment procedures impact well on pupils' learning.
- The use of visits, visitors and other first hand learning experiences are having an increasingly positive impact on learning.
- Not enough opportunities are consistently provided for pupils to use their computer skills in different subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 15 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	1	9	5	0	0	0

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

9. Teaching and learning are good overall, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and in the Foundation Stage, although there is scope for improvement in how pupils' writing skills are developed. Many of the strengths identified in teaching at the last inspection have been maintained and in some instances have improved.
10. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage because teaching is geared well to how young children learn best. Teaching is often fun and enjoyable for the children. There are only a small number of children in the Foundation Stage but teaching gives plenty of opportunities for them to initiate and lead learning activities and to make choices for themselves. This is balanced well with the direct teaching of key skills across all areas of learning. Support staff contribute a great deal to how well children learn and to help create an effective learning environment where children achieve well.
11. Teaching is good overall and there are some notable strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics and science. Reading skills are taught well across the school. From an early age the teaching of phonics is given much emphasis and importance and pupils are taught a good range of strategies to help them tackle new words or phrases. As pupils get older they are taught more advanced reading skills that enable them to locate information quickly. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of literature which evokes in them a genuine love for, and confidence in, reading for pleasure and enjoyment. In many subjects teachers capitalise well on the many opportunities that are on offer for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. The satisfactory, although weaker, area of teaching in English is in the development of pupils' writing skills. Although pupils are taught the skills to equip them to write for different audiences and purposes, there is not enough expectation in Years 1 and 2 as to how often and how much pupils are to write and, as a result, pupils find some difficulty in writing extended pieces of writing. In addition, in Years 1-4, there are too many missed opportunities to enhance pupils' writing skills across different subjects of the curriculum.
12. In mathematics and science teaching is good. Teachers provide pupils with challenging learning tasks where their investigative and problem-solving skills are put to the test and pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. Mathematics across the school is taught by the same teacher and she uses her subject knowledge very well to explain new concepts and the different ways in which tasks are presented keep pupils' interest and motivation at a high level. In science, teaching places a good level of expectation on pupils to use their scientific knowledge well to make informed predictions or to explain why things happen as they do.
13. Teaching and learning in other subjects is satisfactory overall with some good strengths in some subjects. Religious education is taught well because different faiths are covered in depth and the use of artefacts and visitors helps to deepen pupils' understanding. The subject is also being used increasingly well as a vehicle for developing pupils' writing skills. Although teaching is satisfactory in history and music, good use is also made of visits and visitors to help bring

learning to life. The new headteacher is placing an increasing emphasis across the curriculum on pupils' learning through first hand experiences and this is beginning to add another dimension to the quality of pupils' learning. Teaching in information and communication technology is satisfactory overall because pupils are directly taught key skills well by a specialist classroom assistant. However, there are times when teachers do not make best use of his skills in lessons or provide opportunities for pupils to put their newly learnt skills to the test in different subjects.

14. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is often good. Individual education plans are of a good standard and are well matched to the needs of pupils. Across the school teaching support staff play a pivotal and influential role in supporting and enhancing pupils' learning. They provide challenging yet sensitive support and help make learning both fun and effective. They use a good range of teaching and learning strategies to help pupils achieve well and their support is much valued by pupils and teachers alike.
15. Assessment is good overall and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. In the Foundation Stage satisfactory records are kept of children's progress but what children do or do not achieve in focused learning sessions is informally rather than formally recorded and this at times prevents learning from being even stronger. Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in the core subjects. The information is used well to help inform planning and also to set challenging targets for individual pupils. Teachers carefully examine the reasons why, if a particular pupil does not reach the prescribed target. Good procedures are also in place for analysing test and assessment data and the information gathered is used in an effective manner to set priorities for improvement. Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking the progress of pupils with special educational needs with the data used to ensure that support is targeted to where the need is greatest. Assessment in the foundation subjects is satisfactory.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**. Opportunities for enriching pupils' learning outside of the formal curriculum are **good**. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good provision for pupils with special educational needs has a positive impact on how well they learn.
- The curriculum on offer for children in the Foundation Stage meets their needs well.
- New planning procedures that have been introduced by the headteacher are impacting well on learning.
- The time allocated for some individual lessons in the foundation subjects is too long.
- The curriculum is enriched well through the opportunities for visits and the use of visitors.

- The outside provision for children in the Foundation Stage is in need of further development.
- How pupils' writing and computer skills are enhanced in different subjects of the curriculum is not consistent enough.

Commentary

16. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good because it offers a good range of learning activities that suit how young children learn best. There is a good balance maintained between independent and child-initiated activities, practical hands-on learning experiences and the direct teaching of key skills. The well-planned links between different areas of learning bring added interest to the activities on offer and successfully promote the children's curiosity in their everyday learning.
17. The curriculum on offer in Years 1-4 is satisfactory overall and improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. It is securely based on the National Curriculum and fully meets statutory requirements with a teacher in school having devised a good quality mathematics scheme which has impacted well on how well pupils achieve in the subject. Topics in different subjects are often covered in sufficient depth and all subjects are allocated an appropriate amount of time overall. However, due to the fact that literacy and numeracy are always taught in the morning, the time allocated in some lessons in the afternoons for other subjects is too long for the activities that are planned and the pace of learning is not as dynamic as it could be. The school provides well for the personal, health and social education of pupils. The quality of curriculum planning is now good due to the new planning formats introduced by the headteacher, which have encouraged a more consistent approach to planning and provide good opportunities for teachers to evaluate the quality of the curriculum and the success of lessons. These procedures are supported well by the sensible collegiate approach to curriculum development. Whilst there are some good examples of pupils' writing and computer skills being put to effective use across different subjects of the curriculum, this good practice is not as consistent as it should be.
18. The school has good procedures and provision to support and guide pupils with special educational needs. There is a well structured and planned programme in place to ensure that pupils receive the necessary support. Teaching assistants play a valued and important role. Outside agencies are brought in where necessary to provide additional guidance and support. Good quality individual education plans are in place and are reviewed regularly with all staff that support the individual pupil. All these factors go a long way in explaining why the pupils achieve as well as their classmates.
19. The school provides a good range of visits and visitors to the school that help to bring an added dimension to pupils' learning in subjects such as history, religious education and music. The school makes good use of the locality and people in the community to enhance learning. Given the small size of the school, the range of extra-curricular activities on offer is good and over the course of the year has included football, basketball, recorders and

mathematics, computer and nature clubs. Discussions with pupils indicate that they enjoy and appreciate these enrichment opportunities which also add to the quality of pupils' personal development.

20. The quality of accommodation is satisfactory overall and both the inside and outside accommodation is put to good use to enhance the quality of pupils' learning. The school has identified the need to improve the outside play area for children in the Foundation Stage because, although it is satisfactory and careful planning means that it is used often, it is not easily accessible from the classroom and building restrictions prevent it from being as imaginative or creative as it could be. The school is well resourced in terms of quality and quantity and resources impact well on how pupils learn.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare and health and safety arrangements are **good**. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is **good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good and trusting relationships with staff and feel well cared for.
- The procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety are very good.
- Pupils' academic and personal progress is tracked well although pupils are not involved enough in target setting.
- Pupils would like their views to have greater impact on school improvement and decision-making.

Commentary

21. The school is a caring community that takes good account of individual needs and circumstances. Relationships are good across the school. Staff know their pupils well and any personal, social or academic issues are detected quickly. Where these occur, pupils are helped and issues are resolved effectively. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported and parents are closely involved in supporting their learning. Discussions with pupils indicate that they feel they would have someone to turn to if they were ever worried or troubled. Many of the strengths in this aspect of school life have been maintained since the last inspection.
22. All the routine checking systems for health and safety are in place, are very effective and carried out diligently and often. Those pupils with medical conditions are well catered for and when pupils are ill or injured they are well looked after and parents kept fully informed. The school is planning more staff training for first aid to ensure better coverage after recent staff changes. Satisfactory procedures are in place for child protection and plans are already in hand for the recently appointed designated child protection person to attend some additional training and the whole school staff are due for a refresher course shortly to update them on the latest procedures.

23. The systems for assessing pupils' work are good and pupils' performance is tracked well as they move up through the school. Good target setting procedures are in place and the targets that are set are both challenging and realistic. The school has identified the need for pupils to be made more aware of their targets and what they need to do to achieve them and as a further step for pupils to be more actively involved in setting these targets. The tracking of personal development is good and staff constantly remind pupils about the importance of good social skills and a good work ethic.
24. Pupils talk openly and easily to their teachers and classmates in circle time and can put forward ideas and opinions. The school council assembly system enables pupils to suggest improvements and to raise issues and these are discussed during the school council assembly. However, pupils felt that although this system had some merits, they would like more involvement in a "proper school council" and would like to see their views acted upon more. Inspection findings support the pupils' views. Older pupils enjoyed contributing to their "Children's Charter" and would welcome the chance to have more effective formal ways of helping the school improve and to contribute to the decision-making processes.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The links with parents are **satisfactory**. Links with the local community are **good** and links with other schools are also **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents have very positive views of the good education provided.
 - Parents contribute well to pupils' learning at school and at home.
 - The quality of information parents receive about pupils' standards and progress is unsatisfactory
 - Good community links help to enrich learning and boost personal development
 - There are good links with other schools in the wider learning community
25. Parental support for pupils' learning and for the wide range of school activities is good. Parents are pleased that their children enjoy school so much, are expected to work hard, are encouraged to become more mature and make good progress. Inspection findings support these views. The school welcomes parents to help in school and is rewarded by having sixteen parents who regularly help to support reading and make a major contribution to learning. Parents also help effectively with other practical activities such as art, design and technology and school trips. The Parents and Teachers Association is very active in raising large sums to pay for the swimming coach, visitors' fees, school trips and many new library and reference books to enhance learning. Parents help when needs arise and there is good community spirit when everyone helps with school productions and other big school events. Parents are given good guidance on how to support learning at home. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

26. One of the issues raised by parents in their questionnaire was the lack of information about their children's progress. This was investigated and the inspection found that parental concerns are justified. The arrangements for consultation are unsatisfactory as for some year groups there is only one formal opportunity per year for parents to discuss their child's progress. However, the school holds Open Mornings each term when parents may visit. Parents who do not regularly come to school because their children travel on the school bus have insufficient formal contact opportunities with the school. School reports are unsatisfactory. English, mathematics and science reporting is satisfactory but other subjects do not contain enough information on progress and focus mostly on coverage and enjoyment rather than always identifying strengths and weaknesses. The quality of other information such as newsletters and other letters has improved recently and are now of a good standard and parents made several positive comments about this.
27. The school is at the heart of the local community and local people support school events. Visits to the local church, local quarry, shop and the village are welcomed by the community and the visits are used effectively as resources for learning. Visitors from the community also make learning more exciting and meaningful when local police, fire brigade, supermarket representative and a dental specialist help to enrich personal and social education. Pupils enjoyed a visit to the local estate to extend their history learning and a visitor recently led a Victorian day in school. Local music links are also good.
28. Links with the pre-school groups are good and help children to move to the school smoothly and to settle easily. The links with the main receiving middle school are good for both pastoral and curricular aspects and the arrangements for pupil transfer are good. Liaison for literacy and numeracy in particular is very good and helps to ensure good curricular continuity between the schools. Links with other groups such as the Samuel Whitbread Network Learning Community, Lower Schools Cluster Group, and Headteachers' Leadership Learning Group are used well to share resources, good practice and other initiatives which benefit pupils' learning. Links with colleges however are not as developed as they could be.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The newly appointed headteacher is gaining an increasingly informed awareness of what is needed to improve the school and has introduced some good initiatives.
- The effective management of special educational needs provision contributes well to how well pupils' achieve.
- The school has not yet established a realistic but effective way for teachers to monitor teaching, learning and standards in different subjects of the curriculum.
- Governors contribute well to the strategic management of the school.

Commentary

29. The leadership and management of the recently appointed headteacher are satisfactory. She has steadily gained an understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in the short time she has been in post and is now in a position to begin to make changes to help improve the quality of education that the school provides. The headteacher shows a strong commitment to all pupils achieving well and has helped to maintain a strong team spirit in the school and to promote a sense of community. The initiatives that she has introduced, such as a new format for curriculum planning, subject action plans and improved communication with parents have already impacted well on teaching and learning and on the partnership with parents.
30. The management of the school is satisfactory. Good procedures are in place for analysing test and assessment data and the information gained from these analyses is put to good effect to set areas for improvement in standards and how well pupils achieve and for setting targets for different year groups and individual pupils. The headteacher has carried out a limited number of lesson observations. The fact that most staff are part-time, carry responsibility for a number of subjects and that some teachers teach subjects across the school means that the school has found difficulty in devising a realistic but effective framework for monitoring teaching, learning and standards in different subjects. The school is starting to address the issue by subject leaders writing action plans. Areas for improvement are identified through working together to scrutinise pupils' work and through lesson observations and observing good practice in this and other schools when and where necessary. These are good initiatives and if rigorously pursued should provide staff with a clearer picture of provision and standards across the curriculum.
31. Management of special educational needs provision is good. The co-ordinator helps to ensure that individual education plans are of a good standard, that documentation is kept in good order, that pupils' progress is reviewed regularly and that support is targeted to where the need is greatest. The school's commitment to ensure that those pupils with special needs are included in all that the school has to offer is visible and genuine. The management of the Foundation Stage provision is satisfactory as it helps to ensure that the curriculum on offer is well matched to how young children learn best.
32. The governance of the school is good and governors fulfil their statutory duties well. Governors visit the school at work on a regular basis and this gives them a good insight into the quality of education provided. Governors have met with subject leaders and leaders of other aspects of school life on numerous occasions and have a good grasp and awareness of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Relationships between staff and governors are very good. The standards that pupils attain are regularly discussed at governing body meetings and governors, whilst being very supportive of the work of the school, do not shy away from asking challenging and searching questions about different aspects of school life. Governors are actively involved in drawing up the school improvement plan and in budget setting. Their readiness to attend training sessions provides them with the opportunity to set the work of the school in both a regional and national context.

33. Financial planning and budget control are satisfactory overall. The school and governors ensure that the principles of best value are applied in a satisfactory manner when purchasing goods and services and in ensuring that spending is closely linked to the educational priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The school has, however, over time accrued a much larger than average contingency fund which has only recently been earmarked for building adaptations and improvements and for improving computer resources. The school secretary carries out the day-to day administration in an effective manner. This helps the school to run in an efficient and smooth manner. Taking all factors into account, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	225333
Total expenditure	227590
Expenditure per pupil	3612

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	59045
Balance carried forward to the next	56788

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because of good teaching, including the contribution made by the nursery nurse and teaching assistants.
- Children have good opportunities to choose and develop activities for themselves.
- Children thoroughly enjoy the wide range of learning activities on offer.
- Adults do not always record well enough what children have or have not been successful at during learning activities.
- The limited outdoor accommodation makes outdoor play and provision problematic.

Commentary

34. Children have a staggered start when they begin to attend school. They start school at the beginning of each term and stay for variable amounts of time during the week depending on their birth date. By the time they reach the term in which they are five-years-old they attend school full-time. Attainment on entry to the school covers the full ability range, varies from year to year with the small size of the cohort and overall is broadly average. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. They achieve well overall and most will exceed the nationally recommended early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they start in Year 1. Attainment in the creative and physical areas of learning is in line with the early learning goals and achievement, although good on occasions, is satisfactory overall.
35. Teaching and learning are good and are supported significantly by the contribution of classroom assistants, particularly the nursery nurse who plans and supports the current small afternoon group successfully. The curriculum is effective in meeting the needs of the children and all adults help to create a supportive learning environment which allows children to settle in quickly and become confident and happy at school. A good balance is maintained between those activities which are directed by adults and those which the children select for themselves. As numbers are small, there are good opportunities for children to lead the development of their play and to blossom into independent learners. Assessment is satisfactory. Satisfactory records are kept of children's progress and informal observations are shared regularly by the use of a notebook. However, adults do not always keep a more formal record of what individuals know and can do during their focused activities and at times this prevents learning from being stronger. The classroom is bright and cheerful and well

organised. The outside play area is not easily accessible and cannot be monitored from within the classroom. However, imaginative planning and deployment of staff ensure that this recently improved area is used regularly for all areas of learning. Although classroom space is at a premium when all the class is present the adjacent hall is used well when available.

36. The school has established a good partnership with parents, who are keen to support their child's learning in whatever way they can. There is a good arrangement with the local playgroup so that sessions between the two settings are dovetailed successfully for the four-year-old children and good liaison is being established to review the curriculum that is on offer in the different settings. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The early years teacher has a clear vision of what she wants to achieve and has a realistic approach to development particularly linked to the outside provision and the deployment of staffing as the class size increases. There has been good improvement with regard to issues concerning the curriculum and use of resources since the last inspection, but more limited improvement regarding the quality of the outside learning area.
37. Children achieve well in **personal, social and emotional development** and exceed the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are good. The good progress that children make owes much to the high quality of relationships established between adults and children. The small number in the class means that children have a lot of individual attention and adults know the children very well. Teaching places a strong emphasis on children developing as independent learners and as a result children learn quickly how to take responsibility for washing-up, tidying away and preparing activities. They make sensible choices and relate well to their older friends with whom they play and share some lessons. Children are particularly good at taking turns, as they play games with adults, more often than might be expected at this age and thus learn effectively about rules and strategy. They choose their own games and extend their imaginative play with good and enthusiastic interventions from adults. Children learn well in this environment and thoroughly enjoy all that they take part in.
38. The children achieve well as a result of the good teaching and learning of **communication, language and literacy**. By the end of the reception year, standards exceed the expected goals. Teaching provides good activities to help children to develop their reading skills. There are daily opportunities to share books with adults both individually and as part of a group. The recent emphasis on fairy stories has been very popular and the use of puppets reinforces the understanding of characters, the sequence and the settings of stories. All adults are adept at maintaining conversation and asking questions which develop vocabulary and thinking skills well. Early writing skills are taught well and most children are confident in trying to write for themselves.
39. Children achieve well in their **mathematical development** and teaching and learning are good. By the end of the reception year, attainment levels exceed the expected goals. Good teaching ensures that children are provided with a good range of practical learning activities. All opportunities are taken to practise

counting. Seven dwarfs have seven of everything! Children are learning to recognise coins and count pennies and the making of money labels for the outside toyshop is great fun and supports learning well. The children's use of mathematical vocabulary such as "bigger," "lighter" and "heavier" are fostered well. Children are provided with practical activities where they can explore capacity and volume and good quality practical apparatus enables them to gain a good early understanding of different shapes and their properties.

40. Attainment exceeds the expected goals in **knowledge and understanding of the world**. Children achieve well and teaching and learning are good. When children explore materials, they use their senses well and are given good opportunities to talk about what they are doing and why. They made sensible suggestions about how to mix dough and what they thought was the best way to make it blue. Teaching activities provide good opportunities for the children to learn about the world around them. They learn well about what plants need to grow and the life cycle of chicks. Construction kits are used well. Children are given good opportunities to use the computer and do so well and with high levels of enthusiasm and enjoyment. Children are introduced to the Christian and other world faiths and already have a good awareness of and respect for the feelings and beliefs of others.
41. Children's achievement is satisfactory in their **creative development**, and most children are on track to attain the expected goals by the end of the reception year. In lessons observed teaching and learning were good. Children are provided with good opportunities to work with a variety of different media and finished pieces of work are of a satisfactory standard. Good role-play activities are on offer, and the readiness of all adults to take a proactive part adds to children's creative spirit, to their self confidence and to the enhancement of their communication skills. The children are taught music alongside the pupils in Years 1 and 2. Here the younger children benefit from working with their older friends and learn well. They handle instruments well and explore the different sounds that can be made. A small number of children can name some percussion instruments.
42. There were few opportunities to observe how children's **physical development** is fostered, but available evidence indicates that attainment is in line with the expected goals and that achievement is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but restricted by the limited outside play provision. Planning shows that children are provided with opportunities to use large wheeled toys and to take part in formal physical education and dance lessons. Teaching ensures that good emphasis is given to developing and teaching children how to hold pencils, brushes, scissor and other small tools and how to put these skills to best use in creative tasks, which children thoroughly enjoy.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils across the school achieve well.
- Reading, speaking and listening skills are developed well.
- Not enough is consistently expected of how much Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are to write or for pupils in Years 1-4 to develop their writing skills in other subjects.
- Teaching assistants contribute a great deal to how well pupils learn.
- Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress.
- Pupils are not always aware of targets for improvement.
- The role of subject leader is not effective enough in monitoring standards or provision.

Commentary

43. On the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well above the national average in reading and writing. When compared to similar schools, attainment was well above average in reading and above average in writing. Inspection findings show that attainment by the end of Year 2 is above average in reading, speaking and listening and at an average level in writing. Attainment by the end of Year 4 is well above average in reading, speaking and listening and above average in writing. Differences between test results and inspection findings can be explained by the differences in natural ability of the different group of pupils and also by the fact that the small number of pupils assessed each year means that comparisons with national data are not always reliable. The important factor is that overall pupils across the school achieve well although achievement in writing is satisfactory because standards could be better. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
44. By the end of Year 2 most pupils are confident speakers and listeners. They listen attentively and follow instructions well. Pupils use a good vocabulary in discussion. These good skills are built on as pupils move through school and by the end of Year 4 speaking and listening skills are well above average. Pupils speak articulately about a range of different subjects, use an expansive vocabulary and are confident at expressing and justifying their view and opinions. By the end of Year 2 pupils are good and expressive readers and are confident at reading a wide range of different texts to delve into and explore different topics and themes. Many pupils leave the school as very accomplished readers. They have a genuine love of literature, read with great expression, know many different authors and have well developed referencing skills. The satisfactory, although weaker, element of attainment is writing. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4 pupils' technical ability in writing is secure and they write in a competent manner for a suitable range of audiences and purposes. However younger pupils struggle to write extended pieces of work that capture the interest of the reader. Older pupils do not consistently transfer their spoken vocabulary into their written work and writing at times fizzles out after a lively and interesting opening.
45. Teaching and learning are good overall with some room for improvement in the teaching of writing skills. Reading skills are taught well across the school.

Reading has a high priority in school and teaching ensures that pupils acquire all the skills they need to become confident and expressive readers who can locate information with ease. Teachers are good at developing pupils' speaking and listening skills through well focused discussions on a range of different issues across different subjects of the curriculum. Teaching introduces pupils to a wide range of literature including fiction, non-fiction, poetry and plays. The enthusiasm in which texts are introduced and read to pupils leads to many pupils developing an avid interest and love of reading. Pupils have increasingly been directly taught the skills necessary to write for different audiences and purposes, but there are times in Years 1 and 2 where expectations are not high enough as to how often and how much pupils are to write. This results in pupils finding some difficulty when asked to write lengthier pieces of work. Across the school the contribution made by teaching assistants is significant and makes a major contribution to how well pupils learn and achieve. The marking of pupils' work is at times good but there are times when pupils are not made aware enough of what they need to improve. Equally so pupils are not sure enough as to what targets they are working towards or actively involved in setting and reviewing their own targets.

46. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and the subject leader has a good grasp of what is needed to improve provision. However, the fact that the subject is taught by the same teacher throughout the school means that there are some difficulties in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. The school has accurately identified the need for staff to work together to look at pupils' work, for the subject leader to draw up a formal action plan and for lessons to be observed by the headteacher when appropriate. The school has established good procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and the information is used well to set individual targets for all pupils. This impacts positively on how well pupils achieve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. The use of language and literacy across the curriculum is satisfactory. Opportunities for pupils to put their speaking and listening skills to the test in different subjects of the curriculum are consistently capitalised on. Whilst there are some good examples of pupils' writing skills being enhanced in different subjects, there are too many missed opportunities in Years 1-4 and this impacts adversely on writing standards.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils attain high standards because teaching places a good emphasis on developing pupils' problem solving skills alongside other skills in the subject.
- The curriculum is well designed and impacts well on learning.
- Teaching assistants contribute a great deal to how well pupils achieve.

- Pupils' progress is assessed, tracked and recorded well.
- Pupils are not always aware of the targets they are working towards.
- The role of subject leader is not impacting as well as it could on provision and standards.

Commentary

48. On the basis of the 2004 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was very high, in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally and very high when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that attainment at the end of Year 2 is currently above average and well above average when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. The differences between test results and inspection findings can be explained by the differing natural abilities of the different groups of pupils. Inspection evidence clearly indicates that across the school pupils achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
49. By the end of Year 2 pupils have well developed number skills and they handle numbers accurately and confidently. Their mental agility is at a good level and many can work out computations quickly. Pupils have a good knowledge of shapes and their properties. Pupils measure with a satisfactory degree of accuracy and are good at handling and interpreting data. Pupils are confident at problem solving and recognise that there can be different ways of arriving at an answer. The good start that pupils make in Year 1 and Year 2 is built on well as they move through the school and many pupils leave school as accomplished mathematicians. Pupils handle large numbers with ease and carry out calculations confidently. Their knowledge of both two and three-dimensional shapes and their properties is strong and they draw and interpret graphs well. A particular strength is pupils' ability to put their mathematical skills to the test in solving a range of challenging mathematical problems or investigative tasks that are put in front of them.
50. Teaching and learning are good, with some very good features. Most of the teaching in this subject is carried out by a specialist teacher who uses a well-structured scheme of work that she has devised herself. The small incremental steps used in the programme ensure that progress is made quickly through the use of consolidation and extension of skills. It enables individuals and groups of pupils to work at appropriate levels whatever their age or ability in the class. The use of problem-solving techniques is integrated very effectively into work. The three-part structure of the National Numeracy Strategy lesson is used effectively and the teacher demonstrates her own expertise by the quality of questioning employed. Responding to these challenging and searching questions as well as the expectation of the use of correct mathematical vocabulary makes learning demanding. The presentation of new facts in a variety of ways ensures good understanding and pupils learn well and quickly. Tasks are explained very clearly and pupils understand what they have to do. Pupils work hard in class because of a good working atmosphere and because activities are well organised. Pupils enjoy the final part of the lesson because they have opportunities to use the interactive white-board to demonstrate their understanding. The teacher has high expectations of good behaviour and

presentation of work to which pupils respond well. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and learning assistants deployed particularly well. They are skilful in asking and repeating questions during whole-class sessions. This ensures that all pupils take a full part in what is going on. Their contribution to the quality of learning in group sessions is very good and means that the pupils they support achieve well.

51. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There are good procedures in place for assessing and tracking pupils' performance and the information gained together with information from the analyses of test and assessment data is used well to set priorities for improvement and to set targets for individual and groups of pupils. Although targets are shared with pupils, they are not always given the opportunity to contribute to the target-setting process. The school has identified the need for the subject leader to work with all staff in the monitoring of pupils' work, identifying areas for improvement and to share good practice both in school and from other schools when appropriate.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. There are satisfactory opportunities for the use of mathematics in other subjects. Pupils' measuring skills are used well in science. Printing techniques have been used well to reinforce understanding of tessellation and symmetry in art and design. Information and communication technology programmes are used satisfactorily to support the knowledge of number facts, logic and the use of simple databases.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn through investigative tasks.
- Good procedures are in place for analysing test and assessment data.
- Teaching assistants add much to the quality of pupils' learning.
- Pupils are not aware enough of their targets or what they need to do to improve.
- There are good examples of the subject being used to enhance pupils' mathematical skills, but at times opportunities are missed to develop writing skills.
- The role of subject leader is not impacting enough on the quality of teaching and learning.

Commentary

53. On the basis of the 2004 teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, attainment was very high and in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. Inspection findings indicate that standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and

well above average by the end of Year 4. The differences between teacher assessments and inspection findings are the result of the differences in ability of the different groups of pupils. In addition, only a small number of pupils are assessed each year and comparisons with national data cannot always be reliable. The important factor, however, is that pupils are achieving well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

54. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of forces and electricity. They understand how different surfaces can affect motion. Pupils are confident at building circuits and explain well the difference between conductors and insulators. They talk knowledgeably about reversible and irreversible change and the good emphasis that teaching puts on practical and investigative work means that pupils know what a fair test is and give good reasons as to why things happen as they do in experiments. Pupils continue to acquire good scientific knowledge and investigative skills as they move through the school. By the time that pupils leave school many are confident and able young scientists. They have a very good knowledge of materials and their properties and of the uses and dangers of electricity. They know that forces are measured in Newtons and measure temperature accurately. Pupils have a very good awareness of what constitutes a healthy diet and of the impact that exercise has on the body. Pupils' investigative and practical skills are strong and they use their scientific knowledge to good effect to make accurate and informed predictions and talk about their work using a good level of scientific vocabulary.
55. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching puts a good emphasis on ensuring that all topics are taught and covered in depth and this deepens pupils' understanding. A particular strength is the emphasis given to practical work. Whether finding out about irreversible change, which surface is better than another for helping vehicles to move or understanding how a circuit works, learning is geared around finding out through practical investigations which pupils participate in with great enthusiasm. Expectations are high and good open-ended questioning challenges pupils to come to accurate conclusions and to use their knowledge to make good quality predictions rather than guesses. There are good examples of pupils being expected to put their mathematical skills to good use when measuring temperature or recording mass or volume, but on occasions opportunities are missed for the subject to be used as a vehicle for improving writing standards. Across the school teaching assistants play a pivotal role in supporting teaching and learning and in helping pupils to achieve well. The marking of work is satisfactory overall and at times good when it clearly outlines what a pupil needs to do to improve or explains why a piece of work is good. Good procedures are in place for analysing assessment data and using the information for setting priorities for improvement but individual pupils are not always made aware of the targets they are working towards or involved in setting and reviewing their own targets.
56. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory because the subject leader has a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. However, over time a realistic but effective way to monitor provision in the subject has not been established. The school is starting to address the

issue by ensuring that the subject leader draws up a more formal action plan and for staff to work together under the guidance of the subject leader to evaluate teaching and learning through scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and through lesson observations or team teaching when and where appropriate.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources have improved well since the last inspection.
- What pupils are taught is recorded well.
- The best use is not always made of the subject expertise of the classroom assistant.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed to use computers to support learning in different subjects.
- The role of subject leader is not developed enough to have the biggest possible impact on monitoring teaching and learning.

Commentary

57. Standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and achievement is satisfactory across the school. Improvement overall has been satisfactory since the last inspection, although there has been good improvement in the quantity and quality of resources.
58. By the end of Year 2, pupils recognise the different icons on screen and save and retrieve their work. Pupils use computers in a satisfactory manner for word processing but only a small number of pupils have good keyboard skills. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of how to use a screen turtle and how to use a microscope. Pupils use an appropriate technical language when talking about their work but are less secure about the uses of computers in the wider world. Pupils continue to acquire skills at a steady rate as they move through Years 3 and 4. By the time that pupils leave school they edit pieces of written work using the computer. They merge text and graphics and are confident at changing text colour and size. Pupils are competent at locating information from the Internet and have used a more advanced turtle in a satisfactory manner. Pupils have devised and then interrogated databases when plotting the weight of different pupils in the class.
59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Most of the skills teaching in the subject is carried out by an information and communication technology specialist classroom assistant and this is often of a good standard. The skills taught reflect accurately the content of the units in the national guidance for this subject and are planned in a satisfactory manner. Support and teaching is offered mostly in literacy and numeracy although some skills are learned in history and geography. Very careful records are kept of what pupils have been

taught and what they can do and also their experiences with various pieces of software. However pupils are not always provided with sufficient time to practise and consolidate these newly learnt skills in relevant and meaningful classroom activities. The classroom assistant often supports learning in class and when his skills are put to good use by teachers learning is accelerated. However this is not always the case and opportunities to enhance pupils' computer skills are missed.

60. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner, but there is scope for improvement. Teaching and learning are not monitored by the staff working together under the guidance of the subject leader by looking at the work of the pupils and by evaluating how to get the most out of the available computers and subject expertise. Assessment procedures in the subject are satisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

61. The use of information and communication technology to support learning across different subjects is satisfactory overall but opportunities are missed. It is used predominantly to support mathematics through number-skills programmes, data handling and use of logic trees and graphs. There is more limited application in science. Pupils have opportunities to word process diary entries and have produced a newspaper and enhanced some descriptive writing by importing pictures. They have fewer opportunities to apply their knowledge to more sustained writing or editing. Older pupils are learning how to interrogate web pages and CD-ROMs to obtain information in history and geography. Painting programmes have been used to support art and design.

HUMANITIES

62. Due to timetable constraints, not all subjects were inspected in depth and therefore a judgement cannot be made about provision in geography as no lessons were observed.
63. In **geography**, evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils indicate that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that a good balance is struck between developing pupils' geographical knowledge and geographical skills. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory awareness of their own locality and that it may differ from other parts of the country or other places in the world. They know that food comes from different parts of the world and have drawn a simple map to plot their way to school from home. By the time that pupils leave school they have compared Southill to Tenby and Mexico and relate in a satisfactory manner some similarities and differences. Their knowledge of different countries around the world is satisfactory. Pupils can name differences between villages, towns and cities and have developed satisfactory mapping skills. Evidence indicates that the subject is not always used as well as it could be for developing pupils' writing skills. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall with the school rightly

seeking to develop a realistic and effective way to monitor provision in the subject in a more formal manner.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching ensures that pupils are provided with good opportunities to learn about different faiths in depth.
- The subject is used well to enhance pupils' writing skills.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding is increasingly being enhanced by first hand learning experiences.
- The role of subject leader is not yet firmly established.

Commentary

64. Standards are in line with the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and achievement overall is satisfactory. By the time that pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, standards exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils in Years 3 and 4 achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
65. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity. They recognise and have a satisfactory understanding of the fact that there are times and places that are special to Christians and to people of different faiths. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to learn about world faiths and they show good levels of respect for the beliefs of others. Opportunities are also provided for pupils to explore their own feelings and those things that are special to them. By the end of Year 4 pupils have a good awareness of different stories from the Bible and recall important Christian festivals such as Easter, Christmas and Advent. They name places of worship such as mosques and synagogues and have a good knowledge and understanding of the Jewish faith and Jewish family life. Pupils continue to show a high level of respect for people with different beliefs and recognise that there are similarities as well as differences between Christianity and other faiths.
66. Teaching and learning are good overall. Planning is often good and ensures that different topics are covered well and in depth and this gives pupils a better understanding and awareness of what they are learning. Teaching is increasingly using artefacts and visits and visitors to help bring learning more to life and pupils respond positively to this. Planning takes good account of pupils of differing abilities. The subject is used well to develop pupils' writing skills with writing frames being provided for the less able pupils to help them write more competently. Marking of pupils' work is often good and assessment tasks are set at the end of topics to evaluate what pupils have learnt.
67. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory because the subject leader knows what the strengths in the subject are and what is needed

to improve still further the quality of provision. However, over time there have not been procedures in place for the formal monitoring of the subject. This is now being addressed by the implementation of strategies for staff to look at pupils' work on a more regular basis and by drawing up a formal action plan to outline how any areas of weakness are to be tackled.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have developed a good level of historical knowledge by the time that they leave school.
- Good use is being made of visits and visitors to help bring learning to life.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed to use the subject to enhance writing skills.
- The role of subject leader is not sufficiently developed.

Commentary

68. Standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 4. Achievement is satisfactory overall and good when matched by good teaching within lessons. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
69. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory understanding and awareness of chronology. Pupils make satisfactory comparisons between toys and modes of transport from the past to the present day and have a satisfactory knowledge about famous people in history. Quite a number of older pupils in school have an individual interest in history and have read independently about different periods of history. There is little doubt that this contributes to the above average standards that are attained by the end of Year 4. Pupils have a good knowledge of Romans, Vikings and of life in Victorian England. They differentiate between invaders, raiders and settlers and know that artefacts can tell us a great deal about life in the past. Pupils are keen to find out about the past and are developing a good sense of chronology.
70. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good features. Planning indicates that different periods of history are covered in depth and a particular strength is the way in which the school uses artefacts and visits and visitors to help make learning more fun and to deepen pupils' understanding of different periods of history. Pupils have for example taken part in a Victorian school day and visits to the local estate have heightened pupils' interest in the past and how their own locality has changed over time. Within lessons pupils are given the chance to handle artefacts such as old toys and again this stimulates their interest far better than simply looking at photographs. Although there are some good examples where the subject is used well to further writing and investigative skills, there are other occasions where these opportunities are not seized upon.
71. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory with the school accurately identifying the need for the subject to be monitored in a more effective manner through staff monitoring pupils' work on a more regular basis.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

72. Due to timetable constraints no creative, aesthetic, practical and physical subjects were inspected in depth and it is not therefore possible to make a judgement on provision. One lesson was observed in music and one lesson in physical education. No lessons were observed in art and design or design and technology. The following represent the inspection findings.
73. 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 end of Year 2 and Year 4. Younger pupils in school mix colours to produce the desired effect and are becoming more confident at carrying out observational drawings such as the drawing of toys

linked to their history topic. The pupils have carried out printing activities to illustrate tessellation. Pupils are encouraged to be creative and imaginative in their work and to experiment with colour to present different effects. By the time that pupils leave school there have been many opportunities for pupils to work with a wide range of different media including paint, chalk, pastels, charcoal and pencil and to have used techniques such as shading in their work on colour and light and the natural world. Planning shows that pupils are directly taught key artistic skills which they are expected to put to good use when putting their own stamp of originality on their finished work. Discussions with pupils show that they are enthusiastic about the subject and look forward to lessons with great anticipation. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner and assessment procedures are satisfactory.

74. 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 4. Planning indicates that over time the subject is taught in sufficient depth and pupils have the opportunity to make different products, to take part in food technology activities and to build using different construction kits. By the time that pupils leave school they have made weather instruments, mock playgrounds, wheeled vehicles and a variety of toys and games. Older pupils have recently been making vehicle chassis powered by an electrical circuit. It is clear that pupils have been taught key skills and techniques for fixing and joining materials and fabrics together and they use these in a satisfactory manner when constructing. Pupils are conversant with the importance of the designing and evaluating aspects as well as the making element. The pupils show good levels of interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, as are assessment procedures.
75. In **music**, 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 4. Planning shows that over time all elements of the subject are covered in sufficient depth. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4 standards in singing are at an average level. Year 2 pupils differentiate between loud and soft sounds satisfactorily and recognise a variety of methods for making sound like scraping, banging and shaking. Music in other parts of the school is taken by a specialist teacher and was not observed during this inspection. The title and composer of assembly music is displayed, but opportunities are missed to discuss these. Pupils have benefited in the last year from the support of the local education authority music service and had the opportunity to take part in a number of musical activities that were aimed at improving their singing, appraising and performing. Leadership and management of the subject and assessment procedures are all satisfactory.
76. In **physical education**, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils show an appropriate awareness of space and put together a sequence of movements in a satisfactory manner in dance lessons. Pupils are encouraged to be creative and imaginative in their movements and respond well. Planning shows that over the course of the year pupils have the

opportunity to take part in dance, gymnastic and games activities and pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taken swimming for a six-week block of time. Extra-curricular sporting activities, such as football and basketball, add to pupils' sporting skills. Discussions with pupils show that they enjoy taking part in sporting activities and that they recognise the contribution that taking part in sport can make to healthy living. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory as are assessment procedures.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

77. The programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good and adds to the quality of pupils' personal development. The school promotes healthy living through both the science and physical education curriculum. The school has timetabled PHSE lessons where pupils are given the opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues such as the importance of rules, bullying, special places and pupils' reaction to topical events. The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' moral development and pupils respond very well by taking a high level of responsibility for their own actions. The pupils have recently drawn up a "Children's Charter." Discussions with pupils indicate that they feel confident about expressing their views and opinions in both class discussions and in the school council assembly. Pupils, however, expressed their wish for a more structured and formal school council which they feel would provide a better forum for them to contribute to the decision making processes of the school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
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).