

INSPECTION REPORT

GLASCOTE HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tamworth

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124178

Headteacher: Ms Nicky Poore

Lead inspector: Mrs Barbara E Doughty

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th March 2005

Inspection number: 272965

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	189
School address:	Silverlink Road Glascote Tamworth Staffordshire
Postcode:	B77 2EA
Telephone number:	01827 475000
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Neil Roberts
Date of previous inspection:	6 th December 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average size primary school for pupils aged four to 11; there are 189 on roll. Thirteen of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds, mostly mixed White and Black Caribbean, but none is learning English as an additional language. The area the school serves is one of social deprivation and economic disadvantage. The number of pupils with special educational needs, around 34 per cent, is well above the national average and attainment on entry to the Reception class at age four is below average. The head teacher has been in post just two months. Currently two teachers are currently absent with their classes being taught by temporary teachers, and there are some unresolved issues at deputy headship level.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2226 1	Mrs Barbara E Doughty	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Personal, social and health education and citizenship
1344 8	Mrs Dawn Lloyd	Lay inspector	
1912 0	Mr Derek Pattinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education Special educational needs
3259 6	Mrs Gillian Phillips	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage curriculum English Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides an unsatisfactory education for its pupils. Value for money is not good enough because pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory and standards are too low. Almost all pupils show sound attitudes to learning but teaching is ineffective in Years 3 to 6 and the curriculum throughout the school is narrow and uninspiring. Unsatisfactory leadership and management have failed to bring about important improvements.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils do not achieve well enough in Years 3 to 6 because of inconsistent teaching, and the most able in Years 1 to 6 and those with special educational needs do not do well enough.
- Assessment procedures are ineffective and the information is not used well enough in Years 1 to 6 to tailor work or check on pupils' progress.
- Too little is done to evaluate what is going on, although the new head teacher already has a clear idea of what is and is not working and has started improving things.
- Children's social and language skills are taught well in the Reception classes where there are lots of things for children to do and talk about, but in Years 1 to 6 learning opportunities are narrow and uninspiring and too little is done to encourage pupils to show initiative.
- The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory and does not meet statutory requirements.
- Although most pupils work hard most of the time, there is too much emphasis on controlling pupils rather than inspiring good behaviour.

Improvement since the last inspection has been poor. All of the key issues from the 1999 inspection remain. Reading and writing standards are still not good enough, assessment remains ineffective, the provision for pupils with special educational needs has not improved significantly, school evaluation remains weak, and pupils' cultural development is still unsatisfactory. Many of these were issues from the inspection before last.

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

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Achievement is unsatisfactory. This is because pupils do not make sufficient progress from the start of Year 3 to the end of Year 6; the most able do not do well enough in science or in Years 5 and 6 in mathematics and most of the pupils with special educational

needs do not achieve as well as they could. Although up until 2003, the school's test results rose faster than nationally, the rise came to a halt and in 2004 many pupils made insufficient progress. Pupils make sound progress up until Year 2 and good progress in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy in the Reception classes. Nevertheless, few reach the expected goals by age five and by Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics remain below average. By the end of Year 6, standards are well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are below those expected nationally and those in religious education do not meet the expectations of the agreed syllabus. Pupils' low standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT have a detrimental impact on standards across all subjects.

Pupils' personal qualities are satisfactory but their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is unsatisfactory. Despite some uninteresting work, pupils have satisfactory attitudes and generally try to do the work. Most pupils do as they are told, develop sound relationships and start lessons promptly, although teaching does not do all it can to help them to cope with the demands of school routines and pressures or to promote independence and initiative-taking. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is unsatisfactory and, overall, teaching is ineffective. Although learning is satisfactory in the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2, pupils do not make enough progress in Years 3 to 6 given their standards at the end of Year 2. This is because whilst teaching is often lively and exciting up to and including Year 2, from then on it is often pedestrian and dull. Assessment is unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Teaching takes too little account of how well pupils have done previously to tailor the work to meet their needs and senior managers do not hold teachers accountable for making sure pupils progress as well as they should. Because the work does not always match pupils' needs, some pupils lose concentration. At these times teachers put too much emphasis on controlling the behaviour of individuals rather than altering it. Pupils' learning in ICT is patchy; there are insufficient resources to deliver pupils' statutory entitlement and teaching makes too little use of the school's computers. The curriculum is not as broad or as exciting as it should be and although teachers care about the pupils' well-being, they do not give them sufficient advice and guidance about how to improve their work. Partnership with parents and links with the community and other schools are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory and governance is not effective enough. Governors have a limited idea of what is going on and the governing body has failed to ensure that statutory requirements are met in ICT. Some key members of staff have been reluctant to recognise the need for change; hence improvements have been, and are still, too slow coming about. However, the new head teacher, currently working without the support of a deputy, already knows the school well. She has managed to inspire some of the subject leaders to move forward and is helping them to find out what is and is not working in their subjects. With her support, these people have made a sound start in recognising the strengths and weaknesses and identifying what needs doing. However, systems are new and not yet fully implemented to be effective enough.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are generally satisfied with what the school offers their children, but some are justifiably concerned about the way the provision has deteriorated in recent years. Pupils are reasonably happy and say that there is someone they can go to if they are worried about anything.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve teaching and learning and combat underachievement in Years 3 to 6.
- Use assessment information to meet pupils' needs and check on their progress.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of leadership and management.
- Provide a suitably enriched curriculum that motivates and inspires pupils to learn and encourages them to show initiative.
- Implement effective strategies for improving the behaviour of a minority of pupils.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that provision in ICT meets statutory requirements.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is unsatisfactory because, although pupils achieve well enough from the start of the Reception Year to the end of Year 2, achievement in Years 3 to 6 is not good enough. Standards in English are below average at the end of Year 2 and well below at the end of Year 6. Few children reach the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception class and standards are below average in mathematics, science and ICT at the end of Years 2 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in the Reception classes in two of the six areas of learning, but unsatisfactory in English in Years 3 to 6, mathematics in Years 1 to 4, ICT in all years, and among the most able pupils in Years 1 to 6 in science and Years 5 and 6 in mathematics.
- Throughout the school, those pupils with special educational needs do not achieve as well as they could.
- Pupils' below average competencies in literacy, language, mathematics and ICT have a detrimental impact on standards in all subjects.
- Children's language skills are promoted well in the Reception classes and achievement is good.

Commentary

1. Achievement is satisfactory in the Reception classes and Years 1 to 2. Although standards are below average by the end of the Reception Year in all areas of learning, children achieve well in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy. However, standards remain below by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, and mathematics, reflecting pupils' below average attainment on entry.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.4 (15.4)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.9 (15.9)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	13.7 (15.4)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6, with particularly slow progress made in English. By the end of Year 6, standards are well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics and science, with the most able pupils not doing well enough in either subject.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
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English	25.7 (25.9)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.3 (26.3)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.3 (27.8)	28.6 (28.6)

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

3. Up until 2003, Year 2 and Year 6 test results at this school were rising faster than the national upward trend. However, between 2003 and 2004, the school failed to keep pace with what was happening nationally; the rise in mathematics results came to a halt and those in English declined. In neither subject did they improve as well as those of similar schools and value added indicators fell to an unsatisfactory level. The analysis of the current Year 6 work and their assessments at the end of Year 5 show that again this year pupils are unlikely to do as well as they should. Similarly, analysis of the assessment information for the pupils currently in Years 3 to 5 shows that too many pupils at this school are not achieving well enough.
4. This school is not doing as well as it did two years ago. This is because not enough is being done to stem the current underachievement. There is an air of complacency amongst a small minority of staff, including some key staff who are reluctant to accept the pattern that is emerging and to do something about it. They told the inspection team of their ill-founded concern about the new head teacher's decision to abandon the usual act of employing an additional teacher in the run-up to the tests to help the Year 6 pupils to do better than they would have otherwise done.
5. In English, standards at the end of the school are below those at the start because pupils do not achieve well enough from year to year, particularly in writing. Children start school with underdeveloped communication and language skills. However, these are promoted well in the Reception classes because children are given time to listen to questions, think about the answers and speak them. In mathematics, pupils underachieve in Years 1 to 4 and the most able in Years 5 and 6 do not do well enough. Their problem-solving and data-handling skills are particularly weak. Whilst in science a similar number of pupils as in most other schools reach the nationally expected level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, too few reach the higher level. This is because whilst their knowledge is generally secure, their scientific investigation skills are underdeveloped. Investigations are very teacher-directed and not demanding enough because pupils do not have enough opportunities to test their own ideas or plan their own investigations.
6. Achievement in ICT is not good enough. This is because very little has been done to pursue the weaknesses from the last inspection report and eradicate them. As a result, the school is still not meeting statutory requirements and pupils' achievement remains unsatisfactory. Pupils' learning opportunities are too narrow and extremely limited. For example, pupils in Year 6 have not yet used electronic mail or sensory equipment to measure, for example, sound, temperature and light. Whilst they understand the usefulness of using computers to word-process their stories because of the ease with which they can edit their work, they usually hand-write their work first, negating the worth of putting it on computer. They do not use digital cameras, scanners or photocopiers, limiting their understanding further about the usefulness of ICT.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make unsatisfactory progress as they move through the school, as at the time of the last inspection. Although their achievement is better than last time, it is still not good enough. This is because work is often not matched to pupils' precise needs, the quality of individual education plans is

unacceptably varied and teaching assistants are not always used to best effect to benefit pupils. Important systems for monitoring and recording progress are not yet rigorous or regular enough nor embedded in the school's work to give pupils the best possible opportunities to succeed. The 'nurture' group is not effective as it is failing to meet the needs of pupils who attend. The criteria for selecting pupils for this support group are unclear and there is little accountability to enable the progress pupils are making to be effectively evaluated. As a result, their achievement over time is unsatisfactory.

8. Pupils' poor competence in literacy, language, numeracy and ICT has a negative impact on standards in all subjects. There is no specific worthwhile use planned in other subjects for skills learnt in numeracy, and reminders for pupils to consider the skills they have learnt in literacy are too infrequent. Because of this, pupils' written work in, for example, science, history and geography is not precise enough, spellings are often incorrect and grammar is often inaccurate. There is little use of ICT to support other work partly because the school has limited ICT resources and the classroom computers in Years 3 to 6 in particular often stand idle and too little use is made, by all classes, of the computer suite.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development, including their behaviour, attitudes to learning, and the provision for their social and moral development are satisfactory. However, attendance is unsatisfactory, as is the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils like coming to this school and many of them work hard most of the time.
- Although the school encourages pupils to attend school regularly through the recent introduction of attendance awards, these have yet to impact on the attendance figures.
- Children in the Reception classes have good attitudes to learning but strategies to improve the behaviour of a small minority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 in particular are ineffective and lessons are often too directed in a bid to maintain discipline.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

9. Most pupils are happy at this school and willingly co-operate with teachers and each other – particularly when they find the work interesting and inspiring. Most of them work hard most of the time, presenting their work neatly and with reasonable care.
10. Children in the Reception classes have good attitudes to learning because most of their work is based on exploration and observation. Because of this it excites them, they enjoy what they are doing, and they work productively. This happens in Years 1 and 2 but to a lesser degree, and in these classes pupils mostly behave well and are enthused by what teachers ask them to do.
11. In Years 3 to 6, most pupils work satisfactorily in most lessons, even when sometimes work is dull and teaching is methodical and uninspiring. However, there are some vulnerable pupils at this school, particularly in the older classes, who find it difficult to conform to rules. To help these pupils and their teachers, the school has put in place some behaviour management strategies and on-call arrangements, but these mostly rely on disruptive pupils being removed from lessons and sometimes excluded from the school. Hence the high rate of exclusions shown in the table below. However, the new head teacher is determined to decrease the rate of exclusion and is working hard to convince staff that this measure provides only a short-term solution and does little to get the heart of why some pupils behave as they do.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Black or Black British – Caribbean

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
176	13	1
7	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0

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

12. Instead of focusing on changing pupils' behaviour over time, in order to maintain control some teachers in Years 3 to 6 restrict the freedom they give pupils and are very reluctant to, for example, let them plan and carry out their own scientific investigations or research things on the computers. This has a knock-on effect on pupils' personal development, particularly that of the most able pupils because their independence skills are underdeveloped. Sometimes the remarks teachers write in pupils' books show little respect for the efforts pupils have made. Red lines through pupils' work and comments such as, "Write what you mean" and "Really, how are you going to do that?" do little to make pupils feel valued, increase their self-esteem, or raise their self confidence.
13. Whilst some pupils are taught by a teaching assistant in a 'nurture group' for four mornings a week in an attempt to modify their behaviour, it is not as successful as it should or could be, reflected in the fact that one of the pupils has been in the group for nearly three years. No one up to now has questioned its effectiveness or evaluated its success in modifying pupils' behaviour. Although the teaching during the sessions is sound, the overall impact of the group and its cost effectiveness are unsatisfactory.
14. The provision for pupils' cultural development is not good enough because it is unplanned and too incidental. Although there have been some visits to school by people from minority ethnic backgrounds, these are too few and pupils lack understanding of other cultures and traditions and how these can enrich their lives. Similarly, spiritual development is insufficiently promoted. Apart from some moments of reflection in assembly and the teaching of different world religions in religious education, there is little else to make pupils spiritually aware of their world, feelings and beliefs.
15. Whilst the attendance of most pupils is satisfactory, the rate of absence is too high. This is because too many families take time off for holidays and spasmodic attendance by some pupils has a detrimental effect on learning. However, recently the school has started to reward pupils' good attendance, but it is too early yet to see the effect of this on the attendance rates.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.6	School data	0.3
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is unsatisfactory. Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall in the Reception classes and Years 1 to 2, a predominance of weaknesses in Years 3 to 6 outweighs the strengths, resulting in unsatisfactory teaching and learning overall. The curriculum is narrow and uninspiring, and lacks enrichment, and the ICT curriculum fails to meet statutory requirements. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory although some parents have concerns about the way the behaviour of a small minority of pupils is managed in Years 5 and 6 in particular and how this has a

negative effect on the learning of their children. There are satisfactory links with the local community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. They are satisfactory in the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2, and unsatisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. The quality and use of assessment are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment information is not used well enough to tailor work for differently attaining pupils, check on how well pupils are doing, and find out where the most and least progress is made.
- In Years 3 to 6 teachers are reluctant to give pupils sufficient freedom to work independently, learning opportunities are too narrow, time is not used well enough, and teaching is too pedestrian and uninspiring.
- There are some strengths in teaching which include some purposeful questioning that makes pupils think, effective subject-specific language promotion, and clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils resulting in pupils knowing what they expected to learn and giving direction to the teaching.
- Ineffective behaviour modification means that pupils' behaviour is managed rather than changed.
- ICT is not taught well enough throughout the school.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	0	8	13	4	0	0

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

16. Although the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall, there are some things that work well. Throughout the school, teachers employ purposeful questioning to make pupils think. Their modelling of subject language is effective and this means that sometimes pupils respond to teachers' questions using similar language. Teachers have clear learning intentions and share these with the pupils so that pupils know what is expected of them and what they are intended to learn by the end of the lesson, giving work purpose.
17. However, as at the time of the last inspection and the one before that, pupils' achievement is greatly affected by the lack of regard teaching has to tailoring work to meet pupils' needs and identifying when particular pupils need to revisit an idea or move on to the next step. Consequently, the work does not meet pupils' needs well enough; the most able 'tread water' and those with special educational needs struggle to do the work without support. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6, because there were no assessments for the teacher to look at to gauge the level of pupils' understanding, pupils spent much of the lesson aimlessly cutting out squares to develop an understanding of squared numbers, which many already had. Throughout the school, too often all pupils in the same class do the same worksheet or are taught the same idea without regard to their age or whether or not they have the necessary

knowledge to build on or be able to understand the concept being taught. For example, in science, the least able Year 3 pupils very often do the same work as the most able Year 4 pupils in the same class, and in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, pupils of different abilities all maintained the same level and pace of work, which restricted the most able in particular. In addition, marking does little to help pupils understand what they are doing well and how they can improve next time.

18. The quality of learning is at its least effective in Years 3 to 6. However, until now, this has not been picked up by the school's senior managers because the school's tracking systems are ineffective. Until the arrival of the new head teacher, no one had collated the information to show where the most and least progress was made. Now that this has been done, a clear pattern is emerging; the teaching in some classes is simply not good enough and too many pupils make unsatisfactory progress between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6.
19. Whilst teaching in the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2 is often lively and exciting, teachers in Years 3 to 6 rely on too narrow a range of teaching styles. Some of the pupils in these older classes are quite able but find the work dull and uninspiring because teaching is too often mundane. It lacks pace and enthusiasm and fails to motivate pupils by creating within them a desire to learn and succeed. For example, although at the start of the week one of the Year 5/6 classes found it difficult to cope with the lively style of a supply teacher, on the third day many pupils commented that they found this way of working much more interesting and enjoyable. This lack of emphasis on modifying pupils' behaviour in the long term means that whilst the school consistently insists on high standards of behaviour, it does not always achieve them. The nurture class, where currently five pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 are being taught for four full mornings a week by a nursery nurse, is clearly ineffective. This is reflected in pupils remaining in the group long term; one has been attending the group for nearly three years now. The criteria for selecting pupils for this support group are unclear and there is little accountability to enable the progress pupils are making to be effectively evaluated.
20. The teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory. This is due to infrequent teaching of ICT, computers and other ICT equipment not being used to support work in other subjects, and the lack of vital resources to deliver the statutory curriculum. Classes make little use of the computer suite beyond one weekly timetabled lesson and extremely limited use of the classroom computers – many of which remain covered, stand idle, or are switched off.

The curriculum

The curriculum is unsatisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and does not meet statutory requirements. It is satisfactory in the Reception classes. Opportunities for enrichment are unsatisfactory. The accommodation is satisfactory and resources, except in ICT, give adequate support for the curriculum.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of learning opportunities is too narrow and restricted for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and work is not tailored well enough to meet the aptitudes and needs of pupils.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills and to use or extend them in other subjects.

- There is no coherent programme of visits or visitors to the school and the school has fewer after-school clubs than most comparable primaries to support and enrich pupils' learning.

Commentary

21. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for children in the Reception classes. These children learn best when adults provide purposeful hands-on experiences where they can explore and experiment. However, the learning opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 6 are limited and some subjects are covered inadequately. For example, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing skills in Years 3 to 6. In mathematics, there is little focus on developing the data-handling skills of pupils in Years 1 to 6 or opportunities for them to use these skills in other subjects such as science. There is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' scientific enquiry skills to enable them to experiment and find out information themselves. Time for teaching is not always used well enough, especially when pupils study a subject for a whole afternoon. For example, in a history lesson in Years 5 and 6 the pace of learning was not as brisk as it could have been and the planned work could have been covered in less time.
22. Teachers plan work using national strategies and guidance. However, because teachers do not check what children can do and understand, the work is not tailored to pupils' particular needs. As a result, many pupils, including those with special educational needs and the most able pupils, do not do as well as they should. The support for pupils' special needs is often limited, and the work for the less able is sometimes too difficult, and for the more able pupils it is insufficiently challenging. Even in Years 1 and 2 where teachers work closely together in planning the learning opportunities for the pupils, this is not as effective as it could be because of the inadequate assessment procedures. Work is often repeated from one year to the next or from two years previously because records of pupils' achievement are neither detailed enough nor secure.
23. The curriculum is not systematically reviewed and the school has not taken on board many of the recent national initiatives. As a result, there has been little innovation in recent years and teachers miss opportunities to make learning more exciting for pupils. The recently appointed head teacher is well aware of the deficiencies in the curriculum and has correctly identified many areas where improvements need to be made, but has not had sufficient time to implement any changes.
24. The curriculum for ICT is unsatisfactory and does not meet statutory requirements. A major factor is the lack of resources, such as for control technology. The computers in the suite are underused. Although there is a computer in each classroom pupils do not use these independently as a resource for learning. Pupils in Year 6 said they rarely used the computers in the classrooms and used the computer suite only once a week.
25. As well as the residential visit for Years 6 pupils, from which pupils get much enjoyment, there are some visitors to the school and visits out of school, which enhance pupils' learning. For example, there are annual visits for children in the Reception classes and pupils in Years 1 and 2, such as the visit last year to an environmental centre. Following the visit of a student vet, children in the Reception class successfully took on the roles of the vet, nurse and receptionist when they played in the vet's surgery on their classroom. However, these opportunities are not an integral part of the curriculum and depend on the enthusiasm of individual teachers. Similarly, individual teachers give their time willingly to provide after-school clubs such

as those to develop pupils' computer, sewing and football skills. However, there is not a sufficiently varied programme, including external providers, to develop and enhance pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils are satisfactory. Support and guidance for pupils, based on the monitoring of their academic achievement, are unsatisfactory. Sound opportunities are now being created for pupils to express their views and play an active part in the school's development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective induction arrangements in the Reception classes help children to settle quickly and easily into school.
- Staff know pupils well and take care to meet their personal needs but do not give pupils effective guidance on how to improve their academic skills.
- Some teachers do not show enough respect for the effort pupils put into their work.

Commentary

26. Parents express a high level of satisfaction with the arrangements for helping new children to settle into school. Daily informal contacts between staff in the Reception classes and parents and children attending the adjacent playgroup mean that, when it is time for new children to join the Pre-reception class, they are already on familiar ground. Before children start school, formal visits are arranged for all of them and their parents so that questions can be answered and important information gathered from them, for example about any health problems. Parents are provided with a helpful booklet giving information about the school and advice on the basic skills that they can help their children to learn. While in the Pre-reception class, children join in social activities and outdoor play with the older Reception group, as well as following similar routines, such as lining up and sharing, raising confidence and reducing any stress as they move into the Reception class.
27. Most staff show genuine concern for the personal well-being of pupils. Arrangements for first aid and routine medical care are good. Staff are properly trained and careful documentation of medical conditions, such as food allergies, ensures that the pupils concerned are never at risk. Personal problems that may affect a pupil's performance in school are communicated discreetly to those staff who need to know, so that any sign of distress can be quickly identified and action taken. Child protection procedures are secure and staff are aware of what to do if they have concerns. Pupils themselves feel safe in school and are confident that they can approach an adult if they are worried or unhappy. In turn, most staff are anxious to do whatever is necessary to help a pupil, whether this means comforting a tearful six-year-old in the playground, providing complex care for a severely disabled pupil, or making arrangements with external agencies to provide support for a family in need.
28. Because pupils' academic achievement is not assessed systematically, nor the results of assessments used to plan appropriate work for pupils, teachers do not give effective guidance to pupils on how they can improve. Although personal target setting is in place in some classes, and pupils find the system motivating, they do not really understand what they need to do to achieve higher standards. Targets are included in end of year reports to parents but are often too general to be effective. Parents are not

given the opportunity to discuss their children's targets with class teachers, so they are unable to provide support for pupils at home.

29. Marking does little to help pupils understand how to improve their work and it is evident from some inappropriate, sarcastic comments written in some books, that some teachers do not show enough respect for pupils. Although relationships between pupils and teachers during the inspection were satisfactory, parents are disappointed that some teachers were unduly harsh and do not always speak politely to the pupils, thus exacerbating disruptive and inappropriate behaviour. Some parents feel that because some teachers do not provide good role models, some pupils in turn show little respect for adults.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, the community and other schools are all satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher responds swiftly to parents' queries and concerns.
- Arrangements to inform parents about pupils' progress are not good enough.
- Parental involvement in, and support for, pupils' learning are limited.

Commentary

30. Since the arrival of the new head teacher, the school has operated a successful and effective 'open door' policy, which encourages parents to make known to staff, and the head teacher in particular, any queries or worries that they have. Parents feel that the head teacher listens to them and they are particularly pleased with how quickly she reacts to their concerns. Changes are evident, for example, in the introduction of regular newsletters that keep parents up to date with events in school. Its tone is friendly and welcoming. Because some parents do not feel that they know enough about what children are learning, there are plans to issue more comprehensive curriculum information each term.
31. Informal contacts between parents and class teachers or support staff are effective in helping parents keep track of day-to-day issues. However, the way that termly consultation evenings are organised does not enable parents to obtain a clear picture of the progress that pupils are making, because they cannot always speak to the teacher who knows most about their child. Annual school reports give a satisfactory account of what pupils know, understand and can do and include targets for improvement, although some of these targets lack detail and are not specific enough. Some of the reports, however, are bland and impersonal and the use of computers to help generate them is unpopular with some parents. The justifiable concerns expressed by parents at the pre-inspection meeting and in the questionnaires are acknowledged by the head teacher, who has already identified ways to ensure more effective communication with parents about pupils' progress in the future.
32. Although many parents are supportive of the school and take a clear interest in their children's education, there are a number who do not attend consultation meetings, do not ensure that their children come to school regularly and on time, and seem reluctant to become involved in school matters. As a result, these parents cannot contribute effectively to pupils' achievement. In the past, little has been done to encourage these parents to be actively engaged in school life and many activities that might have

attracted them, such as performances by children or family assemblies have been curtailed or discontinued. As a result, a number of parents are concerned about what they see as a decline in provision in recent years. In a bid to combat this, increased involvement of parents in their children's learning has been set as a target in this year's school improvement plan and efforts are now being made to offer appropriate activities for them. The head teacher has arranged for a Parents' Information and Support Project to take place in school and workshops for parents of Reception age children are being organised through the Family Learning Initiative. A small number of parents already provide valuable practical support for the school by helping in classrooms, organising fund-raising and social events and taking on the onerous and responsible role of school governors.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The leadership of the new head teacher is sound but she is too new to post yet to have brought about the significant improvements needed to make this an effective enough school. Leadership of key staff and the governance of the school are both unsatisfactory. Management is not effective and the governing body is not meeting its statutory duties fully.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher has high aspirations and a very clear vision for the school, although this is not yet an inclusive enough school.
- The depleted senior management team and subject leaders are not effective enough in their work.
- Strategic planning as a tool to secure future development and drive up standards is embryonic.
- Management is unsatisfactory; in particular because arrangements for monitoring standards and checking on the quality of the school's work are ineffective.
- There is little accountability, resulting in an air of complacency amongst a small minority of staff.
- The governing body fulfils nearly all of its statutory duties well enough with the exception of meeting statutory requirements for ICT.
- Governors are not involved enough in shaping the school's direction or checking its work.

Commentary

33. This is not an inclusive enough school. The nurture class is not effective enough, there is a high level of exclusion because staff are not good enough at improving pupils' behaviour, pupils' special needs are not met well enough, and there is insufficient challenge for the most able. In addition, there is a lack of commitment from some staff to help pupils improve, provide the best education possible, and raise standards.
34. However, the new head teacher has made a very good start to her headship. She has undertaken a rigorous audit to determine what is working well and what needs doing. This has revealed weaknesses in many aspects of the school's work, previously unrecognised by the school's senior managers, which need urgent attention. She has established key priorities for development, and has started to raise awareness among staff of what improvements are needed and what must be done to secure them. She has established a strong sense of purpose among some teachers who are keen to make the school successful. However, some staff are not yet working with her to

secure the best possible education for all pupils to help them realise their full potential. Senior staff and governors have been consulted to determine the school's priorities, and are beginning to come to an agreement about what needs to improve and, most importantly, how to effect improvement. The head teacher is fully aware that improvements since the last inspection have been unsatisfactory, and that most issues have not been addressed. However, she has communicated clearly to pupils, parents and staff, her high aspirations and clear sense of purpose, and has started to introduce initiatives, systems and procedures to help realise her vision for the school.

35. Senior staff and subject leaders are not effectively working with the head teacher to secure the best possible quality of education for all pupils in order to raise standards. This is because they do not monitor standards and quality regularly or rigorously to enable them to discover what works well and what needs doing. As a result, they do not have an informed and accurate overview of strengths and weaknesses in the subjects for which they are responsible. The lack of a deputy head teacher, due to prolonged absence and over a year of reduced responsibilities, is substantially weakening the impact of the senior management team. This in turn is significantly adding to the head teacher's burden as she strives to secure improved provision in many aspects of the school's work.
36. Effective school improvement and subject action planning are at early stages of development. However, the head teacher intends to ensure that the school improvement plan contains all that is necessary to secure needed improvements to help raise standards. For example, she intends it to contain a clear, measurable agenda with rigorous time scales, identifying responsible personnel, teaching and learning implications and precise costs of planned developments so that spending patterns can be rigorously monitored. However, she has had little time as yet to begin this process. Performance management arrangements to help improve the quality of teaching and learning are established, but are having little impact on improving teaching and raising standards.
37. The school's arrangements for evaluating its own performance are unsatisfactory. This was a weakness at the time of the last inspection that has still not been addressed. Because of the head teacher's short time in post, good systems to support a rigorous approach to all aspects of monitoring and evaluation are embryonic, and have yet to make an impact to help drive up standards. The head teacher has undertaken a rigorous analysis of pupils' performance in the national tests and has started to track pupils' progress over time to establish whether they are making enough progress. However, some data is unreliable because teachers are not yet secure in levelling pupils' work against National Curriculum requirements while other data from national tests is only just beginning to be used to target pupils of different abilities to help them improve. As a result, pupils are not given the best possible opportunities to succeed. Systems are not securely established to ensure that there is a planned programme for subject policy review, evaluation and improvement. As a result, there is no regular and rigorous monitoring of policies and procedures for compliance, consistency and quality. In addition, there is little onus placed on teachers to improve standards of individual pupils, nor are they brought to account when pupils in their class fail to make progress. Because of these weaknesses, important areas, such as the curriculum, are unsatisfactory, while other areas, such as the provision for pupils with special educational needs, are not good enough.
38. A committed and caring group of governors are keen to make the school successful. The governing body carries out all but one of its statutory duties well enough. All

committees are properly structured and meet appropriately to help ensure that they support the head teacher. However, the governing body is not involved enough in shaping the school's future direction or checking its work, such as the quality of the curriculum, and in holding the school to account for what it achieves. It is not yet knowledgeable enough about the school's strengths and significant weaknesses. As a result, it is not operating as a true 'critical friend' of the school and governance is therefore unsatisfactory. However, under the head teacher's direction, the governing body has started to become more involved in the school's work and is rapidly being awakened to its many and varied responsibilities.

39. Although in 2003/4 the school carried forward 12 per cent of its budget into 2004/05 this has been reduced to a more acceptable four per cent.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	659430
Total expenditure	644109
Expenditure per pupil	3097

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	73030
Balance carried forward to the next year	88351

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

40. Provision in the Reception classes is satisfactory with some good features. When children enter the school most are working at levels well below those expected in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy development and below those expected in all other areas of learning. Children achieve well in personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy development and their achievement is satisfactory in all other areas of learning. However, most do not reach the expected levels for their age by the time they leave the Reception Year.
41. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features. Staff seize opportunities to develop children's language skills and, as a result, children's speaking skills develop well. Children behave well and work hard because staff have high expectations of behaviour and children know what is expected of them. Adults are patient and caring and children benefit from working in small groups and on a one-to-one basis with them. Children learn best when they are engaged in purposeful hands-on activities where they can experiment and explore. However, at times some of the activities do not have a clear enough focus and adults do not always check what children are learning and what they need to practise next. For example, when the teacher asked a group of children to 'use the story sack to make Old Macdonald's Farm', their play lacked purpose. This was because they were not given a specific task to complete and the teacher did not regularly check what these children were learning.
42. Most children attend the playgroup on site before they enter school. There is a good programme of visits to the school prior to entry and, as a result, children settle quickly into school because they know the staff and are familiar with the routines. The leadership and management of the Reception classes are sound. The recently appointed Foundation Stage manager has worked hard to develop and enhance the environment and has identified appropriate areas for improvement. Although there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection there is still no secure outdoor area where children can regularly develop skills such as balancing, climbing, throwing and catching or use wheeled vehicles.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff create a caring and secure environment where children feel happy and secure. As a result, children work hard and enjoy learning,
- Adults make sure that children understand school routines and, because of this, children become confident in moving around and choosing activities.
- Occasionally adult-directed sessions are too long which results in some children losing concentration.

Commentary

43. Good teaching in this area of learning means that, although children do not reach the nationally expected goals by the end of the Reception Year, they achieve well. Adults in the Reception classes have a kind and supportive manner and regularly praise children's efforts. They give children just the right amount of help but also encourage them to become increasingly independent. As a result, children in the Pre-reception class put their painting on the rack to dry and hang up their aprons after they have painted. Children enjoy their work and are enthusiastic. They learn best when the activities are fun and adults join in their enthusiasm. For example, children in the Pre-reception class were very excited when they discovered that if they mixed paints together they could make a different colour.
44. Children behave well because adults have high expectations and set children a good example. As a result, children know what is expected of them. For example, children in the Pre-reception class politely waited for the teaching assistant to give them their juice and orange and all said 'thank you' when they were given them, and in the Reception class the children lined up quickly and sensibly in the hall and politely held the door for their friends as they walked back to the classroom.
45. At times children sit for too long listening to adults and, as a result, a few become restless and lose concentration. For example, two children in the Pre-reception class could not maintain their concentration during a writing session and some children in the Reception class became restless during a class discussion because it went on too long.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults have correctly placed a high priority on developing children's speaking skills and, as a result of the good opportunities they provide, children develop them well.
- Children are enthusiastic about reading because teachers promote reading well and systematically teach children the skills they need for reading.

Commentary

46. Most children enter the school with language skills that are well below those expected for their age. Though they do not reach the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year, they achieve well because of the good teaching. Adults regularly seize opportunities to reinforce and extend children's language skills. For example, when a child in the Reception class said that ducks had 'special feet' the teacher explained they were called 'webbed feet' and that the terms 'bill' and 'beak' were both used for a duck. In the discussion about ducks she gently encouraged the children and gave them plenty time to talk and explain their thoughts.
47. Adults encourage a love of books by choosing interesting books to share with children. Consequently children listen attentively. There is a good emphasis on the basic skills children need to read, and regular opportunities for children to practise them. For example, at the beginning of the morning session, children in the Pre-reception class read the names of all the children in the class and the names of the characters from their reading books. The systematic approach to the teaching of sounds helps children to begin to read and write. For example, when children in the Reception class wrote

labels for their pictures of ducks the most able children used their knowledge of sounds when they wrote 'feet' correctly and made a good attempt at writing words such as 'beec' (beak) 'ay' (eye) and 'fev' (feather).

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children begin to use mathematical language correctly because adults use precise mathematical language when they talk to children.
- Children develop their mathematical skills most effectively when adults provide them with exciting first-hand experiences.

Commentary

48. Most children do not reach the goals they are expected nationally to reach by the end of the Reception Year. However, their achievement is satisfactory because the teaching is sound. Adults regularly use mathematical vocabulary when they talk to children and, as a result, children begin to use this themselves. For example, children used terms such as 'triangle', 'rectangle' and 'flat' correctly when they described the bubbles they had made. The support teacher asked children to explain how the shapes they had made from construction straws were similar to a triangle. The children pointed out the three sides and the teacher further extended children's vocabulary when she explained that the sides of a triangle were straight but the sides of their shape were curved.
49. Children learn about numbers and shapes through a variety of activities. For example, children in the Reception class made models using construction equipment and found out that the circular wheels rolled but the rectangular shapes did not roll. Similarly, children in the Pre-reception class continued the pattern of bright and dull as they put the cushions into a box. However, at times activities lack a clear purpose and because of this learning is too incidental and opportunities are missed at the end of lessons to reinforce what children have learnt.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide children with some good opportunities to learn through observation and exploration.
- Computers are not used regularly to support and extend children's learning.

Commentary

50. Although most children do not reach the expected goals by the end of the Reception Year, children's achievement is satisfactory because teaching is sound. Adults provide some good first hand experiences. For example, children in the Reception class were excited when they discovered that they could produce more bubbles when they stirred

up the water containing washing up liquid and they could make bubbles bigger when they blew on them.

51. Although there is a computer in each classroom, during the lessons observed children only used them on one occasion. Children are not given sufficient opportunities to practise and develop their keyboard skills or to use computers as a tool to extend their knowledge in other areas of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults give children good opportunities to develop their manipulative skills in activities in the classroom.
- Though children use the hall twice weekly there is no secure outdoor learning area where children can regularly develop their physical skills.

Commentary

52. Although most children do not reach the goals they are expected nationally to reach by the end of the Reception Year, children's achievement is satisfactory because of the sound teaching. Teachers provide a variety of good opportunities for children to develop their skills such as cutting and manipulating materials. As a result, children use tools such as paintbrushes and scissors safely and can manipulate pieces of jigsaws and construction equipment.
53. Children develop their physical skills in the twice-weekly lessons in the hall. For example, children in the Reception class followed the teacher's movements as they danced to the 'Funky Monkey' music at the beginning of the lesson. They successfully changed their movements as they took on the roles of animals such as ducks and horses as they sang 'Old Macdonald had a farm'. However, children do not have access to a secure outdoor area to develop skills such as balancing or climbing, or to use wheeled vehicles. This limits the opportunities they have to practise and develop physical skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults provide good opportunities for role-play, which help children to develop their imagination.
- The activities adults give children for art are sometimes not sufficiently varied to encourage children to experiment.

Commentary

54. By the end of the Reception Year few children reach the expected goals for their age. However, their achievement is satisfactory because the teaching is satisfactory. The

role-play areas successfully stimulate children's imagination and provide good opportunities for them to develop their language skills. For example, following a visit from a student vet the teacher set up a vet's surgery in the Reception class. Children successfully took on the roles of vet, nurse and receptionist and developed their imagination well because the teacher provided them with props such as uniforms, badges and equipment such as stethoscopes, which they used to examine the soft toys.

55. At times art activities are not sufficiently varied and do not enable children to experiment and use their imagination. For example, children in the Reception class clearly understood the importance of looking closely at an object before drawing it and as a result developed their observational skills well. However, sometimes children were given a limited range of materials and as a result their art work was very similar to each other's. For example, children in the Reception class were given a small range of papers to make a picture of a duck and as a result the completed collages looked similar. Similarly in a dance lesson children were not given sufficient opportunities to develop their imagination in response to the music.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Though teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, there are many weaknesses in Years 3 to 6. Teachers do not always check what pupils know and find difficult and as a result the work is not matched to the needs of many of the pupils.
- Standards are well below average at the end of Year 6 and because of the unsatisfactory teaching many pupils are underachieving in Years 3 to 6.
- There are few opportunities planned for pupils to use their reading, writing and speaking skills in other subjects and ICT does not support the work in English satisfactorily.
- The checking of teaching and learning is not established. As a result, weaknesses are not identified or eradicated.

Commentary

56. Standards are below average in reading, writing and speaking and listening by the end of Year 2. Most pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards reflect those on entry. Standards at the end of Year 6, however, are well below average and a significant number of pupils underachieve. Pupils' progress is patchy and this is directly linked to the variations in the quality of teaching. Improvement since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory as most of the weaknesses identified remain. Though teaching, learning and achievement are now satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 they remain unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6 and weaknesses in teaching, such as the ineffective use of assessment, have not been rectified.
57. Overall, teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. In lessons in both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils were involved well through short, sharp and well-focused activities. For example, they shared their ideas with their 'talking partner' and practised writing them on a whiteboard before speaking in front of the class. Support from the teaching assistant was particularly well targeted in a lesson in Year 1 and this contributed significantly to pupils' good achievement. Teachers check what pupils know and can do and, as a result, most work is matched to pupils' needs. However, when teachers mark pupils' work they do not make it clear what aspect of the work is particularly good or how pupils can make their work better.
58. Although some satisfactory teaching was seen in Years 3 to 6, there are too many weaknesses in both teaching and learning. Teachers do not use the national teaching guidance well enough to ensure that pupils cover the whole curriculum. There are limited opportunities for extended writing and an inconsistent approach to the teaching of the skills pupils need for reading, writing and speaking. Most work is not matched sufficiently well to pupils' needs because teachers do not accurately assess what pupils can already do and what they find difficult. Similarly there is an inconsistent approach to marking pupils' work. There are often celebratory comments written in pupils' books and references to the presentation and handwriting, but few comments which help pupils to improve their work. Not all teachers' writing provides examples of good handwriting. It is sometimes untidy and difficult to read and large ticks obscure pupils' work.
59. Pupils do not use computers well enough as a tool for learning. They do not go to the classroom computers to help them with their writing, for example to check spellings or grammar. Inspectors saw a computer used on only one occasion during the inspection, when a group of pupils in Year 3 used a spelling program, which satisfactorily supported their learning. There are no examples of pupils using word processing in their English books and only a few examples of such work displayed on the walls.
60. Though the school has collected data on pupils' standards in reading and writing it has not analysed the information to find out why so many pupils are not making sufficient progress. As a result, actions have not been put in place to make sure that weaknesses are rectified. There have been few programmes put in place to help pupils with difficulties in reading and writing or to extend the most able pupils. The school has relied heavily on 'catch up' programmes in Year 6 rather than tackle the problems in other classes in the school.
61. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory as they were at the previous inspection. The school has failed to check the quality of teaching and learning through classroom observation or monitoring pupils' work. As a result, the extent of the

weaknesses in teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 has not been identified. The new head teacher has enabled the hard working co-ordinator to put in place much needed changes to promote reading throughout the school. She has also correctly identified further areas for improvement. However, these changes are in the very early stages of development and, as such, have not had an impact on standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. The use of English in other subjects is unsatisfactory and some pupils' poor competence in reading, writing and speaking has a detrimental impact on standards across other subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were unable to clearly explain how they had carried out their science investigations or write down what they had found out, and pupils in Year 6 did not use any specific technical vocabulary when they talked about the fairground rides they had made in design and technology. Links with language and literacy are not specifically planned in, for example, history and, as a result, teachers miss opportunities to support and extend pupils' learning.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although pupils have good attitudes to mathematics, many do not achieve as well as they could because the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall.
- Although the school is keen to drive up standards and has introduced some initiatives to help improve provision, management is not yet good enough to secure needed improvement.
- The development of mathematics through other subjects has too low a profile.

Commentary

63. Standards in mathematics have fallen over recent years in Years 1 and 2. Standards at the end of Year 6 are now falling away again after rising up to 2003, with assessment data indicating that they are likely to fall again this year. Pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory overall, with many pupils in Years 1 to 4 and the more able in Years 5 and 6 not achieving as well as they could. As a result, standards in mathematics are below the national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6, with a trend of rising standards across the school not securely established and insufficient improvement since the last inspection.
64. A scrutiny of pupils' books reveals that teaching and learning are ineffective over time and many pupils are significantly underachieving. This is because there are no consistent approaches to assessing what pupils know and understand so that work can build carefully on pupils' previous learning. As at the time of the last inspection, work is rarely matched to pupils' precise needs to enable them to make best possible progress, especially in Years 3 and 4. As a result, some work is too hard for pupils while other work is too easy, which slows the progress pupils make over time.
65. During the inspection, teaching and learning in lessons were good in Years 1 and 2, while in Years 3 to 6, they were largely unsatisfactory. However, the impact of teaching and learning over time is unsatisfactory across all years. This is because pupils are rarely given work matched to their precise abilities to help them make best possible

progress. Teachers sometimes follow the national teaching guidelines too rigidly, which do not match the needs of many pupils. For example, the most able pupils are sometimes required to complete number work they already understand before proceeding to more challenging tasks, and as a result, progress slows. Some teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and the pace of lessons is not brisk enough. Despite these weaknesses, pupils usually try hard to please their teachers and most show good attitudes to learning. Where lessons were judged good in Years 1 and 2, teachers had higher expectations and pitched work at appropriate levels. Purposeful questioning developed clear understanding of new knowledge. Other positive features of the lessons seen were the high levels of enthusiasm, good relationships and secure subject knowledge, which helped to keep pupils motivated and involved. As a result, many pupils made good progress. However, weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics are more prevalent than strengths, and are having a negative impact on the urgent need to address the underachievement of a significant number of pupils.

66. The school is keen to drive up standards, and has introduced some initiatives, such as agreed approaches to planning to help improve provision, and class targets to help pupils to understand what it is they are learning. However, leadership and management overall are unsatisfactory. This is largely because no one has been empowered to gain an informed overview to help evaluate the subject's strengths and weaknesses. For example, there has been little opportunity to observe teaching and to monitor learning and pupils' work regularly to help find out what works well and what needs doing. This was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. As a result, the action plan in mathematics is not rigorous enough and does not always focus on the right issues to help drive up standards. These weaknesses help explain why standards are not rising fast enough and many pupils underachieve. However, important initiatives have been introduced to help raise standards. For example, data from national tests is now analysed, and careful tracking of pupils' progress to help identify and overcome weaknesses has begun.
67. Other weaknesses are also evident, which prevent pupils from achieving well enough. Teachers give too little attention to investigative approaches and problem solving as a means of developing mathematical understanding. Links with 'real life' mathematics, such as with money and shopping, are too few to help bring the subject alive for pupils and to help them appreciate the importance of number in their daily lives. The quality of pupils' presentation and teachers' marking is unacceptably varied, with few comments made by teachers to help pupils secure the next steps in learning. In Years 3 and 4, the quality of lessons and learning experiences for pupils in different classes is unacceptably varied, leading to marked differences in the progress pupils make over time. This was a weakness last time, which has not been addressed. Displays in classrooms to help pupils acquire a mathematical vocabulary and celebrate their work do not have a high enough profile.

Mathematics across the curriculum

68. The development of mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding through other subjects is unsatisfactory. For example, links with ICT are minimal, such as to help pupils with data handling to facilitate mathematical understanding. Opportunities for developing number skills in other subjects are not being planned, implemented and evaluated as part of a systematic approach, and therefore happen more by accident than intention.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Increased emphasis on developing pupils' investigation skills is starting to impact on standards but the most able pupils are not given enough opportunity to work on their own initiative.
- Unsatisfactory assessment leads to unnecessary repetition from year to year and work not tailored to pupils' needs.
- Pupils enjoy the practical nature of their science work and some good questioning, in Year 6 in particular, makes pupils think.
- The new subject leader has an accurate idea of what needs improving but improvements have been slow coming about.
- There is some, but not enough, use of ICT to support work in science.
- Effective marking in Years 1 and 2 helps pupils but in Years 3 to 6 teachers' comments have little impact on improvement.

Commentary

69. Whilst overall the teaching of science is satisfactory, and most pupils achieve well enough by the end of Years 2 and 6, there is a fine balance of strengths and weaknesses. Standards in science are below average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is because whilst pupils have a secure enough knowledge of scientific facts, particularly of life processes and materials and their properties, their investigation skills are weak. They know, for example, that seeds are dispersed in various ways, can explain the functions of the major organs of the body, talk knowledgeably about the food chain, and know that "liquid always takes the form of its container". However, when asked about an investigation they had carried out the day before to test reversible and irreversible changes, Year 6 pupils described what they had done, but when asked why they had done it, they became confused. Eventually they concluded that they had been testing what would happen when they mixed together different solutions.
70. Whilst a similar percentage of pupils here as in most other schools usually reach the nationally expected level and most achieve satisfactorily, the most able pupils do not do well enough and fewer than could do reach the higher level. This is because although recently there has been an increased emphasis on investigative work, the most able pupils have insufficient opportunities to work independently. The teacher usually tells them what to investigate and how to do it, depressing their scientific enquiry skills and stifling their creative thinking. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the most able pupils could explain the process of evaporation but they still carried out the same investigation as the average attaining pupils. However, when asked to explain how they would carry out a test to see if the height a ball bounces is dependent on how the height it is dropped from, they talked confidently about making the test fair and how they would keep the surface it bounced on and the force with which it was dropped the same. They explained how the test would need to be carried out several times to make sure it was fair, and how they would record their results on a table or chart.
71. Pupils enjoy their work in science, particularly the practical nature of the work. However, teaching does not always take account of the way in which these pupils learn

best and too much time is taken with lengthy explanations and questions before pupils get on to the practical work. After carrying out an investigation, pupils are much more secure about what they are saying because their learning is based appropriately on exploration and observation. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, many more eager hands went up in response to the teachers' questions after the investigation than before it.

72. Assessment arrangements are unsatisfactory. Teachers do not have a clear enough idea about what pupils already know, understand and can do and as a result work is often repeated from year to year and differently attaining pupils in the same class are given the same work to do. Whilst in Year 1 and 2 teachers' comments in pupils' workbooks help set the work in context and point out how well the pupils have understood the idea being taught, comments in Years 3 to 6 do little to help pupils understand what they have done well and how to improve next time. In Years 3 to 5 in particular, some work is unmarked and unacceptably inaccurate work is marked as correct. For example a Year 3 pupil had drawn an unacceptably messy table, but the teacher had commented "Lots of nice work", giving a false impression as to what is acceptable.
73. Leadership and management are ineffective and improvement since the last inspection has not been good enough. However, the recently appointed subject leader has an infectious enthusiasm for the subject and is excited at the prospect of her new responsibilities and, most importantly, being given time to carry them out. Whilst she does not know her subject well enough yet, she is learning fast how to find out more about it. Thwarted by the reluctance of some staff to co-operate, she is not yet confident or experienced enough to be innovative or driving. However, with the support of the new head teacher, she has set some wheels in motion and things are starting to move forward. However, her plans have yet to come to fruition and it is too early yet to judge their impact. Management systems are not securely in place and key managers have yet to convince and inspire all of their colleagues that there is a need for them.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although some good teaching was seen in Years 1 to 2, the lack of essential equipment means that requirements cannot be met adequately across the school, the subject cannot be taught well enough, and there are gaps in pupils' learning.
- Computers are used insufficiently.
- Assessment arrangements are ineffective in tracking pupils' progress or building pupils' skills over time.
- Weak leadership and management have failed to improve provision and the subject is on the decline.

Commentary

74. This subject is in a more precarious state than it was at the time of the last inspection. The school is not keeping pace with what is happening nationally in ICT; statutory requirements are still not being met, achievement is not as good as it was, and teaching has declined from sound to unsatisfactory. This is because, as at the time of the last inspection, computers are used too infrequently and there is no monitoring of

achievement and progress. Although at the time of the last inspection, the subject leader had lots of ideas about how to raise standards in ICT, these plans never came to fruition. It was intended, for example, to open the school at eight o'clock in the morning to allow parents and children access to the computers and to acquire 30 laptop computers to loan to families. None of this happened. Although the weekly after-school computer club, run by the temporary subject leader, goes some way to help meet statutory requirements, it is not enough to make up for the shortfalls.

75. Although some good teaching was seen in Years 1 to 2, mainly due to good subject knowledge and enthusiastic and accurate teaching, overall, teaching is unsatisfactory. Pupils do not achieve well enough and standards are below the nationally expected level because there is insufficient ICT equipment to enable teachers to teach. The school has only one interactive whiteboard, although more have been ordered, and no sensory equipment for pupils to monitor changes in temperature or detect light levels; there is no control equipment so that pupils can, for example, turn on a light. There are no digital or video cameras or scanners and pupils in Year 6 have not yet learnt how to use electronic mail.
76. The computer suite, an expensive investment, is made insufficient use of and classroom computers are often switched off, covered up, or lie idle. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, hardly use theirs except to register house points and as a reward at playtime.
77. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory and improvement since the last inspection has been poor. No one checks on what is going on in ICT. There have been no lesson observations and no analysis of what pupils can and cannot do. Although the subject leader has worked hard to produce year-group teaching plans, these are followed by teachers with little regard to what pupils have and have not learnt from the year before.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. This is unsatisfactory. There is little evidence of ICT being used in English, mathematics or science. Whilst some word-processing goes on in English, pupils merely type onto computer – for display purposes – what they have already spent a long time handwriting, defeating the object of the exercise to use a computer as a tool. Sensory equipment, such as data-loggers, have not been purchased so pupils cannot use these to measure sound or light levels in science and little use is made of data-handling programs in mathematics.

HUMANITIES

79. Inspectors observed two **history** lessons and no **geography** lessons. Because of this, examples of pupils' completed work, discussions with pupils, and a study of work displayed around the school form the basis of judgements about standards in history. However, inspectors were not able to make judgements about provision in either subject or about standards in geography at the end of Year 6 because insufficient evidence was gathered. Standards are below national expectations in history at the end of Years 2 and 6 and in geography by the end of Year 2 and pupils make uneven progress as they move through the school. Both subjects, but especially geography, have too low a profile, and much of the work undertaken lacks depth. Work is rarely matched to pupils' precise needs because there is no consistent approach to assessing what pupils know and understand.

80. Nevertheless, good features of history teaching were evident in both of the lessons seen. For example, in a Year 6 lesson in which pupils were finding information from different sources about life in Victorian schools, the teacher's subject knowledge was secure and a good choice of resources contributed to the good learning. Effective questioning helped to move pupils forward and both collaborative and independent approaches were used well. Copies of log book entries helped to interest and involve pupils, and as a result, they responded well to the lesson and made good progress. Some of these good features were also observed in a lesson for younger pupils in which they discovered what conditions in hospitals in the Crimea were like for Florence Nightingale. However, time is not always used to best effect, with the pace governed by the length of time allocated for the lesson rather than the need to meet pupils' precise needs, slowing progress. The quality of pupils' presentation is unacceptably varied, reflecting teachers' varied expectations. In Years 1 and 2, too many 'low level' worksheets are used, which do not inspire pupils, and colouring is used extensively, which does not extend historical or geographical understanding. The work scrutiny showed that all pupils in the same class often complete the same work and that the quality and quantity of work undertaken across different year groups are unacceptably varied. This helps to explain why progress is uneven as pupils move through the school.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some good features of teaching are evident, supported by some well-planned assemblies.
- The subject is securely led, but co-ordination arrangements are not effective enough.
- Links with other subjects, especially literacy, and multicultural links are under-developed.
- As at the time of the last inspection, there are no consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school.

Commentary

81. Standards in religious education are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. However, pupils make sound gains in learning about and from religion as they move through the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils know why people worship and have some knowledge of a Christian baptism. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 consider the thoughts, words and feelings of the main characters in the Easter story. By the end of Year 6, pupils have some knowledge and understanding of different religions. For example, pupils are starting to understand the origins of some Jewish practices and beliefs. They write guidance notes for themselves based on some of the teachings of Islam, showing that they are learning to apply what they are learning to their daily lives.
82. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and some good features were seen in some lessons. For example, learning objectives were shared with pupils so that they were clear about what they were learning, sound relationships helped to underpin learning, and teachers' subject knowledge was secure to help pupils make satisfactory progress. However, time was not used to best effect to benefit pupils and the pace of lessons was methodical rather than brisk, which led to some restlessness from a small number of pupils. Work is rarely matched to pupils' precise needs to enable them to make best possible progress.

83. The subject is soundly led and satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection; there are sound plans in place for its continued development. However, the co-ordinator does not yet monitor teaching and learning or pupils' work to enable her to discover what is working well and what needs doing. She is not yet checking regularly to evaluate how well the locally agreed syllabus is followed. However, the subject is appropriately represented in most classes.
84. Assembly themes, such as, 'caring for mother on Mothers Day', enable pupils to learn about and from religion. For example, they applied stories from the life of Jesus, such as the Parable of the Lost Sheep, to their own lives, in an assembly led by the local vicar who visits regularly. Pupils learn about the importance of courtesy, care and consideration for others. As a result, the subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' personal development.
85. Links with other subjects are evident, such as with drama, as younger children re-create a baptism ceremony through role-play. However, links with other subjects are not fully developed to bring learning to life, such as through the increased use of artefacts, visits and visitors. This helps to explain why multicultural links are few and why this important area aspect of the school's work is unsatisfactory. The development of literacy skills has too low a profile in religious education, with limited opportunities for extended writing.
86. There are no consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school. As a result some work is not matched to pupils' precise needs to enable them to make best possible progress. Some tasks involving colouring do not extend pupils' understanding, which was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. There are too few displays to motivate pupils and celebrate their work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

87. Creative, aesthetic, practical and physical subjects were sampled and insufficient evidence was gathered to judge provision, standards or teaching in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Evidence was gathered from examining teachers' planning, samples of pupils work, short observations in the classroom and talking to pupils in Year 6. Teachers do not have systems to check which skills pupils have learnt and, as a result, do not adapt the national guidance to meet the needs of all pupils. Evidence indicates that there is adequate coverage of the subjects in Years 1 and 2 but subjects are not covered in sufficient depth in some classes in Years 3 to 6.
88. In an effective **art and design** lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils showed a good understanding of how Clarice Cliff's designs were built up, and worked hard to reproduce them in their teapot designs and when painting plates. Research on a website further enhanced the knowledge of two pupils; they were enthralled by the images of Clarice Cliff's pottery and talked animatedly about the colours and shapes she used and which designs they liked or did not like. There was a limited range of art work displayed in Years 3 to 6 and inspectors did not observe any art and design lessons. However, during the inspection pupils in Year 5 completed work in the style of LS Lowry, which showed an appreciation of the techniques used by the artist.
89. There were no **design and technology** lessons in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection as it is taught at a different time in the year. However, from examining the work pupils had recently completed it was evident that they had successfully used a variety of

materials and techniques to make puppets and vehicles. Their skills in, for example, fixing materials together in different ways are developing satisfactorily. In a lesson in Years 3 and 4 pupils were investigating how manufactured photograph frames were made in preparation for designing and making their own photograph frames. Pupils used the information they had gained in previous lessons on structures, such as tripods, to explain that the frame would need “a strong support or it will fall over”. Pupils in Year 6 talked excitedly about the biscuits and the model fairground rides they had made. However, they did not describe clearly the sequence of the tasks they had to complete or use any technical vocabulary during their explanations.

90. There were no **music** lessons during the inspection as music is taught by a specialist teacher on Thursdays. Pupils in Year 6 said they played percussion instruments, composed and listened to music and sang songs during their lessons. However, they could not re-call the names of any composers or any pieces of music they had heard from another country or culture. At present all Year 6 pupils have weekly lessons when they are taught to play either the violin, guitar or keyboard. Music specialists funded by a local initiative give this series of ten lessons. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 can join the choir, which is led by the specialist music teacher. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 perform in front of other pupils and adults to celebrate, for example, Christmas. However, there are no regular opportunities for the choir or any pupils to play instruments or sing in front of other pupils, parents or other adults.
91. In **physical education** all pupils take part in regular indoor and outdoor activities and there is a planned programme for swimming. However, teachers do not take account of pupils’ previous learning when they plan their lessons or check which skills pupils have learnt at the end of the lesson. One pupil in Year 6 said that all pupils practised the same football skills even though some pupils played regularly in teams outside the school. As a result, he did not learn any new skills in the lessons. The lessons sampled were very short and there were indications that teachers do not always use time effectively. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, pupils were only engaged in the lesson for 20 minutes. At the end of a games lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4 there were no opportunities for pupils to evaluate what they had done or comment on what they had learnt. Recently pupils have had the opportunities to work with sport specialists to develop their skills, though this was not observed during the inspection. Though there are clubs for football and cross-country running these mainly take place prior to pupils being involved in competitions with other schools and, as a result, do not effectively support and extend pupils’ learning in school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

92. Although taught as a discrete subject, it was not possible to see enough lessons during the inspection to make a secure judgement about provision, the quality of teaching or pupils’ learning. Year 6 pupils are well aware of what personal, social and health education is and they have a good enough understanding of citizenship. This is because some lessons explore what it is like to “be an owner in this country” and role-play helps pupils understand and come to terms with their feelings and decide how to react in certain situations. They say, for example, that they have learnt not to fight over petty things and are well aware of the need for class and school rules.
93. There are adequate arrangements in place for sex education and for pupils to learn about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Pupils of all ages have a good say in what happens in school and the opportunity to influence change through their work on the school council. However, behaviour modification is not as effective as it could be

and the work of the nurture group is too slow to impact on changing the way pupils behave. The school, including the subject leader, has little idea about what goes on in this group or around the school. Senior managers do not monitor pupils' progress or the quality of the teaching and therefore have little impact on bringing about improvement.

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	5
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	6
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	4
Attendance	5
Attitudes	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	5
The quality of education provided by the school	5
The quality of teaching	5
How well pupils learn	5
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	5
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	5
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	5

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