

INSPECTION REPORT

SUDBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sudbury, Ashbourne

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112631

Acting Headteacher: Mrs S Rimmer

Lead inspector: Mr C Parker

Dates of inspection: 10th – 11th January 2005

Inspection number: 268006

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 41

School address: School Lane
Sudbury
Ashbourne
Derbyshire
Postcode: DE6 5HZ

Telephone number: 01283 585251

Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of Mr N Francis
governors:

Date of previous 7th June 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The number of pupils has fallen by a third since the last inspection. There are currently 36 children on roll who are taught in two classes; some year groups are very small. There is only one child in Year 1. The largest year group is Years 3 with nine pupils. A quarter of the pupils have a special educational need, which is higher than usual; one pupil has a statement. All of the pupils speak English as their first language.

Attainment on entry is judged to be broadly average with considerable variation from year to year. The pupils come from a variety of supportive backgrounds. The school is located on the Sudbury estate in extensive grounds.

The school has an acting headteacher. There has been a long period of disruption to both the leadership and teaching associated with a number of staff changes. The governors are currently seeking to appoint a new headteacher to replace the substantive post holder from April 2005. The acting headteacher does not have a teaching commitment because the LEA is funding an additional teacher to allow her to tackle the management issues facing the school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11897	Christopher Parker	Lead inspector	Mathematics; Science; Information and communication technology; Art and design; Design and technology; Music; Physical education; Special educational needs; Personal, social and health education
11437	Tony Anderson	Lay inspector	
19028	Vanessa Ward	Team inspector	English; Geography; History; Religious education; Foundation Stage

The inspection contractor was :

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	15
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS [AND COURSES] IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	22

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Overall the school's **effectiveness is unsatisfactory**. The acting headteacher is providing strong leadership and in a short time has placed the school on the road to recovery, but much remains to be done. Currently standards are too low and the teaching does not ensure that pupils make as much progress as they should. Consequently, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are too low
- Achievement is unsatisfactory because the teaching is not demanding enough
- The curriculum does not meet requirements; some subjects are covered inadequately
- Subject leadership is weak
- Behaviour has improved because higher expectations have been established
- The care and welfare of the pupils is good and relationships are positive
- Attendance is well above average

Improvement since the last inspection is poor. Standards have declined significantly and the teaching is not as effective. The rigour with which the curriculum is implemented remains unsatisfactory. The monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum are not yet effective. Governors have a clearer view of the school's strengths and weaknesses but systems for evaluating the school's performance are not good enough.

In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspection Act 1996 I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Because the number of pupils in each year group is so small and so variable very little account can be taken of changes from year to year in national test results. Since 2001 the results of tests at the end of Year 6 have been well below average and often in the lowest five per cent of schools both nationally and compared with similar schools. Currently, standards in Year 6 in writing and science are below average and in reading and mathematics they are broadly average, but the pupils are not doing well enough and consequently they are not reaching the standards they should. Overall, **achievement is unsatisfactory**. Over recent years the results of the tests at the end of Year 2 have shown greater variation. The results in 2004 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Currently, standards are broadly average except in writing where they are below average and pupils are not making enough progress. In the Foundation Stage the pupils make a secure start to school life and most are on course to reach the goals set for them by the end of reception.

The **pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**, is satisfactory. Behaviour has improved and is now entirely satisfactory because the moral development of the pupils is good and the school effectively promotes good relationships. The pupils have few opportunities to learn about other cultures.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school is not providing an adequate quality of education because the teaching does not ensure the pupils make the progress they should and the curriculum does not provide them with a good range of motivating experiences. The **teaching is unsatisfactory** overall because very little of the teaching seen during the inspection was better than satisfactory and scrutiny of the pupils' work in their books shows that not enough is expected of them. There is a lack of urgency and aspiration in the teaching. Too little of the teaching motivates the pupils to achieve highly, particularly the older and more able pupils. Some of the work the pupils are set is not well matched to their ages and abilities. Assessment is not used effectively to inform planning for the next stage of learning; marking does not consistently help the pupils to improve their work. The curriculum across a wide range of subjects is not implemented with sufficient rigour, lacks challenge and is not taught in sufficient depth. The care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good. The pupils have trusting relationships with the adults in the school. The older pupils have few responsibilities but they do consider and care for younger children. Good tracking systems have recently been implemented to allow the pupils' progress to be charted so that they can be given more precise guidance to help them to improve. Partnerships with parents are satisfactory and they are provided with adequate information about progress. Links with the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Taken overall, **leadership and management are unsatisfactory**. However, the acting headteacher, who has been in post for one term, has quickly identified the key areas of significant weaknesses. The current school improvement plan sets out a clear road to recovery and there is already good evidence of success in the way that the children's behaviour has improved. However, subject leadership is weak and currently co-ordinators have little influence on standards and the quality of education. The governors are now making more effective use of training and have a clearer understanding of the importance of their role and how they can steer the work of the school. Even so, systems to routinely monitor how well the school is doing are not well established with many improvements made relatively recently. Important aspects of the curriculum do not meet statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have some concerns about the school. While many feel it is a very caring school where children are happy, others are not sure that pupils are stretched or stimulated. All agree that behaviour has improved and that in recent months improvements in other areas are becoming more evident and the school is 'back on the right track.'

Some pupils are not excited by their lessons. They say that some subjects are taught infrequently and some feel they could work harder and would respond to greater challenge. There is some frustration amongst older children about the amount of time they are inactive while explanations are given to younger children in the same class.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards and the rate of achievement for all pupils
- ensure all aspects of teaching and learning are of high quality
- extend the role and responsibility of co-ordinators so they check that the pupils are reaching the standards of which they are capable

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure the pupils receive a broad and interesting curriculum in all subjects that provides continuity and enables them to progress rapidly.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Except in writing, achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but in Years 3 to 6 it is not. By Year 6 standards in writing and science are below average. In reading and mathematics they are broadly average but not high enough.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are far too low throughout the school
- The pupils have few opportunities use and apply mathematics
- The skills of scientific investigation are not being developed systematically
- Not enough is expected of the pupils in most subjects

Commentary

1. The children start school with skills which are broadly similar to those expected of four-year-olds. In their first year of school the satisfactory teaching and the attention which is paid to individual needs enables children to achieve satisfactorily. By the end of the reception year, the majority reach the expected goals in most areas of learning.
2. Cohorts are very small and, consequently, the data from national tests must be viewed with considerable caution. However, there is little doubt that overall standards have fallen since the last inspection. Under the strong leadership of the acting headteacher expectations have been raised significantly this year and there are clear indications that standards are higher than in recent years but much remains to be done, not least in improving the standard and quality of the pupils' writing. Overall standards are not as high as they should be and pupils are not achieving well enough in writing, mathematics and science.
3. At the end of Year 2 national test results over the last four years have been broadly below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics, with very large fluctuations from year to year caused by the variations in the size and ability of the year group. Comparisons with similar schools have also fluctuated, but overall have been well below average. At the present time the pupils in Year 2 are making satisfactory progress in reading and mathematics but they are not reaching the standards they should or achieving well enough in writing.
4. Following a very good year in 2001, the national test results at the end of Year 6 have been well below average over the last three years compared to all schools and compared to similar schools. More often than not individual subject results over that period have fallen into the bottom five per cent compared both with all schools nationally and with similar schools. Currently standards are broadly average in reading and mathematics but in writing and science they are below average. Overall, the pupils are not achieving the standards they should because expectations are not high enough; they are not challenged or required to aspire to higher levels. Results have declined and are significantly lower than when the school was last inspected.
5. There are some variations in the results attained by girls and boys but the very small cohorts make it difficult to ascertain from the data if there are any differences in the achievements of boys and girls. No differences are evident in the provision for boys and girls. In lessons, the pace of working and support is better suited to pupils with special educational needs who make satisfactory progress but the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and not enough is demanded of them by their teacher.

- In many other subjects, for example, history and art and design the pupils are not reaching the standards they should or making the progress of which they are capable because they are not taught the skills and knowledge they need in an organised and systematic manner. Weaknesses in the curriculum and the quality of teaching combine to slow the pupils' progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The development of the pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour has improved and is now entirely satisfactory
- The moral development of the pupils is good
- The school effectively promotes good relationships
- The pupils have few opportunities to learn about other cultures
- Attendance and punctuality are very good

Commentary

- Most pupils behave in at least a satisfactory manner during lessons and around the school. For example, in one observed Year 1 and 2 music lesson, most pupils worked well together when experimenting with a range of percussion instruments, although a few had difficulty in listening to the teacher's instructions. When the teaching challenges the pupils their attitudes and behaviour are good, for example, in an art and design lesson. However, in other lessons there is rarely the excitement and motivation that generates enthusiasm and very positive attitudes to learning.
- Most of the children in the Foundation Stage are on course to reach the expected goals in their personal, social and emotional development by the end of the reception year. The priority given to this development is entirely appropriate and helps to assure the children's progress.
- The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory overall and in the case of moral development it is good. Spiritual develop is encouraged in collective worship. Cultural development is also fostered in assemblies by encouraging the pupils to listen to different types of music and telling them stories about people from other parts of the world. However, not enough consideration has been given to developing an understanding of the cultural diversity of society. The pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong and high expectations of the behaviour has resulted in improvements that are now evident to parents, governors and visiting behaviour support officers.
- The overall attendance of pupils at the school is well above the national average. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school by helping to ensure that their children attend school regularly and promptly. The school is very effective in monitoring and promoting the good attendance of all pupils.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.9	School data	0.2
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.

Exclusions

There have been no exclusions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school is not providing an adequate quality of education because the teaching does not ensure that pupils make the progress they should and the curriculum does not provide them with a good range of motivating experiences.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Too little of the teaching motivates the pupils to achieve highly
- There is a lack urgency and aspiration in the teaching
- Assessment is not used effectively to inform planning for the next stage of learning

Commentary

11. The teaching is unsatisfactory overall because very little of the teaching seen during the inspection was better than satisfactory and the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that not enough is expected of them. Consequently, they are not progressing rapidly enough. Some lessons, although having a broadly satisfactory outcome, lacked the urgency and attention to detail needed to ensure the pupils made the good progress of which they are capable. The one very good art lesson, taught by the acting headteacher, provided a sharp contrast with pupils achieving very well and gaining new skills at a good pace because they were captivated from the start of the lesson. In this lesson they were challenged and motivated throughout to improve their work and, as a result, they grew in confidence so that by the end of the lesson the good quality of their work provided considerable satisfaction and achievement. Subsequent discussions with pupils revealed the extent of their enjoyment and their desire to build on the skills they had acquired.
12. The pupils' completed work shows that too little is expected of them, particularly the older and more able. For example, in their science books there is very little that extends the challenge for these pupils and requires them to achieve at a higher level. Similarly, the skills of writing are not being developed rapidly enough because the pupils have too few opportunities to write for a range of purposes and in a range of contexts. In mathematics and science too little attention is paid to investigation and experimentation. In Years 1 and 2 there is an over reliance on work sheets which again restrict opportunities for the most able.
13. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There are strengths in the positive relationships between staff and children, which help the children to feel secure and encourage them to learn. Thorough systems for assessing and recording the children's progress enable teaching to target individual needs.
14. Teachers do not make full use of time in lessons. For example, in Years 3 to 6, lessons do not start with pace or activities that grab the pupils' interest and attention. In both mathematics and science lessons this was the case with tasks extending to fill the time

available rather than being sharply focussed to move the pupils' learning on to the next stage. Equally, the absence of any variety of approach resulted in a large group of pupils sitting on the floor writing answers to very similar questions on a whiteboard for the entire one hour of a mathematics lesson. Consequently, they did not achieve enough in the lesson.

15. The acting headteacher with the assistance of local education authority consultants are providing support and encouragement to increase the range of teaching and learning strategies. The acting headteacher is also encouraging the teachers to raise their sights, which are currently too low. Much of the marking of the pupils' work is accepting of what is offered, with few comments that demand more or that highlight how the work can be corrected or improved.
16. Although much has been done in recent months to improve planning, weaknesses remain in the structures needed to underpin effective teaching. For example, the long-term plans have yet to be established in all subjects to aid the teachers' preparation for lessons. Where they do exist they are not adhered to, in order to ensure that the activities the teachers plan build on the pupils' earlier learning. Equally, recent developments in the assessment and recording of what the pupils know and are able to do are not yet fully informing planning to ensure the tasks set by the teachers match the needs of the pupils. This is particularly the case for the more able pupils who are not consistently challenged in lessons. The pace of learning is better suited to pupils with special educational needs who benefit from the support of teaching assistants.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 12 lessons

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

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

The curriculum

The curriculum provided by the school is unsatisfactory. Extra-curricular activities, accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 lacks breadth and balance and does not meet statutory requirements
- Planning to support teaching in several subjects is inadequate
- Insufficient time is given to teaching some subjects
- Educational visits and visitors are used well to enrich aspects of the curriculum

Commentary

17. The curriculum across a wide range of subjects lacks challenge and is not taught in sufficient depth. This results in the pupils not having full access to the curriculum and not reaching the standards of which they are capable. This is the case in, for example, science where the older pupils do not have appropriate or challenging opportunities to carry out experiments or investigate with a degree of independence. Furthermore, those areas of the science curriculum planned, for example, to be taught in the autumn term

are either superficially covered or omitted. In several subjects, the guidance for teachers consists of a brief overview of topics to be taught, which provides insufficient detail to support the teachers in planning lessons that will ensure continuity in pupils' learning. This lack of detail also contributes to topics not being explored in sufficient depth. In design and technology, for example, the pupils do not have opportunities to investigate, develop, plan, design and make products and systems nor are they taught the skills and techniques they need. At the time of the previous inspection, curricular planning for subjects other than literacy and numeracy was insufficiently detailed and was a key issue for action. This remains the case. This issue has begun to be addressed in earnest since the recent appointment of the acting headteacher, and the teachers are working hard to develop plans. Planning for literacy and numeracy is supported by consultants from the LEA. However, much work remains to be done to produce curriculum continuity and coherence that supports effective teaching.

18. There is currently an imbalance in the time allocated to the teaching of different subjects, with subjects such as art and design and design and technology being taught with insufficient frequency. This limits opportunities for the pupils to make progress and results in standards being lower than they should be across most of the curriculum. In English, too little writing is taught, especially in Years 3 to 6. In mathematics there is little evidence of investigative work or of opportunities to apply knowledge already gained. This imbalance has been identified by the acting headteacher and a revised timetable is being implemented.
19. The provision for special educational needs is now well organised with support being focussed on those pupils who need it. In addition, visiting specialist teachers enhance the provision and provide beneficial one to one support. Individual education plans have clear and precise targets to help the pupils to make progress. Support for more able pupils, identified through tests, has recently been instigated to help them to make more effective use of their abilities. There is no difference in the provision made for boys and girls and all are equally included in activities.
20. The school successfully provides a stimulating range of visits to places of interest and uses the expertise of visitors, such as storytellers and artists, to enrich the pupils' learning. A suitable range of extra-curricular clubs is offered and a large majority of the pupils attend one or more of these.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good. Guidance and support for pupils is satisfactory as are arrangements for seeking and acting on pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good tracking systems have recently been implemented
- Pupils have trusting relationships with the adults in the school
- Members of the staff know the pupils well
- Medical records and the accident book are well maintained

Commentary

21. Child protection systems and procedures are effective and the reporting person is known to all staff in the school. Relevant staff training in child protection matters has also taken place. The school teaching and support staff know their children well and provide a positive degree of

welfare and pastoral support to individual pupils. Pupils' academic performance and personal development is now monitored both formally and informally by the school but this information is not yet being put to full use to ensure the pupils are achieving as well as they should.

22. The school operates a good first aid system for minor accidents and up to date medical files are maintained for each child. Regular fire drills are undertaken and the outcome of each one is recorded. The school carries out occasional medical administration with the written permission of parents. The school is proactive in maintaining a safe school site and in undertaking risk assessments for trips out of school.
23. The school acknowledges pupils' achievement through the praise given to them in the classroom and, more formally, in regular sharing and presentation assemblies. Although there is no school council in operation at the present time, older pupils are encouraged to look after younger ones in the playground and dining room and the good relationships within the school allow the pupils' views to be gleaned through conversation and discussion.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with parents are satisfactory. Links with the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's relationship with parents is satisfactory.
- The school uses its good links with the community well to support the curriculum.

Commentary

24. Parents are loyal and support the school but a significant minority have very mixed views of the school and there are particular concerns about how well they were informed about the progress of their child and in how well the school was led and managed. One in four parents who returned the questionnaire also felt that the school does not seek their views.
25. The information provided by the school through the prospectus, annual governing body report to parents and via regular newsletters is of a satisfactory standard. Annual academic reports to parents are of an inconsistent standard and do not provide a clear picture for parents about how well the pupils are doing. Many of the targets for development included in the reports are very broad and do not always clearly state exactly what the child needs to do in order to make the expected level of progress. The acting headteacher has clearly made progress in addressing the issues surrounding the school/home partnership and it is apparent that she is gaining the confidence of many parents. There is a strong determination on the part of the school leadership to continue to improve school/home relationships for the ultimate benefit of children, parents and for the school itself.
26. The school makes good use of the local environment to enhance the range of opportunities for the pupils. This is evident in the good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. The school has good links with the community including the local church to which pupils recently paid a harvest festival visit. A number of older pupils visited the Leicester Space Museum and a group of younger children spent a day at Sudbury Hall. The whole school recently paid a visit to Stoke to see the pantomime, Cinderella. In addition, visitors are also used effectively to enhance the curriculum and these include a string quartet, a story teller and a music partnership. The school also has links with other local primary and secondary schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Taken overall, the leadership, management and governance of the school are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher is providing strong leadership
- Subject leadership is unsatisfactory
- Governors have not ensured the curriculum meets requirements.

Commentary

27. The good leadership and management reported at the time of the last inspection have not been maintained and the school has declined in its effectiveness. There has been a period of considerable turbulence when effective action has not been taken to ensure that standards and the quality of education remain high.

28. The acting headteacher, who has been in post for one term, has quickly identified key areas of significant weakness. She has systematically assessed the current situation through rigorous monitoring and analysis of the available performance and assessment data. Having very quickly come to the conclusion that behaviour and the ethos of the school are unacceptable, standards are not high enough and teaching is not as demanding as she would expect, she has taken steps to bring about improvements. The new school improvement plan is comprehensive and sets out to tackle a necessarily wide range of issues.

29. In some areas, most notably the pupils' behaviour, considerable improvements have been made in a relatively short space of time and, overall, behaviour is now entirely satisfactory. However, many of the difficulties currently facing the school are due to weaknesses in leadership and management. Systems for tracking the pupils' progress, monitoring the quality of teaching and ensuring the needs of the pupils are being met are only now being implemented by the acting headteacher and have yet to have a significant impact on the pupils' achievements. She has a very clear understanding of the issues facing the school and the organization it requires to be successful. She also has clear and high expectations of what can and should be achieved and the manner in which teachers have to work in order to obtain the results she expects. To this end she has set precise short term targets to bring about improvements in teaching and achievement. In addition, her own very good teaching provides a role model for others. There is strong agreement amongst governors and parents that the school is improving. The acting headteacher has put the school on the road to recovery but there is much still to do to provide the pupils with a good quality of education.

30. Subject leadership is weak and co-ordinators have little influence on standards and the quality of education. Much of their work is currently establishing planning systems and organizing the curriculum, which was an issue at the time of the last inspection, and has yet to be successful in a number of subjects. However, even when a plan is adopted, for example, the two year curriculum plan for science, it is not adhered to because, as yet, co-ordinators are not monitoring and evaluating either the quality of the provision being made or the standards that are being achieved.

31. The governing body has not done enough to hold the school to account and, for example, ensure that the issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. However, it is currently exerting greater influence on the school than it has in the past. This is most evident in the desire to make a very good appointment for the post of headteacher in order to continue the improvements instigated by the acting headteacher. The first interviews for the post did not result in an appointment. The difficulties associated with attracting strong and suitably qualified applications to this

teaching headship remain a barrier to the school performing at the level it should. There are clear expressions of commitment to improvement but these are not consistently or convincingly expressed by all who work in the school. The acting headteacher's clear and unequivocal assessment of where improvements are needed and her plans for improvement can only be successful if matched by rigorous implementation by all involved.

32. The governors are now making more effective use of training and have a clearer understanding of the importance of their role and how they can steer the work of the school. However, systems to routinely monitor how well the school is doing are not well established with many improvements made relatively recently. The governors do, however, make good use of consultation with local education authority officers to inform their view of the standards being attained and the quality of the provision being made for the pupils. The good working relationship between the chair and the acting headteacher and the acting headteacher's willingness to share information is placing the governing body in a position to be far more effective than it has been in the past.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	212 412	Balance from previous year	11 060
Total expenditure	222 775	Balance carried forward to the next	697
Expenditure per pupil	4 546		

33. The expenditure per pupil is much higher than in most schools. Although this is often the case in smaller schools, the unsatisfactory quality of education means that currently this school does not provide value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships between adults and children assist in promoting the children's development
 - The tracking of the children's progress is carried out effectively
 - Good adult intervention in the children's play helps to motivate them to learn
 - The planning of learning for these children is linked well with the planning for the older children who are taught alongside them
 - The outdoor play area is in need of development to provide greater stimulus for learning
 - The school has no apparatus for developing climbing and balancing skills
34. The children are admitted to the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday. The children's attainment on entry varies each year, but is broadly average overall. There are currently five children in the Foundation Stage, who are taught alongside a small class of pupils in Years 1 and 2. Overall, their achievement is satisfactory and, by the end of the reception year, a majority are likely to achieve most of the expected goals. This is fewer than was the case at the previous inspection and reflects the skills of the present children.
35. The children are taught by two part-time teachers, supported by a teaching assistant. The teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with good aspects in the positive relationships between adults and children and the quality of adult intervention in the children's play. The planned curriculum is appropriate and is integrated well with the National Curriculum, which is taught to the older pupils in the class. The assessment of the children's progress is carried out conscientiously and provision is adjusted according to the children's identified needs. The leadership in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The staff work effectively together and the positive relationships between the adults set a good example to the children.
36. The adults make the most of opportunities to promote the children's **personal, social and emotional development**. Whilst playing with hoops and balls outside, the children were given opportunities to take turns, share equipment and stand in line. A child who misbehaved was helped to understand why his behaviour was unacceptable and was given a chance to improve. The children persevere when trying to skip or when sticking boxes together to make models. They wash their hands independently and tidy away toys and equipment competently when asked to do so. When tidying away after playing with dough, one child showed initiative by fetching the brush and dustpan in order to sweep up.
37. In **communication, language and literacy**, all of the children can recognise their written name and some regularly-used words. They like to hear stories and the majority enjoy looking at books independently. They know how to turn the pages singly from front to back and understand that writing is read from left to right. Almost all of the children can write their own name using recognisable letters. They are beginning to write some identifiable letters in their attempts to communicate and this is rightly an area

of focus for teaching. The adults make sure that the children listen well to instructions and respond appropriately. The children speak confidently to familiar adults, sometimes using either complete sentences or phrases. The adults make good use of opportunities to develop the children's communication skills. Questions such as, 'How will you make your model move?' and 'Who will travel in your carriage?' encourage the children to speak and to use their imaginations.

38. The adults make the most of opportunities to foster the children's **mathematical development** as they play. The teaching assistant encouraged the children to count whilst they were playing with balls outside. Counting rhymes, songs and stories all help to reinforce number sequences. A good range of activities was provided during a mathematics lesson to stimulate the children's interest. These included counting the number of apples they painted on to a tree and using a computer programme for a matching activity. While the children rolled dough, the teaching assistant drew their attention to the comparative sizes of different cutters and helped them to decide which cutter would be the best size to fit on their dough.

39. The children's **physical development** was supported well as they made castles and coaches in connection with work on the story of Cinderella. The choice of materials available for sticking was appropriate. The children persevered as they used glue spreaders and scissors. Their abilities to run, hop, throw and catch are appropriate for their ages. While playing with apparatus outside, they tried hard to skip with ropes and to kick and throw a ball. They expressed joy when they were successful and watched as each demonstrated what they could do. They successfully played a 'follow my leader' game, which helped them to practise a range of skills and to understand and follow rules. Apart from a few alphabet markings, the outside area does not provide a stimulating area for learning. However, the school has plans for its development. Similarly, the school hopes to purchase climbing apparatus to increase its provision for the children's physical development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' achievements and the teaching of writing are unsatisfactory
- The match of work to the pupils' needs is often not considered carefully enough
- Too few opportunities are provided to develop literacy skills across the curriculum
- Too little use is made of ICT to support learning
- The leadership of the subject is unsatisfactory

Commentary

40. The standards attained by the small numbers of pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are average, and achievement is satisfactory in speaking, listening and reading. In writing, standards are below average. Standards for both year groups are lower than they were at the time of the previous inspection when compared with both similar schools and with all schools nationally.

41. Achievement in writing in Years 1 to 6 is unsatisfactory and the more able pupils, in particular, require greater challenge. A heavy reliance on completing worksheets limits opportunities for pupils to express their ideas. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils' written work shows they have too few opportunities to write for different purposes. Consequently, achievement in writing is unsatisfactory. Their work shows a strong emphasis on spelling lists, with very few opportunities for writing at greater length, or for drafting and editing their work. This is particularly the case for the older year groups. The teaching of writing in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory because it is not clearly focussed on developing the accuracy, creativity and imagination need to communicate effectively.
42. Throughout Years 1 to 6, the range of tasks provided is not matched well to pupils different ages and abilities. This means that work is often either too easy or too hard for certain pupils. There is no clear evidence that the teachers analyse their lesson outcomes with sufficient rigour to be able to determine what different pupils need to learn next.
43. The need to improve writing has been identified as a significant weakness by the acting headteacher and suitable plans have been adopted to improve writing. A whole-school effort to use correct punctuation, with the targets entered in the front of each pupil's book, are helping to focus the teachers and pupils on working for improvement. Half-termly pieces of writing from each pupil are now being assessed and saved, so that progress can be tracked more effectively.
44. ICT is not used to support learning in English as frequently or as effectively as it should be. The staff have identified this as an area for development.
45. Subject leadership is unsatisfactory. Although the role is beginning to be developed, the coordinator does not currently influence standards, teaching and learning beyond her own classroom. She has worked closely with the acting headteacher and LEA literacy consultants to develop planning for literacy but this has yet to have a significant impact on standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. The teaching of language and literacy skills in other subjects is unsatisfactory. Too few opportunities are created for pupils to practise and consolidate the skills they have learned in English lessons. The acting headteacher has initiated work with the staff to identify and plan the more systematic use of language and literacy skills across the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

The provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The older pupils are underachieving
- The teaching is unsatisfactory
- The marking and assessment of the pupils' work are ineffective
- The pupils have inadequate opportunities to apply their mathematical skills across the curriculum

Commentary

47. At present, standards of attainment are broadly average in Year 2 and Year 6, although they are not as high as at the time of the last inspection. While achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 the older pupils are not doing well enough and their progress is unsatisfactory. The range of work is narrower than it should be and little consideration is given to providing the pupils with opportunities to use and apply their knowledge and skills.
48. Recently a greater degree of organisation has been introduced into the planning of numeracy lessons, which now provides a more secure basis for teaching and learning but the weaknesses in marking and assessment mean that the teachers have to make assumptions about what the pupils know and can do. In some lessons, they are able to adjust and manage the learning so that the pupils can progress at a reasonable rate. For example, in Years 1 and 2, the teacher helped the pupils to recognise patterns emerging from their answers to questions about counting on in 2s and 5s. A lesson in Years 3 to 6 highlighted the teacher's considerable difficulty in matching the work to the pupils' different abilities and needs. The most telling feature of this lesson was the speed with which the more able pupils completed the tasks they had been set and the excessive length of time the rest of the class spent providing answers on a white board to very similar problems. This highlighted the absence of imaginative approaches to teaching mathematics, in this case, capacity and reading scales. The pupils had neither opportunities to investigate using measuring jugs, containers or liquid nor access to simulations using ICT.
49. A scrutiny of the pupils' exercise books identifies a number of weaknesses. They have not done enough work; the range of work is narrow; the pupils have inadequate opportunities to use and apply their skills and they are rarely asked to give reasons and explanations for their answers. It is clear that the tasks they are set do not build on their previous learning, resulting in underachievement. The quality of marking does not help the pupils to improve their work and too frequently is accepting of low productivity. Although some satisfactory teaching, and one example of good group work, were seen during the inspection, the teaching overall is unsatisfactory because the oldest pupils are failing to reach the standards of which they are capable.
50. Recent developments in recording the pupils' attainment and tracking the pupils' progress place the school in a stronger position to monitor its own performance.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. There is little evidence of the use of mathematics across the curriculum and no planning to help the teachers create opportunities for the pupils to use, apply and extend their skills. In one group work session Year 2 used a seating plan for the banquet attended by Cinderella as basis for counting in twos. However, there are very few examples of mathematics being used across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average by the end of Year 6

- Progress is slow
- The curriculum is unsatisfactory

Commentary

52. Standards in science are too low because the pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge through a planned programme of activities, particularly in Years 3 to 6. While a plan of themes and topics to be taught has been developed, it is not implemented with sufficient rigour and there are no mechanisms for the co-ordinator to check that the curriculum meets requirements. Some topics are not covered at the times that are identified on the plan and those that are, are not covered in sufficient depth. Opportunities for investigation and experimentation are infrequent and ineffective because the pupils are not given the opportunity to decide on appropriate approaches, make predictions, test ideas or determine how to observe and record their findings. In discussion older pupils could only give one example of an investigation they had undertaken recently, as part of their work on rocks and soils, when they watched the teacher do the experiment. While they are able to talk in general terms about a fair test they cannot give examples of how they have worked independently and determined which variables remain constant and which change. Throughout the school pupils are not given enough opportunities in science to use and extend their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

53. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils have completed a modest range of work with an element of investigation. The pupils also record their finding using ICT and produce simple bar graphs of, for example, how far a toy car will travel down a ramp when they were investigating forces. The completed work is of a broadly average standard but the limited range of work impedes progress. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. However, in a music lesson a good link was made to work in science when the pupils were given the opportunity play musical instruments and investigate the relationship between the material it was made from and the sound it made.

54. In Years 3 to 6 one lesson was observed in which pupils made secure gains in their learning about materials that are transparent, translucent and opaque. However, this lesson illustrated how opportunities to make the most of the time available and stretch the more able are missed. It also provided clear evidence that pupils do not have a well developed understanding of how to carry out a fair test and record their findings.

55. Since the recent adoption of an action plan to bring about improvement, pupils' attainment is being recorded. However, the information is not yet influencing the teachers' planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are too low and achievement is unsatisfactory
- The pupils do not have well planned opportunities to develop their ICT skills
- ICT is not used widely enough to support learning across the curriculum

Commentary

56. The last inspection found that standards were 'are at least in line with those expected' but the demands and expectations of how ICT should be used to enhance learning and teaching have increased considerably since then. The school has not kept pace with these demands and finds itself in the position of having to audit its current provision and revisit earlier training to make more effective use of the available ICT resources. The co-ordinator has put together a useful resource of examples of the ICT 'curriculum in action' to help the teachers to make judgements about the standards the pupils are reaching.
57. There is adequate hardware for the number of pupils, and in Years 1 and 2 pupils have access to appropriate software to help them, for example, to practise their counting and addition and subtraction. When they have opportunities to use the computer they do so with confidence and a level of skill that is expected at that age. In Years 3 to 6 pupils were seen using painting programs to make a comparison with drawing with a pencil. This provided a good opportunity for them to make a judgement about whether a computer is always the best tool for the job. They too displayed appropriate levels of skill.
58. The oldest pupils have increasing opportunities to use ICT but the range of applications appears more limited than might be expected. They have, for example, created fact sheets about the planets and downloaded an illustration of the phases of the moon from the Internet, but the amount of work in their books resulting from the use of ICT is very small. There is no evidence of, for example, the pupils creating multimedia presentations, using spreadsheets or controlling and modelling events.
59. The co-ordinator has an action plan setting out the comprehensive range of tasks that are needed to establish ICT within the curriculum. This was adopted a short time ago; a good start has already been made to improving the overall provision for ICT.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. There is little evidence of ICT being effectively embedded in the curriculum. In Years 1 and 2 there are examples of the pupils producing simple bar charts to show the results of an investigation. The teachers are beginning to make use of the projector and interactive whiteboard in their teaching. In a mathematics lesson, for example, in Years 1 and 2 the 'Multiple Machine' provided a good focus for a group activity. However, overall ICT is not yet being used sufficiently or effectively to support learning across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

61. In religious education, it was possible only to observe a lesson in Years 1 and 2. The small amount of recorded work available from Years 3 to 6 was analysed and discussion took place with the coordinator. Work in geography and history was also sampled.
62. In the lesson observed in **religious education**, the pupils were attentive, listened well and contributed sensible ideas because the teacher made the subject matter relevant to their own experiences. This helped them to understand the meaning of the word 'creation', in preparation for forthcoming work on the story of The Creation. The use of objects encouraged the pupils to speak and sustained their interest. The task to sort out pictures of manmade and natural objects was appropriate, but was completed very quickly by the more able pupils. Standards in this lesson were average and achievement and teaching were satisfactory. These are similar to the judgements made at the previous inspection.

63. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards and achievement in Years 3 to 6. The small amount of written work in the pupils' books showed that they have studied the Christmas Story. Links to the school's current literacy target were seen in the teacher's comments about punctuation in a few of the pupils' books.
64. Discussion with the coordinator and analysis of her file indicate that a suitable rolling programme of appropriate topics is used for Years 3 to 6. Written guidance to support the teachers in teaching these topics is satisfactory and there are appropriate links to the locally agreed syllabus. However, this guidance is incomplete. Also, there is no planning for Years 1 and 2 and no process for assessing the pupils' progress throughout the school. This is unsatisfactory. The coordinator does not have influence on teaching, learning and the curriculum beyond her own classroom.
65. In **geography**, there was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards and achievement. The work of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 was analysed. However, each pupil produced only three pages of work last term. This related to work on environments and mountain ranges. The pupils were able to recall little of the work they had done during this topic. There appeared to be a lack of depth to the study undertaken. The coordination of the subject is unsatisfactory. The coordinator is not involved in leading or managing the subject beyond her own classroom. is in place. No guidance beyond a programme of topic titles is available for Years 1 and 2. For Years 3 to 6, additional guidance is being written as topics are taught. There is no process for assessing the pupils' progress. This is an unsatisfactory state of affairs which has deteriorated since the previous inspection.
66. In **history**, one lesson was observed in Years 3 to 6. The pupils were using Egyptian artefacts to make deductions about life in ancient Egypt. The pupils responded with interest and worked collaboratively to agree on theories and questions. However, the questions raised by the pupils in Year 6 were superficial and demonstrated below average standards. Discussion with them indicated that they have had few opportunities to work with historical artefacts previously. Guidance for teachers' planning is being written as the topics planned to be taught over the next four years are offered. No guidance is available for Years 1 and 2. Although a topic was programmed for last term, it was not taught. This meant that the pupils' curricular entitlement was not met. There are no procedures for assessing pupils' progress. The coordinator's role is unsatisfactory. She has no influence over developments in the subject beyond her own classroom. As in geography, this is an unsatisfactory state of affairs which has deteriorated since the last previous inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

67. One art and design and one music lesson were observed, but design and technology and physical education were not taught during the inspection. The small amount of art and design and design and technology on display and in the pupils' books was scrutinised. Discussions were held with pupils about their work. The curriculum for these subjects is not effectively implemented so that any development of knowledge and skills is ad hoc and does not build on previous learning in any of these subjects. There is little evidence of the pupils acquiring skills in a progressive manner as they move through the school.
68. The **art and design** lesson observed was taught by the acting headteacher. The plan for the lesson was based on the fact that the pupils in Years 3 to 6 had not previously been

taught any drawing skills or techniques. This was borne out by the quality of the small amount of work in their sketch books. From the start of the lesson the acting headteacher set high expectations by showing the children examples of high quality work, emphasising the care needed and, throughout the lesson constantly helping them to improve. The pupils were encouraged to experiment with a range of hard and soft pencils, pastels, chalks and crayons and use them in a range of techniques such as shading, smudging and hatching. As the pupils' awareness and skills developed rapidly their confidence visibly grew. When given a the choice of a range of shoes and boots to draw they became fully absorbed by the task and their work, by the end of the lessons was of good quality, with some pupils showing high levels of ability. In this lesson the pupils achieved very well and made considerable progress in one lesson because they were motivated and consistently challenged by the acting headteacher to improve at every stage through evaluation. Discussions with pupils confirmed the high level of enjoyment of the lesson and highlighted the infrequency of art lessons which are often cancelled because, 'we have to finish off other work,' clearly limiting progressing and resulting in a disjointed and ineffective curriculum. Occasional visits from artists provide some specialist input, for example, to make and glaze clay plaques. A well attended after school club also provides opportunities for pupils, for example, to tie dye textiles but overall the range of work undertaken by the pupils within the curriculum is very narrow and there is little evidence of a planned programme of opportunities for them to use range of media or to develop their skills and knowledge.

69. There is very little evidence of **design and technology** in the curriculum. Discussion with the oldest pupils highlighted the absence of a planned programme of work to develop skills, investigate familiar products or undertake increasingly complex design and make assignments. Design and technology has not been a regular feature in the curriculum of these pupils.
70. The school has a field for games and a hard surface play area, but no hall for gymnastics and dance. Consequently, it is difficult to fully meet curriculum requirements for **physical education**. The older pupils use the local swimming pool for lessons. About a third of the pupils attend an after school football club.
71. In the one **music** lesson seen during the inspection the pupils in Years 1 and 2 were given the opportunity to investigate a range of instruments and the materials they are made from. This provided a good link with their work in science. The lesson was satisfactory and pupils made appropriate gains in their learning about how different materials can generate different sounds. The pupils sing with enthusiasm in assemblies and with practice improved the quality from one day to the next. Each assembly has a musical focus linked to a theme. In the two assemblies seen very good use very made of the percussion work of Rodion Schedrin and the songs of Stevie Wonder while discussion focussed on the how people like Evelyn Glenny and Stevie Wonder overcome considerable difficulties to be very successful. As well as adding to the pupils' personal development, this widened their knowledge of music.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

72. No lessons were taught during the inspection. The school has introduced a scheme of work to provide a structure to the PSHE curriculum. The acting headteacher is aligning this programme of work to her efforts to continue to improve the ethos of the school. At

the present time the pupils have few responsibilities and are not setting personal targets or goals. For the most part they are developing good relationships with each other and relationships with adults are satisfactory but not based on a common and shared enthusiasm for learning.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	5
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	6
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	4
Attendance	2
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	5
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
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	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	4

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