

INSPECTION REPORT

ROYLES BROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thornton Cleveleys

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119149

Acting headteacher: Mr E Dempsey

Lead inspector: Mrs D Bell

Dates of inspection: 18th - 20th April 2005

Inspection number: 268113

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

© Crown copyright 2005

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Community
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 296
School address: Marsh Road
Thornton Cleveleys
Lancashire
Postcode: FY5 2TY
Telephone number: (01253) 821 396
Fax number: (01253) 821 396
Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of governors: Miss Doreen Shepherd
Date of previous inspection: 15th March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Royles Brook Primary School has grown in size since its last inspection and now has 296 pupils on its roll (155 boys and 141 girls aged four to 11). Apart from Year 4, other years are virtually full and pupils are taught in either single- or mixed-age classes depending on their age. The pupils' social and economic backgrounds are around the national average and their attainment on entry to the school is similar to that found nationally. Almost all pupils are of white British origin, with a very small number from mixed-race backgrounds. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including statements, is below the national average, and the proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is at the national average. The pupils' special educational needs mostly relate to moderate or specific learning difficulties. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the normal times is the same as most schools. The school achieved the Healthy Schools Award this year. Due to the long-term illness of its headteacher, it currently has an acting headteacher, who has been in post since January 2005.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16413	Mrs D Bell	Lead inspector	Special educational needs Information and communication technology (ICT) Art and design Design and technology Music
9214	Mrs J Garland	Lay inspector	
27677	Mrs D Davenport	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Religious education
16761	Mr M Hemmings	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science
30935	Mrs K McArthur	Team inspector	English Geography History

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal Education
1 - 4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637 833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 9
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9 - 13
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13 - 14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING SUBJECTS	15 - 27
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This school is not effective enough. Under the good leadership of the acting headteacher, in post since January 2005, appropriate procedures have been established to tackle the issues the school faces and there are embryonic signs of improvement. Nevertheless, the school has serious weaknesses because unsatisfactory teaching has led to underachievement in Years 3 to 6, and a decline in standards in Year 6. Currently, the school does not provide satisfactory value for money.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher's effective leadership is moving the school in the right direction but there is still some way to go to improve pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 but it is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. As a consequence, pupils are underachieving by Year 6.
- The overall leadership and management of subjects are unsatisfactory.
- Pupils are well cared for but assessment information is not used well enough to plan their work and they are not involved in helping to make decisions about how to improve their school.
- The school does not cater well enough for the diverse needs of different groups of pupils and it does not do enough to raise pupils' awareness of the range of cultural diversity in Britain today.
- The immature behaviour of some older pupils in and out of class adversely affects the learning and personal development of other pupils.
- The targets set for pupils, including those for pupils with special educational needs, are not always well enough matched to the pupils' individual learning needs.

Improvement since the last inspection, in 1999, is unsatisfactory. Standards have declined in Year 6 as has the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6. There has not been enough improvement in science, or in developing the role of the co-ordinator, and the dip in achievement in Years 3 and 4 has not been adequately addressed. There has been satisfactory improvement in design and technology and, under the effective leadership of the acting headteacher, priorities for improvement have been clearly identified and considerably refined. Although the school does have serious weaknesses, there are emerging signs that it is beginning to move forward with a clear determination to improve.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is unsatisfactory. Children start school with the levels of attainment expected for their age. They make good progress and are well on course at least to meet the goals expected for the end of their Reception Year (the early learning goals) in all six areas of learning. The national test results for pupils in Year 2 in 2004 were above the national average in reading and well above in writing and mathematics. They were well above those of similar schools in all three areas. In the current Year 2, standards are above the national expectation in speaking and listening, reading, writing, science and mathematics, and pupils are achieving well. The same cannot be said in Year 6. The national test results for pupils in Year 6 were as follows:

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

mathematics	C	C	D	E
science	D	D	E	E*

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

The trend in this age group is below the national trend and the value-added score, which measures achievement between Year 2 and Year 6, was well below the national average and very low when compared with similar schools. The acting headteacher quickly identified the reasons for this and the systems he has introduced to tackle it are beginning to work. However, in Year 6, standards are below the national expectation in English, mathematics and science, and too many pupils in Years 3 to 6 are still working below the levels of which they are capable. Boys and girls do equally well in Year 2, but in Year 6 boys do better than girls. Pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. However, in the school as a whole, targets are not yet sufficiently well matched to pupils' individual needs. **Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** but the school does not do enough to prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse British society. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are satisfactory, as is their attendance and punctuality, both of which have improved since January.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

The overall quality of education is satisfactory but the overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2; it is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6, although a small amount of good teaching was observed in this age group. English, mathematics and science are taught well up to Year 2, but not well enough in Years 3 to 6, and literacy and numeracy skills are not promoted satisfactorily in this age group. The use of too many worksheets restricts the opportunities pupils have for writing, even though writing is a key priority in the school development plan. This and the lack of planning to meet the pupils' different learning needs have contributed in great measure to the unsatisfactory achievement by Year 6. The acting headteacher, ably supported by the acting deputy, is working hard to redress this situation through a strong focus on assessment and its use to promote better learning. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 are beginning to respond but they still have some way to go to work together as a team, to build on the good work done up to Year 2, and to use assessment information effectively in planning. The curriculum and links with parents, the community and other schools are satisfactory. The school pays good attention to pupils' welfare, health and safety but it does not provide appropriate support and guidance for them academically. It has no formal mechanisms for seeking their views.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The acting headteacher is leading the school well and is ably supported by the acting deputy. Both have a very clear understanding of what needs to be done, and the school now has a clear educational direction. The leadership and management of other key staff remain unsatisfactory, although co-ordinators are beginning to develop a clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Governance is satisfactory and statutory requirements are met. The overall management of the school is satisfactory but systems for checking on its work are not yet sufficiently robust to improve teaching and learning.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents and pupils are satisfied with what the school offers them, though both groups have concerns about behaviour and parents feel the school could communicate better with them. They acknowledge that both of these concerns are being addressed under the current leadership.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In order to continue to improve, the school should:

- Improve the quality of teaching and eliminate the underachievement in Years 3 to 6.
- Train and empower the co-ordinators to lead and manage their subjects properly.
- Complete the work on assessment in all subjects and use the information effectively to plan work that matches the pupils' different levels of capability.
- Improve the immature behaviour and attitudes of older pupils and provide better opportunities for all pupils to contribute to the life of the school.
- Raise pupils' awareness of the range and diversity of culture in Britain today.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Although good up to Year 2, achievement overall is unsatisfactory. Standards are below the national expectation in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. Girls do not do as well as boys by Year 6 and higher attaining pupils are not well enough catered for. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and, overall, they achieve well.
- Standards are above the national expectation and achievement is good in Year 2.
- By Year 6, achievement is unsatisfactory and standards are below the national expectation.
- Targets are not properly based on pupils' prior attainment and work is not well enough matched to the different learning needs of different groups of pupils.
- Although pupils use their reading skills well in other subjects, their use of writing skills is limited by the amount of worksheets that require only short answers.
- Pupils do not use ICT as a natural tool for learning.

Commentary

1. Children start school with the levels of attainment expected for their age. They make good progress in the Reception class and are well on the way at least to reach the early learning goals by the end of their Reception year. They already exceed them in personal, social and emotional development.
2. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are above the national expectation in Year 2 and pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. In the National Curriculum tests in 2004, pupils in Year 2 reached above average standards in reading and well above average standards in writing and mathematics when compared with all schools. The results were well above those of similar schools and higher attaining pupils did very well.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.0 (15.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.2 (13.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	18.1 (15.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Standards are below the national expectation in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not achieve as well as they should given their levels of capability. Their progress in learning is too slow, declining in Years 3 and 4 and only beginning to pick up again in Year 5. In the past two years, pupils in Year 6 have had a series of supply teachers as a result of staff illness and this has considerably disrupted their learning and affected their behaviour and attitudes. In 2004, the results of the national tests were below the national average in English and mathematics and well below the national average in science. When compared with similar schools, standards were well below average in English and mathematics and very low in science, placing the school in the bottom five per cent of all schools. The value added to pupils' learning between Year 2 and Year 6 was well below the national average and

very low when compared to pupils' prior attainment. The trend in the Year 6 results is below the national trend and the school has not yet managed to halt the overall decline in standards evident since 2001.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.1 (27.6)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.5 (26.8)	27.0 (26.8)
science	27.2 (27.9)	28.5 (28.6)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. The school has always set its statutory targets but they have not been securely based on pupils' prior attainment or capability. It did not meet its targets in 2004, and yet overall they have not been challenging enough. Until January this year, on the appointment of the acting headteacher, there was no systematic approach to tracking pupils' progress over time, even though teachers did maintain records within each year. It is clear from the assessment files now held that, overall, pupils' progress declines from Year 2 to Year 3 and on into Year 4. Progress too often remains static and too many pupils do not make the expected one level progress over two years, or the two levels of progress expected between Year 2 and Year 6. The acting headteacher acted swiftly to tackle these issues. Staff have worked hard and are beginning to address them but the school still has some way to go to get all pupils back on track. Target setting is underdeveloped and although learning objectives are clear, they are not referred to often enough in class and do not form the basis on which pupils' work is marked or assessed. Additionally, they are sometimes in language that pupils do not understand. These factors restrict the usefulness of targets as a means of improving the rate at which pupils learn. Targets are now more closely linked to pupils' prior attainment but specific areas of individual weakness are not yet focused on sufficiently to close the gaps in their learning.

5. Boys achieve better than girls in this school. They are more dominant in class and teachers do not always have effective strategies to cope with this and enable the girls, or less confident boys, to answer questions or have their say. Pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress towards the literacy and numeracy targets in their individual education plans. They are well supported in their work by the part-time staff and teaching assistants. Higher attainers and more-able pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not achieving to the best of their capability because their work is not challenging them to reach the higher standards of which they are capable. All of these issues have been picked up already by the acting headteacher and work has begun on tackling them.

6. Standards and achievement are below the national expectation in ICT in Year 6. In the other subjects inspected, including religious education, standards and achievement are satisfactory. Some good work was observed in art and design, music and history. Pupils use their reading skills well in other subjects. However, their use of writing skills is restricted by the over-use of worksheets and this prevents them consolidating what they learn in English lessons in other subjects. Overall, they use their mathematical skills satisfactorily in other subjects. They do not yet use ICT as a natural tool for learning in different subjects, although they do use computers and the Internet for research purposes in, for example, history and geography.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Behaviour, attitudes, attendance and punctuality are satisfactory, as is the pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, pupils, especially boys, display an immaturity by Year 6 that affects their learning and that of others.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage have very good attitudes to learning.
- A significant minority of older pupils display immature attitudes and do not behave well.
- Attendance is improving.

Commentary

7. Children in the Reception classes enjoy coming to school, behave very well and respond very positively to all that they are given to do. They respond well to the high expectations set by staff in terms of relationships, conduct and mutual respect. They work and play together well in pairs and small groups, taking turns and sharing resources fairly, and they are successfully encouraged to make decisions and develop a sense of personal responsibility. Adults greatly value the children's efforts and this gives children the confidence to tackle problems and to try new approaches. A very caring atmosphere has been created in the Foundation Stage, and relationships between adults and children are very good. The children's very good attitudes and behaviour contribute well to their good achievement and progress.
8. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They listen well to each other and to adults, show respect for each other's needs, and are co-operative and trustworthy. They know right from wrong and understand the consequences of their actions, as do most pupils in Years 3 to 6. In this age group, most pupils have positive attitudes to school, to each other and to the adults with whom they have contact. They show genuine interest in others, initiate conversations with adults, including visitors, listen politely to responses and are keen to talk about themselves and their school. However, a significant minority of older pupils in Years 5 and 6, especially boys, display an immaturity that manifests itself in poor attitudes and silly behaviour in class, noisy behaviour at lunchtime and boisterous behaviour in the playground. Other pupils find this intimidating; teachers do not always deal with it well enough and less-confident pupils, including girls, are often left out of discussions as teachers struggle to manage the boys. This contributes to the pupils' overall underachievement. Pupils with special educational needs concentrate appropriately in lessons, displaying good attitudes to their work and trying hard to succeed, especially when they receive small-group help from the support assistants.
9. In class, the unacceptable behaviour is often a result of the teachers' low expectations of them and, especially in the case of higher attaining pupils, the activities they are given not being pitched at the right level for their capability. Pupils in Year 6 report that they behave well when they have their regular teacher but have become used to a series of supply teachers, and they react differently to each. The acting headteacher regularly supervises lunchtimes with a view to improving behaviour, and he has introduced games and play equipment to improve play times. This work is, however, at an early stage. Overall, moral development is satisfactory, except for the minority of older pupils, and there were no exclusions in the last school year. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have not improved enough since the last inspection.
10. Parents and pupils both voiced concerns about behaviour and the inspection team found that there were indeed some weaknesses in the management of it, although these are now being addressed. The parents acknowledge that the acting headteacher is bringing a visible presence to the playground and that this is helping to improve behaviour. There were no incidents of bullying during the inspection but pupils are

aware of the procedures to follow if bullying does occur. They show interest in how their school works but there are insufficient opportunities for them to take on real responsibilities within it, and opportunities for social development, although satisfactory overall, are somewhat limited. At the moment, these include mundane day-to-day tasks and the Guardian Angel scheme, in which older pupils look after younger ones in the playground. Pupils are not wholly positive about this scheme, however, stating that it gives some pupils the ‘chance of being even naughtier’ as they exercise their power over others. They would like a school council so that they could have a genuine voice in what happens in the school. This is planned for within the school’s developing programme for personal, social and health education. However, the school is delaying it until the start of the next school year, losing a valuable opportunity to capitalise on the pupils’ enthusiasm and get them involved in improving the school as quickly as possible.

11. The school satisfactorily promotes pupils’ spiritual development through the curriculum and the acts of collective worship and commercial displays are used effectively to celebrate the traditions of a variety of cultures across the world. However, the school does not yet do enough to develop pupils’ awareness of range of diversity and culture in Britain today. The adequate range of extra-curricular clubs and educational visits, including a residential visit, contribute to the pupils’ social development and help them gain a better understanding of life in the wider community.
12. Attendance is satisfactory and it is satisfactorily monitored. Most pupils attend school on time. Too many parents take their children out of school during term time, especially in Year 6, and they are not adequately warned of the detriment this causes to their children's education.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5	School data	0.1
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is satisfactory but the overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. The curriculum, and the school’s links with parents, other schools and the community are satisfactory and the school pays good attention to the pupils’ welfare, health and safety. The academic support and guidance given to pupils are unsatisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 but it is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6, as are assessment procedures overall. The quality of teaching has deteriorated since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In the Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2, good teaching helps pupils to achieve well.

- The lack of rigour in teachers' planning and the unsatisfactory use of assessment information mean that, in Years 3 to 6, work is not well enough matched to pupils' capability levels.
- Teaching assistants provide good levels of support for pupils with learning difficulties, though in some lessons they are not used well enough, particularly in whole-class sessions.
- In Years 3 to 6, teachers' marking does not help pupils to understand how to improve their work or achieve their targets, and pupils and parents are unclear about homework.
- Teachers always share learning objectives with the pupils. However, they do not refer to them often enough when talking to the pupils about what they have achieved in lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	1 (3%)	13 (44%)	15 (50%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13. The quality of teaching is good overall up to Year 2. In the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, assessment procedures are satisfactory and teachers use assessment information effectively in planning. This results in the good achievement seen in these age groups. Teachers have taken on board well the improvements in tracking pupils' progress and this is having a positive impact on learning. Staff in the Foundation Stage have a good understanding of how young children learn and the teachers in Years 1 and 2 build effectively on what has been done in the Foundation Stage. This is producing the higher standards seen in pupils' work in Year 2.
14. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. However, teaching was good in four of the 17 lessons observed in this age group; an art and design lesson, two history lessons and a music lesson. In these lessons, the teachers' obvious enthusiasm, good subject knowledge and overall good management of time and behaviour kept pupils fully engaged at all times. They clearly enjoyed the challenges of how to continue a watercolour which had dried, made history come alive as they dressed in Tudor costumes, learned how to differentiate between different sources of evidence and discovered how well they could sing in two parts.
15. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed during the inspection, where the teacher did not manage pupils' behaviour well enough in a physical education lesson. Nevertheless, evidence from the pupils' books and from discussions with them leads to the judgement that teaching is overall unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' work is not well matched to their levels of capability and they do not achieve well enough over time, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and also in ICT. Too often in English, mathematics and science, all pupils do the same work and, until January of this year, their progress was not being well enough tracked to determine how well they were doing or what they needed to do to improve. The recently developed records show clearly that achievement declines considerably in Years 3 and 4 and does not begin to pick up again until Year 5. Too many pupils do not make the expected gains in learning each year, and too often their learning remains static for too long. This lack of continuity in learning is the major contributor to the decline in standards seen in Year 6 in recent years and is the direct outcome of a lack of rigour in

assessment and marking, and the unsatisfactory use of the information in planning. Pupils are given too few opportunities to improve their learning through using computers and this also prevents them from consolidating and extending their ICT skills through other subjects.

16. Planning does not provide a secure scaffold for learning or a record of what has been covered, and how well, in Years 3 to 6. Whilst teachers prepared reasonably detailed plans for the inspection week, these were variable in quality and their files showed that they do not plan in detail at other times. Planning rarely shows what different groups of pupils are expected to learn so that they can achieve to the best of their capability and this inhibits their learning. There was no evidence of planning having been evaluated so that prior learning could be built upon or gaps in learning identified and worked on. Discussions with senior staff show that these weaknesses have been recognised. A great deal of hard work has gone into planning for mathematics and for writing, and the basic skills in mathematics are now being satisfactorily promoted in other subjects. However, the teachers' heavy reliance on worksheets stops pupils from consolidating and extending their writing skills in other subjects, despite writing being a priority in the school development plan and improving writing being identified in the teachers' performance management targets.
17. In all classes, teachers share the learning objectives for each lesson with the pupils but they do not then check often enough with the pupils whether they are working towards or achieving those objectives. The use of WALT (we are learning today) and WILF (what I am looking for), displayed clearly in most classes, provides a good structure for this. However, again, after the initial input, the reference made to these is minimal in most cases. Marking is very variable and rarely shows pupils how to improve their work or reach the targets that have been set for them, and pupils are not sufficiently involved in any of this. As a result, they are not always sure about what to do, or their work is too easy or too difficult, and this leads to the lack of maturity and unacceptable behaviour observed amongst a minority of older pupils. Homework is variable in quality, regularity and consistency in Years 3 to 6, and overall unsatisfactory.
18. Support staff and teaching assistants make a good contribution to the progress that pupils with special educational needs make towards the targets in their individual education plans. However, in class, teachers do not always use the teaching assistants effectively enough in whole-class sessions and opportunities are lost to help a wider group of pupils take a more active part in whole-class discussions and evaluations of learning.

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets statutory requirements. Opportunities for enrichment are also satisfactory, as are the accommodation and resources to support teaching and learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good, giving the children a good start to school life.
- Curricular planning does not cater well enough for the specific needs of different groups of pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- The overall personal and academic achievement of pupils in Year 6 does not prepare them sufficiently for the next stage of their education.
- Support staff are not always deployed effectively to support pupils' learning.

- Good quality displays throughout the school create an attractive learning environment.

Commentary

19. The curriculum for children in the Foundation stage is good. It is clearly linked to national guidelines with a range of varied activities that successfully develop the children's skills in all six areas of learning. As a result, the children achieve well and are well prepared for their work in Year 1. The breadth of curricular opportunities throughout the rest of the school is satisfactory. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and a range of appropriate opportunities are presented to pupils so that they may consolidate their speaking, listening, reading and mathematical skills in other subjects. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and ICT skills across the curriculum are limited. Teachers use national guidelines to support curricular planning but these have not been adapted well enough to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Whole-school planning does not provide enough guidance on how pupils' skills are to be systematically developed and, in Years 3 to 6, it does not make sufficient use of assessment information or tracking systems to ensure that pupils' learning is continuous throughout the school. The curriculum is constantly reviewed to ensure that pupils in the mixed-age classes do not repeat the same work unnecessarily.
20. Although the school gives appropriate attention to promoting equality of opportunity, it is not totally successful in doing so. This is because the work planned for different groups of pupils, especially the more able, does not always ensure that they are working to the best of their capability. Parents, too, felt that more-able pupils are sometimes overlooked. Some girls in Year 6 have limited opportunities to participate fully in all parts of some lessons because of the dominance of a significant number of boys, and this impedes their learning. The overall personal and academic development of pupils in Year 6 does not prepare them sufficiently for their next stage of their education. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met; pupils have individual education plans with clear, measurable targets that are regularly reviewed. Teachers and support staff help the pupils to make good progress towards their targets. However, the targets in the individual education plans for pupils with statements of special education need do not always include all of the objectives laid down in the statement. For example, the plans do not have personal development targets in some cases where the annual reviews of the statements show clearly that all objectives still apply. The current practice of withdrawing pupils in Year 5 from science and history in alternate weeks for additional work in mathematics means that these pupils miss valuable learning in these subjects. This particularly affects their learning in science as they often miss important parts of scientific investigations. The acting headteacher has plans to address this at the end of this school year.
21. There is a satisfactory programme of work, personal, social and health education, which includes teaching pupils about racial equality and the dangers of drug and substance abuse. The sex and relationships policy has recently been reviewed and the school has received a Healthy Schools Award. Curricular provision is suitably enriched by a range of visits, visitors and learning opportunities both during and outside the normal school day. Pupils enjoy the sporting activities provided through after-school clubs, competitions with other schools and working with visiting coaches to develop their skills. There is a choir and music club and pupils participate in performances both in and away from school. These activities, together with day and residential visits, make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and to their overall progress and achievement.

22. There are adequate numbers of teachers and support staff to teach the whole curriculum and, overall, staff are appropriately deployed. Indoor accommodation is satisfactory. It is bright, clean and well maintained and effectively enhanced by good displays of pupils' work, which celebrate their achievement and create an attractive learning environment. Outdoor accommodation is spacious and used well to develop pupils' physical skills. However, the outdoor area in the Foundation Stage is not used effectively to promote children's learning across the Foundation Stage curriculum. Resources overall are satisfactory, although resources for ICT are not used well enough on a regular basis to support teaching and learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school pays good attention to the care, welfare and safety of the pupils. However, academic support and guidance are unsatisfactory due to weakness in assessment and monitoring. Pupils are not yet adequately consulted on their views and opinions.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection is secure and training has been given to all staff.
- Health and safety procedures are good and the school seeks to promote a healthy lifestyle.
- Children in the Foundation Stage are very well guided and supported, but personal and academic support and guidance is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils are not adequately consulted on their views and opinions.

Commentary

23. The school takes good care of its pupils and all health and safety matters are addressed well. Child protection arrangements and training have been a priority for the acting headteacher and are fully in place. The school provides nourishing meals cooked on site and has achieved the Healthy Schools Award.
24. Pupils' opinions are not sought systematically. This is borne out by the fact that several pupils stated that they do not feel their views are taken into account and, should they have any ideas about how to improve their provision, there is no mechanism by which they might convey these to their teachers, the school management or the governors. The school plans to set up a school council but is delaying this unnecessarily.
25. Behaviour in some classes is a worry for some parents and pupils. Both groups feel learning and personal development is too often interrupted by others. In reality, behaviour is very well managed in the Foundation Stage, and well managed in Years 1 and 2. Children in the Foundation Stage in particular are guided well academically and socially. In the rest of the school, most pupils say they have an adult they could turn to, and value the recently instituted rewards as incentives to improving attitudes and behaviour. However, older pupils displaying less than satisfactory attitudes and behaviour are sometimes less well managed.
26. Pupils with special educational needs are adequately supported and satisfactory links with external agencies contribute to this. The provision of support, advice and guidance is limited for other pupils, however, by the shortcomings in the monitoring systems in the school, including the inadequate use of assessment information in planning. Pupils are not well enough guided academically to ensure that they make the progress of which they are capable.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory, as are its links with other schools and colleges and with the local community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents feel welcome in school; they are supportive of it and of their children's education.
- They are given little information about the curriculum and there is little guidance available about homework and how to help.

Commentary

27. Parents are supportive of the school and their children's education. Most feel that their children are happy and make progress, though they have some reservations about the quality of information available and about the behaviour of some pupils. The information given to parents about children's work and progress is unsatisfactory because curriculum details are scant and reports lack precision about how well pupils are achieving according to the national expectations for their age and ability. There are few opportunities for parents to participate in their children's education as there has been little training available for them and guidance about how to help with homework is inadequate. The recently instituted newsletter is a welcome addition to the school's information to parents, and parents particularly appreciate the way the acting headteacher has made informal links with them in the playground. They feel the school is now approachable and that they would be happy to come in if any problems arose. The parents of the youngest children are particularly pleased with the way they are helped to settle into school life and start to learn.
28. The school has satisfactory links with the local community, including other education institutions. There are some sporting links with neighbouring primary schools; partnerships with local churches are satisfactory, as is the school's liaison with the three high schools to which most pupils transfer. The parents of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, are appropriately involved in the reviews of their children's progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the acting headteacher is good. Governance is satisfactory and all statutory procedures are met. The leadership of key staff is unsatisfactory. Management is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher's good leadership, clear vision and determination to improve the school, have quickly gained the support of staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- The governors are committed to the school, and are beginning to help shape its direction.
- The acting deputy supports the headteacher well. However, the leadership of key staff is unsatisfactory overall. Co-ordinators do not lead their subjects effectively.

Commentary

29. The acting headteacher took up his post in January and very quickly identified the major areas for improvement, particularly standards and achievement in Years 3 to 6. His clear vision, combined with a sensitive and skilled approach in a potentially difficult

situation, has gained strong support and commitment from the staff and governors, parents and pupils. He has introduced good systems and initiatives to improve the way pupils' progress is assessed and tracked, to ensure they make the progress of which they are capable and to improve their behaviour in and out of the classroom. However, the systems are new and have not yet had the time to make their potentially positive impact on the work of the school. The acting deputy headteacher has had a key role in these developments and is supporting the acting headteacher well. However, whilst the staff in Years 3 to 6 say they are strongly committed to the new initiatives, they have not yet developed the skills needed to understand and carry out their part in leading the school forward and contributing to school improvement.

30. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed, and the leadership and management of special educational needs provision are satisfactory. Whilst other co-ordinators are beginning to look at their subjects in depth, they are not sufficiently aware of standards and achievement across the school to enable them to plan properly for future improvement. Where they are, as in mathematics, the good advice, support and guidance given to staff has not been heeded fully in Years 3 to 6, and no action has so far been taken to make sure that teachers do what is expected of them in order to raise pupils' achievement. A major problem in this age group is that the staff are not yet working together as a team to build on the good work done up to Year 2, to ensure the pupils' continuous progress through Years 3 to 6. In addition, the systems and procedures to check that they are doing so are not yet rigorous enough to bring about the necessary improvement in overall provision.
31. Governance is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met. The acting headteacher is providing the governors with a wide range of knowledge and information which is enabling them to carry out their role more effectively. Until recently they did not have this information and although they questioned the decline in standards, received few explanations as to the reasons. The governors are well led and are now eager to contribute to the future development of the school. They receive regular reports on the progress of the school development plan and are becoming increasingly confident to challenge the acting headteacher and ask meaningful questions. Reports from co-ordinators and link governors provide up-to-date information. Regular committee meetings are well documented. The finance and staffing committee have confidently faced hard decisions and governors carefully follow the principles of best value when making decisions about spending.
32. The management of the school is satisfactory. All statutory systems are in place, the school runs smoothly from day to day and the budget is managed efficiently. All roles and responsibilities are carried out, but job descriptions are not yet in place for all staff. The acting headteacher has refined the school development plan and there is now a strong focus on raising standards through better assessment systems and improving pupils' writing. He also gives the governors regular progress reports as to how well the initiatives are working. The development plan is now a useful tool, but the monitoring of teaching and learning is at an early stage. Monitoring carried out by the acting headteacher and subject co-ordinators has not yet helped to raise achievement in Years 3 to 6. Performance management targets and professional development for staff are now appropriately linked to priorities in the school development plan but have yet to prove adequate in raising standards.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
----------------------------	--------------

Total income	652,340
Total expenditure	669,118
Expenditure per pupil	2,323

Balance from previous year	102,396
Balance carried forward to the next year	85,618

33. The budget is managed efficiently and monitored each month by the governors finance committee. The surplus in the school's budget is being used wisely to retain staffing and provide additional equipment to support the promotion of good behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes. It is also being used appropriately to extend resources for, and the quality of, teaching and learning overall. Children enter the school with levels of attainment similar to those expected for their age. However, by Year 6, standards are below the national average, and pupils do not achieve as well as they could in relation to their capabilities. Overall, there has not been enough improvement since the previous inspection and the school, though improving, is currently not giving satisfactory value for money.

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. Most children start school with average levels of attainment. Achievement is good and the great majority of children are well on the way at least to reach the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Most children are likely to exceed them in personal, social and emotional development. The quality of teaching is good and all adults work effectively as a team, with a good understanding of how children of this age learn. Lessons are planned well so that children learn through educational play that is fun and purposeful. Curricular planning is good and children have a wide range of interesting and relevant activities, which are well matched to their learning needs. These are carefully balanced between activities that children choose for themselves and those that are directed by adults. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. Assessment procedures are good, enabling children's progress to be carefully tracked. Induction procedures are good and they help children to settle quickly into everyday routines in school. Effective links have been made with parents. The outside secure area is too small and it is not used well enough to promote children's learning through outdoor activity. Overall, however, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good. Adults set high expectations for children's work and behaviour and, as a result, children achieve very well.
- Children flourish because the organisation of their learning develops their independence, confidence and self-esteem.
- There is insufficient use of the outdoor areas to develop children's social skills.

Commentary

34. Most children are on course to reach, and a significant minority to exceed, the early learning goals in this area of learning. Children relate well to adults and other children, listen carefully to them and show good levels of confidence in the way that they act socially. Adults are very good role models for the children. They build up the children's confidence well, successfully encouraging them to make decisions and take responsibility for their actions. Children respond very positively to the care they are shown. They behave very well, enjoy their work and develop good levels of self-esteem. They work well together in pairs and small groups. Social and emotional development is fostered very well because the classrooms are organised effectively so that the children know where everything is and how it should be looked after. Snack times are used well to develop children's social skills. However, there are missed opportunities to develop these skills further because of the small size and limited use of the outdoor learning area.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good; children achieve well and most are well on the way to reaching the early learning goal in this area of learning.
- Speaking and listening skills are effectively fostered in all areas of learning.
- Classrooms lack interesting reading and writing areas for children to use independently of adults.

Commentary

35. The well-planned opportunities for children to talk about their experiences and what they are doing results in their making good progress in speaking and listening. Adults use questioning well to involve all children in discussions and successfully encourage them to communicate their ideas and opinions. The teaching assistant plays an important role in this, for example working with children in a role-play session on acting out and talking about how jungle animals move. Children's reading skills are effectively developed in the shared reading sessions and resources are used well to develop children's reading skills. Good emphasis is placed on developing phonic skills. This was evident as they recognised a good range of letters and helped the teacher to list words that included 'in'. Some children accurately identified and used initial letter sounds in a computer program. There are good opportunities for children to write for different purposes and they make good progress in writing. The staff have high expectations of children's performance and the children respond positively by taking care and presenting their work neatly. However, computers and books are not displayed well in either classroom. There are no dedicated areas to foster an enjoyment of reading, or for children to choose to initiate their own independent writing activities.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because teaching is good and mathematics is effectively integrated into many activities.
- There are times when groups working independently require more intervention by adults.
- Children's learning is further developed through the effective use of ICT.

Commentary

36. Children achieve well in response to the good teaching and learning and most are on course at least to reach the goals expected for the end of the Reception Year. Mathematical activities are fun and well integrated into classroom games and educational play is used well to reinforce what is learned in mathematics sessions. Lessons are planned carefully to develop children's basic skills and successfully encourage children to use the correct mathematical vocabulary. Resources are used well to provide practical activities to help pupils solve problems, for example when children were using a variety of two-dimensional shapes to develop their understanding of how the shapes could be sorted according to different criteria. Activities are often linked to real-life situations so children successfully use their own experiences to support their learning. Adults work well together so that children have a high degree of direct teaching. This ensures that the children's individual needs are met effectively.

There are times, however, when children working independently are not given sufficient support to help them complete their tasks. Children show much enjoyment in their activities, which makes a positive contribution to their progress. Children have good opportunities to use computers for mathematical games, and these are developing their confidence and mental agility. Children also develop good spatial awareness as they use a floor robot and begin to estimate and plot the distances to different destinations.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and a practical and interesting curriculum help children to achieve well.
- The limitations of the outside area hinder outdoor learning.
- Children's very positive attitudes are beneficial to their learning.

Commentary

37. The majority of children are well on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of their Reception Year. Activities are linked well to children's own experiences, and this adds interest to and stimulates their learning. This was evident when they dressed their teddies in different clothes for different types of weather. The local area is used effectively to develop children's early geographical skills. Their good quality drawings of buildings in the neighbourhood show that they have absorbed much detail about their local environment. They are effectively taught about the wider world, away from home and school, and their part in it. When using computers, most children control the mouse well and can follow basic on-screen prompts. A range of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum by providing further good quality learning opportunities. The outside secure area is too small and does not effectively promote outdoor learning. Nevertheless, the children show a great deal of interest and enjoyment in their activities and this makes a positive contribution to their progress and overall achievement.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and therefore children achieve well.
- Children respond very well to the interesting activities provided for them and make good progress when handling small equipment.
- Outside areas are not beneficial to children's physical, social and imaginative development.

Commentary

38. Most children are in line to reach the early learning goals in this area of learning. They develop good manipulative skills through the many opportunities they have to cut, colour, thread objects and make things. They develop good control and co-ordination through physical activity sessions. Their sense of space and awareness of others is developing well and they are effectively taught how to use the hall floor area safely. Adults demonstrate correct techniques well, for example throwing and catching, and as a result children made good progress in these skills. They really enjoy their practical activities and work hard to improve. Resources are good and allow children to take part in a variety of enjoyable, practical activities to which they respond very well. However, the outdoor area is small and there is a limited range of outdoor play resources to develop children's physical and imaginative wellbeing.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good; children achieve well and are on course at least to meet the early learning goals in this area of learning.
- Adults support children well in role-play activities and there is good emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills.
- Some resources are not readily available for children to use.

Commentary

39. Children are given good opportunities to use a variety of resources to develop their skills in handling and using different materials. Consequently, they develop a broad range of skills, using creative materials and tools. This is shown in the good quality chalk drawings they have created after observing a variety of fruit. The good progress they make is also a result of the timely advice and encouragement they receive from teachers and their assistants. However, some resources, such as paints, are not readily available to enable children to choose for themselves the materials they need. Classrooms are organised well for children to dress up and use their imagination through role-play. This was seen in the areas set up as a travel agent's and 'Percy's Park'. Adults join in these activities to effectively develop children's creative talents and their speaking and listening skills. Teachers' planning shows that musical activities are also given due attention.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the national expectation in speaking and reading throughout the school, and in writing in Year 2.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 because they are taught well and have good attitudes to learning.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory overall by Year 6. Standards have declined in Year 6 since 2001 and the school has only recently taken action to remedy the situation.
- Teachers in Years 3 to 6 do not make enough use of assessment information to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils.

Commentary

40. Throughout the school, pupils speak clearly and confidently. They use a wide range of vocabulary to articulate their thoughts and ideas. For example, pupils in Year 5 suggested 'succulent' and 'exquisite' for advertising slogans and Year 6 pupils talked vividly about school visits. Pupils talk politely to adults and support their arguments with well-considered reasons. Unfortunately, these skills are not always apparent in their written work. Many pupils in Year 6 work slowly and find it hard to express their ideas in writing. Pupils listen to each other and to adults considerately during English lessons.
41. Reading skills are above the national expectation for pupils' ages in all classes and support pupils' work across the curriculum. Younger pupils show a good knowledge of letter sounds, and confidently blend two or more letters when working out how to read new words. Reading skills are built up well throughout Years 1 and 2 and therefore most pupils read confidently and fluently, with expression and good regard for punctuation. In Year 2, the majority read at levels above those expected for their age. Pupils continue to develop and use their reading skills well in Years 3 to 6 and they use the full range of techniques to tackle unknown words. By the time they leave the school, the great majority are fluent readers. However, many have not fully acquired the skills of skimming and scanning a text to find facts quickly when looking for information and this sometimes slows their work rate.
42. The analysis of pupils' work and the decline in standards show clearly that writing is a major area for improvement, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and the school has recently introduced a range of initiatives and targets to help pupils improve their writing. Staff have worked hard to create bright displays of writing prompts, frameworks and ideas in all classes. Many pupils have reminders on their desks but they do not always use these prompts in their work, and teachers do not draw their attention to them regularly enough. Pupils' targets are often framed in adult language that the pupils do not fully understand. Displays of objectives for each lesson are intended to help pupils know what they are expected to learn and remind them of what they have covered. Again, these are not always used to support learning during lessons, and their impact is lost. Standards in spelling vary. Younger pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds well. They are encouraged to try to write words by themselves, and many have skills above those expected by the end of Year 2. Most older pupils spell accurately but they do not readily use dictionaries when unsure how to spell a word or find the meaning of it.
43. A joined handwriting style, taught consistently throughout the school, ensures pupils' writing is clear, neat and well formed and they present their work well. In Year 2, most pupils write a meaningful story, use punctuation correctly and know when to use speech marks, adjectives and some alliteration to add interest. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not make enough progress in extending these skills or in using their wide vocabulary. Work is not always completed, suggesting that pupils are not able to form and express ideas quickly enough. Apart from the more able, pupils do not introduce the more complex and varied sentence structures they need to use to reach higher standards. Too many activities are based on completing worksheets which do not help pupils use or extend their writing skills, and there are too few opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills through homework activities.
44. Although the teaching observed during the inspection was overall satisfactory, the quality of teaching over time is unsatisfactory. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, and often very good in Year 2, leading to above average standards. Here, learning is based

on well-planned activities, the good use of assessment information and very good relationships between teacher and pupils. As a result, pupils are eager to learn and they achieve well. The new assessment systems are not yet fully effective throughout the school. Teachers do not make enough use of assessment information or evaluate their lessons or to determine what the pupils need to do next. They do not always plan work that matches the needs of pupils of different abilities, so many older pupils in particular fail to build on the good progress they made by Year 2. Time is not always used well in lessons, and often teachers talk too much, leaving pupils too little time to do their work. This makes pupils restless and they lose interest. In some year groups, boys have been allowed to dominate. The girls are often passive and do not achieve as well as the boys. Teaching assistants make a useful contribution in lessons, working with groups or individuals and they help pupils with special educational needs to make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. In the past two years, pupils in Year 6 have had a series of supply teachers as a result of staff illness and this has considerably disrupted their learning and affected their behaviour and attitudes.

45. The leadership and management of English are unsatisfactory. The decline in standards has not, until recently, been tackled rigorously enough, and the monitoring of teaching and learning has not been effective. The curriculum for English is fully covered. Sufficient resources for learning include a well-stocked library, which pupils use on a regular basis. The co-ordinator has organised training for the staff and has worked hard in the recent drive for improvement. However, standards have been allowed to decline and the quality of teaching is not as good as it was at the previous inspection. Overall improvement since that time is unsatisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. Pupils use their reading skills well in all subjects, particularly when gathering information, and pupils read and follow links on the Internet successfully. Few examples of ICT in English were seen, but when it is used pupils in Years 5 and 6 use different fonts and print colours to add impact to their writing. Opportunities for writing are appropriately taken in history, religious education and science. However, the frequent use of worksheets in many subjects limits the opportunities for pupils to use and extend their writing skills and this hinders the overall drive to improve writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2. Standards are above the national expectation in Year 2.
- Achievement overall is unsatisfactory. Standards are below the national expectation in Year 6 and pupils do not achieve well enough in Years 3 to 6.
- The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall, although it is good in Years 1 and 2.
- The use of ICT to support teaching and learning is limited.
- Unsatisfactory planning and the inadequate use of assessment information prevents pupils achieving to the best of their ability.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

47. Standards have improved in Year 2 since the previous inspection but they have declined in Year 6 because pupils' learning has not been well enough assessed and teachers' planning has not taken enough account of pupils' prior learning. As a result, work is not well enough matched to the pupils' different levels of capability and they do not achieve as well as they can in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the numeracy targets in their individual education plans, but higher attaining pupils are not always presented with the challenges they need to help them make the faster progress of which they are capable. Curricular planning follows national guidelines and all aspects of the subject are adequately covered. However, for pupils in Years 3 to 6 the guidelines are not adapted well enough to ensure that pupils are working to the best of their capabilities. This was seen in a mixed-age class of Year 5 and 6 pupils working on reflective symmetry, where the higher attaining pupils were not moved on quickly enough to more challenging work. Throughout the school good emphasis is placed on the teaching of basic number skills, but opportunities to apply these to problem-solving activities are inconsistent in Years 3 to 6 and a significant number of pupils have difficulty with this aspect of mathematics.
48. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. However, teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 because activities are well matched to the pupils' individual needs. Here, teachers build well on pupils' previous learning and their clear explanations and effective demonstrations ensure that all pupils see and understand different methods of calculation. For example, pupils in Year 2 accurately complete number sentences, using symbols for an unknown number to show that subtraction facts are a reversal of addition facts. The teacher successfully adapted her questioning during the whole-class session to match the abilities of all pupils. This, together with the good support given during independent activities, ensured that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, were fully included in all parts of the lesson. The well-organised resources and the teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work rate resulted in good pace and productivity in learning.
49. Where teaching is less successful, activities lack challenge, particularly for higher attaining pupils, and teaching assistants are not used well enough during all parts of lessons to support pupils' learning. The over-reliance on the use of worksheets in some classes limits pupils' opportunities to investigate and record their work independently. This also means that teachers are unable to check where pupils are having difficulties or to track their progress over time because the worksheets are not filed systematically and they are not marked effectively. This hinders pupils' progress. Throughout the school most pupils show good attitudes to their work, which is neatly presented, and they behave well. However, opportunities for some girls in Year 6 to participate fully in all parts of lessons are limited by the dominance of a significant number of boys and this impedes the girls' learning. The use of homework to consolidate and extend mathematical learning is unsatisfactory. In the past two years, pupils in Year 6 have had a series of supply teachers as a result of staff illness and this has considerably disrupted their learning and affected their behaviour and attitudes.
50. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The subject leader is knowledgeable, gives good support to colleagues and has worked very hard to develop the knowledge and expertise of all staff. She has analysed all test and assessment results thoroughly, identified strengths and weaknesses in the subject and introduced appropriate ways to track pupils' progress. However, the teamwork, monitoring and evaluation required to ensure that the information gathered is used effectively throughout the school are not in place. Teachers' written marking does not help pupils identify how well they have

achieved or what they need to do to improve. Monitoring, assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress are not rigorous enough, though a good start has been made on improving this under the acting headteacher. Resources are satisfactory and classroom displays effectively support learning. However, ICT is not used well enough to support teaching and learning in mathematics. Overall improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory because of the decline in standards and the pupils' unsatisfactory achievement in Years 3 to 6.

Mathematics across the curriculum

51. Pupils use and consolidate their mathematical skills satisfactorily in other subjects. For example, they record and interpret data in science, explore shape in art and design and use measuring skills when making different artefacts in design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and standards in Year 2 are above the national expectation.
- Achievement is unsatisfactory, and standards are below the national expectation in Year 6.
- The basic skills of scientific investigation are not taught well enough and are not given enough time or attention.
- The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 but unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

52. Standards in Year 6 have declined since the previous inspection and are currently below the national expectation. They are above the national expectation in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in science, but boys perform and achieve better than girls. Pupils achieve well up to Year 2 but achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6, especially in the important basic skills of carrying out scientific investigations.
53. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress because teachers provide them with well-structured practical investigations that rouse their curiosity, engage and challenge them, and successfully encourage them to work together in pairs and small groups. Lessons are planned well, building on previous work and pupils therefore use their prior scientific knowledge and understanding to support their new learning. Work is well matched to the pupils' different levels of capability, as was observed in a lesson for pupils in Year 2 on learning about the conditions needed for the healthy growth of plants. As a result, all pupils in this age group make good progress in understanding how to set up a fair test to see if their predictions were correct.
54. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not taught well enough. The important basic skills of making close observations, taking careful measurements, recording findings in different ways or considering what these findings tell them are not given adequate time or attention. Consequently, pupils know the reasons why a test needs to be fair but are limited in their ability to devise one and carry it out independently of the teacher. The conclusions

to their experiments are mainly descriptions of what they have done rather than evaluations of what they have found out, based on prior scientific knowledge and understanding. They lack appropriate skills in interpreting data and identifying patterns in their findings. In most lessons, all pupils are provided with the same work, with little thought given to planning for their individual learning needs or capabilities. This results in a lack of appropriate challenge especially for higher attaining pupils. Teachers tend to let boys dominate lessons. Their immature behaviour and attitudes, especially in Years 5 and 6, stems from their work not being interesting or challenging enough and this affects the learning of all other pupils, especially the girls. Marking is not used effectively enough as a means of suggesting ways in which pupils could improve their work. In one class, pupils' work is rarely marked which shows a lack of value of their efforts. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning. Scientific equipment and resources are handled with care and pupils are aware of the need for safety when carrying out their experiments but they do not have enough opportunities to do this independently of their teachers. The current practice of withdrawing pupils in Year 5 from science in alternate weeks for additional work in mathematics affects their learning as they often miss important parts of scientific investigations. The acting headteacher has plans to address this at the end of this school year.

55. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. In recent years, the co-ordinator has not had sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and does not have a clear view of standards or the quality of provision in science throughout the school. There have been some improvements in overall curricular planning, for example the adjustments made to suit the needs of mixed-age classes to avoid the duplication of work. These changes have not been in place long enough to determine whether they are having the desired impact of improving standards and pupils' achievement. Assessment information is not used effectively to track pupils' progress or set targets for improvement. Consequently, pupils tend to be unsure of how they can improve their performance. There has been unsatisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is unsatisfactory and standards in Year 6 are below the national expectation.
- The overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory and resources are not used to the full.
- Pupils have limited experience of too many areas of ICT, and of using ICT as a tool for learning.
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory but the use of them in planning is unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

56. Two full ICT lessons were observed and a third was sampled. The quality of teaching was at least satisfactory in all of them. However, teaching over time is unsatisfactory and pupils have not achieved well enough by Year 6. Until relatively recently, the school did not have enough computers to allow all pupils to have regular, 'hands-on'

experiences of ICT. Although this deficiency has been addressed, the equipment is not yet used frequently enough in ICT lessons or in other subjects and this continues to restrict pupils' progress.

57. Excitement and enjoyment were evident in a good Year 2 lesson where, using her own expertise well, the teacher gave pupils the opportunity to explore a new program. They concentrated hard, worked well together and successfully found different ways to use shape and colour tools to produce patterns and pictures on the laptop computers. The teacher quickly spotted that a few pupils were further ahead than the others, and moved them onto creating a complete picture using the program. Similar good practice was observed in a Year 5 lesson on spreadsheets. Here, pupils capable of doing so were provided with a range of suitable extension work requiring them to apply their newly developed understanding of how to use formulae within a spreadsheet to solve practical money problems. In another lesson, however, valuable ICT learning opportunities were lost because pupils did not have direct and immediate access to computers to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of a data-handling program.
58. Standards are below the national expectation in Year 6 and achievement is unsatisfactory, largely because pupils have very limited experience of some aspects of ICT. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory. Gaps in pupils' learning are to do with the use of email, control technology and their ability, for example, to import pictures into documents and text boxes. This was very evident in discussions with Year 6 pupils from one of the mixed Year 5 and 6 classes, at the computers. Although they all have their own disks, the work on them is mostly word processing, at which they are relatively competent. Many pupils have other skills, including the use of email, gained from using computers at home, and were looking forward to using desktop-publishing skills to create newspaper articles. An analysis of planning in the other mixed Year 5 and 6 class shows that all aspects of ICT are covered by the time pupils leave the school. However, several of these, including control technology and multimedia work, are visited for the first time in Year 6, too late for pupils to gain maximum benefit from their learning.
59. The subject is not well enough led and managed. The co-ordinator has recently had some time to work alongside colleagues to improve their expertise but this has as yet had little impact on pupils' overall achievement. A major step forward is the recent introduction of the local authority scheme, including its assessment procedures. In most classes, pupils' attainment is satisfactorily recorded against National Curriculum levels and there was a good example in the Year 1 class of the pupils' own involvement in assessing their learning by adding comments to the assessment sheets. The information gained from these procedures is not used in planning, however, and pupils' ICT folders indicate that, on the whole, all do the same work regardless of their different levels of capability.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. Some appropriate use of ICT for research was observed in history and geography, and pupils use word processing competently in some of their English work. Overall, however, computers in classrooms are under-utilised and the laptops remain stored away except for very specific ICT lessons. The school has not yet got to grips with encouraging pupils to use the computers as natural tools for learning across the curriculum. Until recently, computers have not been used effectively at whole-school level either to facilitate, for example, the recording and tracking of pupils' progress, or

teachers' planning. The acting headteacher has acted quickly to address this situation, introducing the use of spreadsheets to track progress ahead of setting up an established program for this purpose.

HUMANITIES

Geography was sampled in this inspection. Two history lessons and two religious education lessons were observed. Evidence for all three subjects was gathered from discussions with pupils and teachers, and the inspection of teachers' planning and pupils' work. In all three subjects, standards and provision are as they were at the last inspection.

61. In **geography**, pupils' work and discussions with them show that standards are in line with those expected nationally, and the curriculum is fully covered. Good displays add to pupils' knowledge, for example the three-dimensional models of hills with contours. Visits are used well to enrich the curriculum and give pupils first-hand experience of fieldwork. The coastal path provides a rich source for local studies and is used effectively to develop the pupils' good knowledge of the locality using maps of the area and further afield. However, too much work is based on completing worksheets and this hinders the pupils' ability to carry out geographical enquiries and develop their geographical skills to the full. There are no secure assessment systems in geography and the co-ordinator has a limited overview of standards and provision, making leadership and management unsatisfactory overall.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is covered well.
- A good range of visits enriches pupils' knowledge and experiences.
- Pupils are not aware of primary and secondary sources of information.

Commentary

62. Two history lessons were observed, both in the Year 3 to 6 age range. Teaching was good in both, standards were as expected nationally for pupils' ages and pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. Costumes, period music and drama effectively brought the Tudor period to life for pupils in Year 4 and they enjoyed presenting their enactment to the whole school. Pupils in Year 5 were intrigued by a video of the teacher's mother sharing her memories of evacuees during the Second World War. This prompted research using the Internet, books and photographs to discover what life was like for the young evacuees. A good range of visits enhance and enrich pupils' knowledge. For example, they study windmills on the coastal path, and conditions in Victorian times at the Ironbridge heritage site during a residential visit. These visits make a useful contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.
63. There was insufficient evidence to form a secure judgement on teaching, standards and achievement in Year 2. In Year 6, standards are in line with those expected nationally, as they were at the last inspection. Evidence in pupils' books and from the lively displays around the school shows full coverage of the curriculum. Discussions with pupils showed that they enjoy history lessons and have a good recall of what they have learned during their time in school. However, in all age groups, too much of the

work in pupils' books relies on the completion of worksheets. This limits opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative skills, find things out for themselves, and record their findings in different ways. They do not yet recognise that primary sources of evidence are more reliable than secondary sources which may be based on opinion rather than fact. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory as there is little awareness of standards throughout the school, and assessment systems are underdeveloped.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' written marking gives little guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.
- The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Good resources, visits and visitors effectively enhance pupils' learning.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and ICT skills to support their learning.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

64. Teaching was satisfactory in one of the lessons observed and good in the other. An analysis of pupils' work and discussions with them, show that pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus, that their achievement is satisfactory as is the overall quality of teaching in religious education.
65. Teachers use the locally agreed scheme of work satisfactorily to plan an appropriate range of topics that ensures pupils' learning is continuous throughout the school. Work is often linked to the curriculum for personal, social and health education. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 used their work on the Creation story to discuss current environmental issues and develop an understanding of the responsibilities of citizenship. All pupils reflect well on their personal feelings and experiences when considering values such as care, forgiveness and making choices. Through their study of different religions, pupils show good levels of respect for the values and beliefs of others. Pupils in Year 6 talk knowledgeably about their work, showing a secure understanding of the special occasions and different customs and traditions within the major world faiths. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils in Year 2 to record their ideas and findings in writing. By Year 6, follow-up activities, consisting mainly of copied work and worksheets, lack challenge especially for the more-able pupils and opportunities are missed for them to extend their literacy skills. As a result these pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Throughout the school opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills to record their work and to research information are limited.
66. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The subject leader has attended meetings and courses to develop her own expertise and has done some team teaching to support colleagues. However, systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are not yet rigorous enough and there are no formal assessment procedures in place for checking on pupils' achievement or recording their progress as they move through the school. Teachers' written marking does not clearly identify what pupils have done well or what they need to do to improve. These are issues that the subject leader

has identified for future development. Resources are good and assemblies, visits, visitors and displays around the school satisfactorily enhance pupils' learning. Overall the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Three lessons were observed in art and design, and that subject is reported in full. Design and technology, music and physical education were sampled. One design and technology lesson, one music lesson and one physical education lesson were observed and an additional lesson was sampled in each subject. Further evidence was obtained in design and technology from talking to pupils and teachers, and sampling pupils' work and teachers' planning. There is insufficient evidence in music or physical education to make overall judgements about standards and achievement. The curriculum for each subject is fully covered but there is no monitoring of teaching and learning in any of them. Although procedures have been put into place to determine pupils' attainment against National Curriculum levels, these are at a very early stage and assessment and its use in planning are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinators do not have a secure overview of standards and provision in their subjects and, overall, leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

67. **Design and technology** work on display, discussions with pupils, and observations of them at work all show that pupils now have a satisfactory understanding of the whole design process and that standards in Year 6 are at the national expectation. Pupils plan their designs appropriately and evaluate their work accurately in relation to those designs, giving clear explanations for any changes they make. Pupils are given good opportunities to produce large- and small-scale models and artefacts using a full range of materials, tools and techniques. However, they do not yet use ICT to aid their planning. There has been satisfactory improvement in design and technology since the last inspection.
68. The **music** curriculum is covered satisfactorily through the use of a commercial scheme. Pupils sing well in assemblies. Their singing is tuneful and enthusiastic and they successfully maintain a good volume. They keep together well, accompanied by good performances from the extra-curricular music group. In the lesson observed, pupils in Year 5 sang well as they learned a new song. After learning the song using a taped accompaniment, they sang well in two parts unaccompanied, maintaining their parts very well, rising to and thoroughly enjoying the added challenge this created.
69. **Physical education** was sampled and therefore no judgements are made about provision, standards or the quality of teaching and learning as only one full and one part lesson were observed. However, evidence shows that the full range of physical activities are developed throughout the year and most pupils reach the required standard in swimming by Year 6. Pupils enjoy their work and in the lessons seen clearly understood the need for warm-up exercises. They developed ball skills satisfactorily, although some inappropriate behaviour resulted in pupils not achieving as well as they could. After-school clubs, sports competitions and visits from specialist coaches further enhance provision. This, together with the annual residential visits for older pupils, contributes positively to developing pupils' physical and personal skills. Through a recent review of provision the subject leader has identified dance and gymnastics as areas for development and steps are now being taken to address these weaknesses. However, overall leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There has been no monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to ensure that progression in skills is continuous as pupils move through the school and there are no records of

assessments to show how well pupils achieve. Resources are good with plenty of space for outdoor activities.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Year 2, standards are above the national expectation and pupils achieve well.
- There is good coverage of all aspects of art and design work.
- The absence of clear assessment procedures means that work is not always well enough matched to pupils' levels of artistic capability.

Commentary

70. Achievement is satisfactory overall in art and design, as is the quality of teaching. However, teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and, as a result, pupils achieve well in that age group. Observational skills are developed well in Years 1 and 2 alongside pupils' understanding of line, colour, shape and tone. Well motivated by the teacher's effective demonstration, pupils in Year 1 rose to the challenge of completing the other half of a given picture. They worked well independently, selecting the tools and materials they felt would produce the best results, taking pride in their work, concentrating hard and working with good attention to detail. Work on display shows a good understanding of colour mixing in this age group.
71. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. In the lesson observed, pupils in Year 3 were prevented from using their thinking and creative skills by a mechanical rather than a creative activity involving pattern, in which their work was too directed. Pupils with a higher degree of artistic ability 'coasted' for much of the lesson because of the restrictions placed on them. In contrast, observational skills were developed well in a good Year 5 lesson as pupils translated their sketches of landscapes, made on a school trip, into pastel and watercolour pictures. These showed a sound understanding of light and shade and how to create these effects in their work. The pupils rose well to the challenge of continuing a watercolour from the previous week, engaging in an informed discussion about how to do so when the paint had dried. The teacher passed on good technical information that allowed the pupils to solve the problem and extended their ability to match colours more accurately to what they saw. The shortcomings of the various media were analysed well as a result of the good expertise of the teacher and the teaching assistant, who constantly persuaded the pupils to reconsider where they placed different things in their paintings and the effects they were producing. This good use of ongoing assessment led to good achievement in this lesson.
72. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory overall. The co-ordinator knows what needs to be done to raise pupils' achievement but does not have a clear view of standards throughout the school, and has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning directly. Assessment procedures are not yet in place throughout the school and there is little recording of pupils' progress in this subject. All aspects of the art and design curriculum are covered adequately but there is little enrichment, for example, through visits to galleries or opportunities for pupils to work with artists and craftspeople. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Standards in Year 6 are not as good and pupils are not achieving as well as they did at that time.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHCE)

73. This aspect of the school's work was sampled and found to be satisfactory. One direct lesson was observed plus one religious education lesson that included strong PSHCE content. A satisfactory programme of work is in place which is closely related to the curriculum for religious education. For example, the ecological impact of man on the planet rose naturally out of a Year 1 lesson using the Creation story from the Bible. In this lesson, the pupils showed a satisfactory understanding of the benefits of recycling and the damage done by pollution, which contributed to their understanding of their role in taking care of their environment. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, however, showed a degree of immaturity in a PSHCE lesson focusing on playground behaviour, insults, bullying and the consequences of unpleasant behaviour. Nevertheless, through the PSHCE programme, pupils are successfully encouraged to consider a wide range of topics relating to their personal, social and health education. The programme includes teaching pupils about sex and relationships, racial equality and the dangers of drug and substance abuse. The opportunities for pupils to develop the skills associated with being a good citizen are somewhat limited at present. Pupils were proud to talk inspectors through their work towards the Healthy Schools Award and have a good understanding of why this was important. However, they have too few opportunities to take real responsibility within the school. The school plans to set up a school council but the unnecessary delay in doing so is delaying an important opportunity to develop this aspect of social and citizenship development.

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	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	4
Attendance	4
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
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	5
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	4

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